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Presenting a Framework and Process for Designing Leadership Development Programs as Sustainable Competitive Advantages: A Case Study at Hershey Entertainment and Resorts

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PRESENTING A FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS FOR DESIGNING

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AS SUSTAINABLE

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES: A CASE STUDY AT HERSHEY

ENTERTAINMENT AND RESORTS

A Dissertation

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in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy

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Title: Presenting a Framework and Process for Designing Leadership Development
Programs as Sustainable Competitive Advantages: A Case Study at Hershey
Entertainment and Resorts

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Organizational executives leverage significant resources to build leadership development programs as part of strategic initiatives, but many of these programs still fail. The organizational strategy and leadership fields have made significant advances and have complementary purposes, yet scholars have not synthesized this literature. The need remains to form a pragmatic conceptual framework and process intended to serve as a theoretical foundation for designing leadership development programs as sustainable competitive advantages (SCAs). This research presents such a leadership framework and process that may serve as a theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool used for designing such programs.

This descriptive single-case study details how I used the leadership framework and process at Hershey Entertainment & Resorts (HE&R) to design a leadership development program (i.e., Core Values Initiative) as a SCA. HE&R is a private for-profit hospitality and entertainment company that has a unique history and social purpose. The study progressed through three distinct phases. Phase I synthesized the research literature to arrive at a leadership framework and process to guide practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Phase II detailed how the leadership framework and related process were successfully used to design the Core Values Initiative at HE&R. The Core Values Initiative proposes to more deeply embed

HE&R's core values throughout the organization by identifying the behaviors of excellence for HE&R's core values at each of the different organizational levels. HE&R would then meaningfully integrate the behaviors of excellence into their performance management plan, specifically the performance appraisals and compensation plans. Phase III presents the findings of guided interviews with the nine senior leaders who provided their perceptions about the pragmatism of the leadership framework and process, and the logic and plausibility of the Core Values Initiative.

The results indicate that the interviewees found the leadership framework and process pragmatic, and they supported the logic and plausibility of the Core Values Initiative. This study provides a strategic understanding of leadership and offers a viable option to practitioners tasked with successfully designing leadership development programs as SCAs.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Organizations facing competition strive to secure sustainable competitive advantages with the intent of achieving long-term superior organizational performance. Porter (1996) views leadership and strategy as complementary processes critical for securing sustainable competitive advantage (SCA). Porter (1980, 1985, 1996, 1998) contributed SCA to the organizational strategy research and positioned SCA as one of the keys for achieving long-term superior organizational performance. SCA, as defined for this research, refers to imperfectly imitable factors that generate and capture unique value, meaning that organizational competitors cannot exactly duplicate or imitate the accrued benefits of the unique value (Barney, 1991; Porter, 1985, 1998). SCA research provides insight into achieving long-term superior organizational performance and has dominated the focus of both organizational strategy research and the pragmatic approach to strategic management over the past four decades (Lado, Boyd, & Wright, 1992; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997).

Organizational decision-makers confront challenging decisions as they strive to secure SCA in a business environment replete with competition, changing technologies, and evolving markets (Teece et al., 1997). Globalization, the realities of a service and knowledge-based economy, technological complexity, and uncertainty further complicate the organizational decision-making process (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993). Executives depend now, more than ever, on an engaged team of high-performers and the analytic tools and frameworks of organizational strategy to help navigate the organization toward achieving long-term superior organizational performance. The ever-changing business

environment magnifies the importance of understanding and leveraging leadership and organizational strategy for securing SCA.

Executives routinely leverage organizational strategy and leadership as separate processes to drive organizations toward securing SCA. For example, strategic planning has become an expected organizational activity and chief executive officers (CEOs) also routinely rank leadership development as a top priority (Biggs, 2004; Rothwell, 2010; Ulrich, Smallwood, & Sweetman, 2008). However, the CEO of Hershey Entertainment and Resorts (HE&R), William F. Simpson, Jr., intuitively recognized the combined power of organizational strategy and leadership when he proposed designing a leadership development program as a SCA. Researchers have not introduced the concept of an integrated program of this type in the research literature, nor have practitioners openly discussed or designed such programs, even though the leadership development literature recognizes the central importance of strategy (Berke, 2005; Charan, 2005; Heffernan & Flood, 2000; Lado et al., 1992; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990). Therefore, in order to design a leadership development program as a SCA, practitioners need a synthesized leadership framework that provides a strategic understanding of leadership, in addition to a related process.

This study addresses this gap in the research literature by introducing a leadership framework and process. The leadership framework strategically defines leadership and provides the theoretical foundation and criteria for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The related process outlines the stages and steps for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. This study develops the leadership

framework and process and then I use them as a guide for designing a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R.

Background

The development and presentation of the leadership framework proves timely considering massive organizational failures, corporate scandals, and consequences of the Great Recession (Vanourek & Vanourek, 2012). The challenges facing America's organizations are compounded given an aging workforce, a paucity of employer and employee loyalty (Rothwell, 2010), the *Occupy* movement decrying corporate malfeasance (Vanourek & Vanourek, 2012), and a turbulent, technologically complex, and rapidly changing business environment. Emphasizing these challenges, Ryan (2009) stated, "In our increasingly complex world, the challenges and opportunities for leaders, and those in charge of developing them, have never been greater," (p. xv). Most corporations recognize the strategic importance of leadership development for organizational success in a service and knowledge-based economy (Lado et al., 1992), but they employ nonintegrated generic processes and systems based on ubiquitous understandings of both leadership and strategy (Charan, 2005; Clardy, 2007; Cohn, Khurana, & Reeves, 2005; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010). The leadership framework introduced through this study addresses these problems so that practitioners can design leadership development programs as SCAs.

Organizational Strategy Introduction

The seminal work in organizational strategy introduced the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analytic framework, which continues to guide the organizational strategy research agenda and strategic management practice (Barney,

1995; Grant, 1991; Weihrich, 1982). SWOT analysis matches internal strengths and weaknesses to external threats and opportunities to inform organizational strategy formulation. The focus on external and internal elements led to two separate research streams in the area of SCA. Industrial Organization (I/O) and the Resource-Based View (RBV) make up these two broad approaches to SCA (Lado et al., 1992). The I/O approach originated from neoclassical economics and posits that SCA stems from organizational positioning given external forces (Lado et al., 1992). Porter's (1980) classic work on industry competitive forces points to the importance of external or product side analysis and ascribes SCA to a firm's ability to seize opportunities and minimize threats (Lado et al., 1992). The RBV approach to SCA points toward firm-specific resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). Barney's (1991) classic work identified the four characteristics that resources and capabilities require to qualify as SCAs. He developed the VRIO (Valuable, Rare, Imitability, and Organization) Framework as a guide for internal analysis (Barney, 1995).

These two broad approaches, when considered collectively, provide a holistic and robust appreciation of the various elements and combinations of elements that have the potential to qualify as SCAs. I/O and RBV approaches to SCA stress matching elements to secure SCA: an analytic approach that remains fundamental to organizational strategy (Barney, 2001; Porter, 2008). Decisions to combine factors and elements to secure SCA, critical for achieving long-term superior organizational performance, remain the foundation of organizational strategy.

Leadership Introduction

Leadership has morphed into a ubiquitous concept that for practitioners typically denotes a person in an official position of organizational power. The understanding of leadership does not become clearer within the scholarly community with over fifteen hundred definitions and forty theories of leadership (Kellerman, 2012). The volume and diversity of leadership research partially stem from the fact that the study of leadership is multidisciplinary with each academic discipline raising different questions and lines of inquiry (Goethals & Sorenson, 2006; Kellerman & Burns, 1984). As a result, there are no right or wrong understandings of leadership, just different perspectives and purposes (Bass & Bass, 2008). Understanding and developing a pragmatic conceptual framework of leadership from the perspective of strategy will contribute to both the scholarship of leadership and strategy. It will also offer assistance to practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs.

Leadership Framework Introduction

The pragmatic leadership framework integrates strategy and leadership to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The leadership framework depicts the synergistic interaction between leaders, followers, and context for realizing sustainable validity, offering practitioners a differentiated understanding of concepts and a clear directive. The term *sustainable validity* provides a specific strategic purpose for the leadership process and represents the desired outcome of the interplay between leaders, followers, and context. As such, sustainable validity constitutes an established direction, alignment, and commitment for achieving long-term superior organizational performance

(Barney, 1991; Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Magretta, 2012; Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 2011; Porter, 2008; Veslor et al., 2010).

For the purpose of this research, *leadership* refers to a dynamic process involving three factors—leaders, followers, and context—for realizing sustainable validity (see Figure 1) (Hughes, Ginnett, Curphy, 2009; Kellerman, 2012; Veslor, McCauley, & Ruderman, 2010). The term *leaders* describes individuals possessing level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 2011; Lahti, 1999; Tichy, 1989; Veslor et al., 2010). The term *followers* describes engaged individuals with integrity who possess the critical thinking skills and level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for actively supporting a leader to positively influence the leadership process (Charan et al., 2011; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1992; Lahti, 1999; Tichy, 1989; Veslor et al., 2010). *Context*, the third factor, refers to an analytic approach for recognizing potential sources of SCA arising from combinations of internal and external elements relative to use value (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Weihrich, 1982). The leadership framework provides practitioners charged with designing leadership development programs as SCAs a pragmatic tool replete with refined concepts, a process, and a focus.
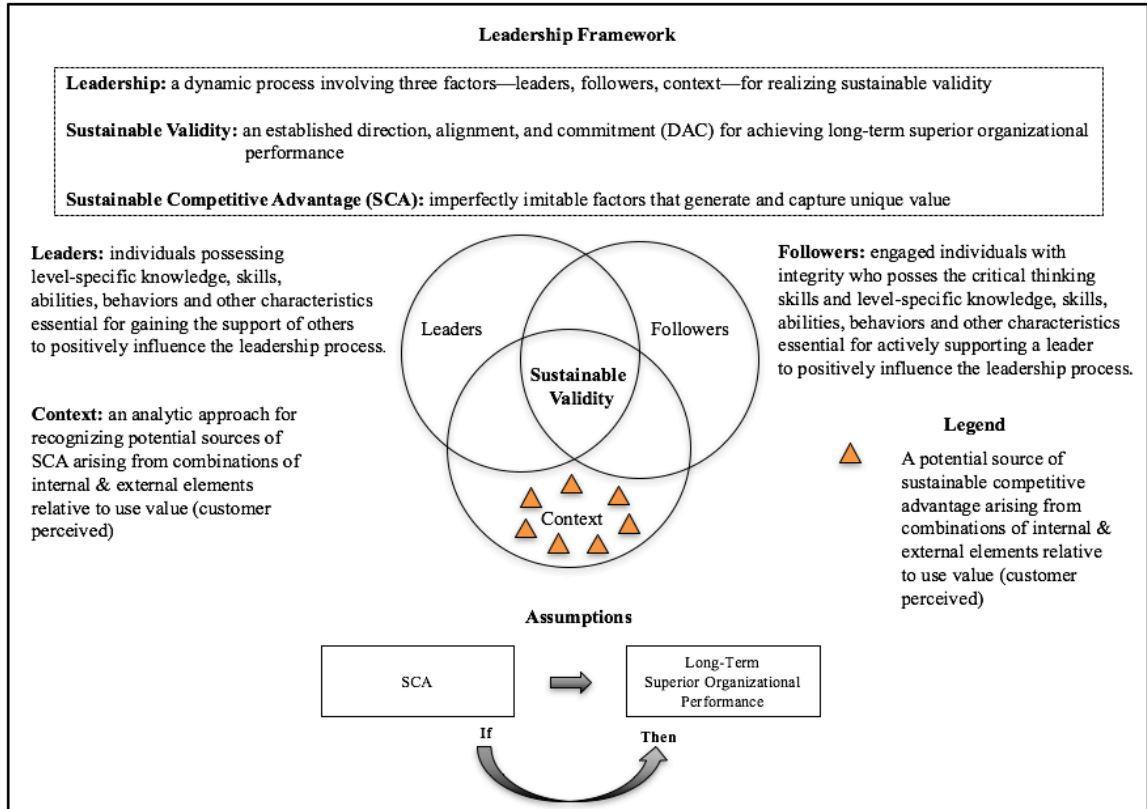
Figure 1. The leadership framework.

Hershey Entertainment and Resorts General Overview

The following general overview of the Hershey Entertainment and Resorts Company (HE&R) provides basic operating information of the organization and its history to introduce the organization central to this case study. The pertinent information for a basic understanding of HE&R's operations include facts related to the number of employees, location, general organizational structure, industry, and business classification. The following paragraph delivers these facts with the intent of orienting the reader to the HE&R organization, followed by a section that presents a broad summary of HE&R's history

Milton S. Hershey founded HE&R in 1927 and built "Hershey Park," schools, shops, a theatre, and The Hotel Hershey as part of his efforts to develop and nurture a

thriving community for the workers of his chocolate factory (HE&R, n.d.). HE&R

operates as a privately held entertainment and hospitality company located in Hershey,

PA. The organization includes the Hershey Entertainment Group and the Hershey

Resorts Group that collectively manage sixteen properties and employ 1,650 full-time

and 7,400 seasonal and part-time personnel (see Table 1) (HE&R, n.d.).

Table 1

HE&R Properties by Group

Hershey Entertainment Group	Hershey Resorts Group
Hersheypark	The Hotel Hershey
ZooAmerica North American Wildlife Park	Hershey Lodge
Giant Center	The Spa At The Hotel Hershey
Hersheypark Stadium	Hershey Golf Collection
The Star Pavilion	Hersheypark Camping Resort
Hershey Bears	Dining In Hershey
Hersheypark Arena	
Hershey Theatre	
Hershey Nursery	
Hershey Laundry & Dry Cleaning	

Note. Adapted from "About: Hershey Entertainment & Resorts" retrieved March 13, 2013 from
http://www.hersheypa.com/about_hershey/mission_statement.php

The History of HE&R

Milton S. Hershey founded the Hershey Company in 1894 and amassed great

wealth, but his legacy stems from his investment of that wealth back into the community.

In 1905, he formed the Hershey Trust Company to serve as the trustee of the Milton

Hershey School. He endowed his entire fortune to the school and in 1909 officially

opened the doors to provide opportunity and hope to students in need[1]. Milton S.

Hershey formed HE&R in 1927[2] to help develop a flourishing community for the

chocolate factory workers to live and raise families. Then in 1936 he created the M.S.

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[1] The Milton Hershey School now serves approximately 2,000 students in need and has an
endowment estimated in excess of $8 billion (HE&R, n.d.)

[2] HE&R was originally named Hershey Estates (HE&R, n.d.)

Hershey Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing cultural and educational opportunities to the members of his community. Philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, and moral capitalism define the Milton S. Hershey Legacy.

Milton S. Hershey's Mennonite roots with their values of hard work and service to the community played a formative role in his life. As a successful business owner, he was inspired and challenged by his U.S. contemporaries who advocated progressive idealism and moral capitalism. These beliefs positioned business as a major social institution responsible for doing good (D'Antonio, 2006). In addition to corporate social responsibility, Andrew Carnegie's essay "The Gospel of Wealth" argued that wealthy individuals have an obligation to serve as stewards of society (D'Antonio, 2006). Mr. Carnegie's essay resonated with Mr. Hershey and helped inspire Mr. Hershey's philanthropic pursuits. The last discernible influence on Milton S. Hershey originated from his travels to Great Britain to study the Cadbury chocolate business. There he discovered that the Cadbury family had a vision to create an ideal community rooted in Quaker principles, a vision that he tried to emulate when he developed Hershey, PA, the home of his chocolate factory (D'Antonio, 2006).

Milton S. Hershey founded HE&R in 1927 as a collection of business interests, separate from the chocolate and confectionery corporation, dedicated to fulfilling his vision. The purpose statement and core values of HE&R reflect this unique history and social purpose. The core purpose statement reads as follows:

Hershey Entertainment and Resorts is proud to help fulfill the dream of our

founder, Milton S. Hershey, by providing value to Milton Hershey School, the

largest home and school in the world, as it continues to provide opportunities for children in need. (HE&R, n.d.)

In keeping with the core purpose, HE&R identified and adopted the following core values:

- Devoted to the Legacy: Acting in a manner that reflects the dedication and integrity of our Founder;

- Selfless Spirit of Service: Serving our employees and their families, our guests, and community and environment;

- Team Focused: Supporting one another as we work toward common goals and earning each other's trust; and

- Respectful of Others: Treating all people with dignity, while respecting their differences and ideas (HE&R, n.d.).

Together the history, core purpose, and core values of HE&R create a unique and powerful organizational culture.

Genesis of Dissertation

In 2011, the former CEO of HE&R announced plans to retire at the end of 2012. In preparation for this succession decision, the CEO collaborated with an outside vendor and developed a competency model to serve as the foundation for HE&R's succession planning and management process. Competency models describe the collection of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics, defined in observable behavior, that have been determined as essential for performing at an above average level for specific jobs (Campion et al., 2011; Rodriguez, Patel, Bright, Gregory, & Gowing, 2002; Schippmann et al., 2000). Succession planning and management typically use

competency models to develop a talent pool of high-performers for official leadership positions (Conger & Fulmer, 2003; Rothwell, 2010). The CEO tasked the top management team of the Human Resource Department to take the necessary steps to roll out the succession planning competency model to the middle-management team. The original purpose of this research, which changed when HE&R introduced a new CEO in 2013, was to ensure the validity and reliability of the competency model and to verify that HE&R was following best practice for succession planning and management.

When HE&R promoted William F. Simpson, Jr. to CEO in 2013, he communicated a clear vision and agenda for the company. Mr. Simpson firmly believes that the unique history and social purpose of HE&R should be reinforced through systems and processes related to leadership development. Mr. Simpson values a RBV approach to SCA as evidenced by his focus on developing HE&R's people to help reinforce the organization's unique history and social purpose. He believes that people are critical for HE&R to achieve long-term superior organizational performance. This new focus on developing people as a means for achieving long-term superior organizational performance incorporates organizational strategy and, therefore, significantly changed the focus of this research. The research now centers on designing a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R, thus helping the organization move toward achieving long-term superior organizational performance.

Researcher's Positionality Statement

The researcher becomes an important research instrument in qualitative research and should disclose relevant personal information that could bias the research (Creswell, 2009). Researcher transparency also serves as a critical safeguard for ensuring ethical

research practices (Creswell, 2009). The researcher positionality statement serves these purposes and the following section highlights my personal, academic, and professional information potentially relevant to this research.

I am the product of a liberal arts education, an education that has inspired critical self-reflection, service, and lifelong learning. As such, I am constantly evaluating and re-evaluating how my experiences, relationships, and environments influence my knowledge, beliefs, values, and self-identity. I have a varied educational and professional life, but the one element that is consistent throughout my life is that I have always been interested in trying to help individuals and the community. My current passion, both professionally and academically, focuses on helping make a positive impact on people's lives by helping improve businesses.

I became interested in business for two reasons. First, business is one of the major social institutions of the world and as such can make a positive impact on many. Second, people spend a majority of their lives working, and as widely reported, most of these individuals do not like what they are doing. Therefore, I made a conscious decision to learn about business so that I could work with as many organizations as possible to help them get the right results the right way[3]. As a result of doing things the right way, businesses and their people can achieve mutual fulfillment and success.

In following with this passion, I founded Vide Consulting Group, a regional consulting firm specializing in developing people, leadership, organizations, and strategy. I am also an assistant professor of business and the founder and coordinator of the Masters of Organizational Leadership program at Alvernia University, roles that allow

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[3] I became familiar with the expression "get the right results the right way" from Ulrich, Smallwood, & Sweetman (2008).

me to make a positive impact on people's lives. I specialize in the areas of executive and

organizational leadership, strategy, and development. My educational background is

varied, having earned a degree in criminal justice with a minor in sociology from

Pennsylvania State University, a master's in Urban Education from Alvernia University,

and currently pursuing a Ph.D. at IUP in the Administration and Leadership Studies

program.

This research project was brought to my attention by my dissertation chair and not

the result of my consulting business. However, the fact that I am a business professor

and have many different experiences in business from owning a consulting firm were

important initial considerations because of my pragmatic orientation and appreciation of

practitioner realities. This research interests me because of its potential to make a

positive difference in the lives of people, and because it involved my areas of

specialization, organizational leadership, strategy, and development.

Problem Statement

Advances in the disciplines of organizational strategy and leadership elucidate the

importance of leadership development for the pursuit of securing SCA (Cohn et al., 2005;

Ryan, 2009). The problem lies in the fact that the organizational strategy and leadership

fields have not coalesced to form a conceptual framework for strategically understanding

leadership to guide the design of such leadership development programs. Leadership

development programs, commonly falling under the rubric of succession planning or

competency models (Berke, 2005; Charan et al., 2011; McCauley, Kanaga, & Lafferty,

2010; Rothwell, 2010), typically concentrate efforts on developing individuals for official

positions of authority (Kur & Bunning, 2002). The undifferentiated use of leader

development and leadership development, coupled with a ubiquitous understanding of leadership and strategy, have led to generic leadership programs that have failed to produce leaders, let alone serve as SCAs (Charan, 2005; Clardy, 2007; Cohn et al., 2005; Lado et al., 1992; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010; Veslor et al., 2010).

Organizational executives leverage significant resources to build leadership development programs as part of strategic initiatives, but most of these programs still fail (Ready & Conger, 2007). Executives, top management teams, and boards of directors consistently cite the lack of quality leadership talent as a major concern (Rothwell, 2010; Ulrich et al., 2008). The conversation no longer revolves around if leadership and leadership development are important, but instead centers on how to design such leadership development programs as SCAs (Ulrich et al., 2008). The strategy and leadership fields have made significant advances and have complementary purposes, yet they have not synthesized their literatures to form a pragmatic conceptual framework to serve as the theoretical foundation for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. This research presents such a conceptual framework to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool used for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. I then apply this framework to develop a leadership program as a SCA at HE&R.

Significance

From Mr. Simpson's desire to design a leadership development program as a SCA came the need to build a conceptual framework that strategically defines leadership. The development of such a conceptual framework required an analysis and synthesis of the organizational strategy and leadership literature. The pragmatic bent of this research

project also necessitated a related process for designing a leadership development program as a SCA. Therefore, this research project contributes to the organizational strategy and leadership fields and supports practitioners by:

- Presenting an analysis and synthesis of the organizational strategy and leadership literature;

- Introducing a leadership framework that strategically defines leadership and serves as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool for designing leadership development programs as SCAs;

- Outlining the process for using the leadership framework as a tool for designing leadership development programs as SCAs;

- Describing the process of designing a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R; and

- Presenting the findings of a qualitative formative assessment of the leadership framework, related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA at HE&R.

Research Question and Objectives

Given the aforementioned background, problem statement, and purpose, the research question and related objectives follow. The research question asks the following:

- How can organizations design leadership development programs as SCAs?

The research objectives include the following:

- Develop a conceptual framework for strategically defining leadership to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool used for designing leadership development programs as SCAs;

- Outline the process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs;

- Design a leadership development program as a SCA in a well-established organization (e.g. HE&R); and

- Treat HE&R as a case study and evaluate the following via a qualitative formative assessment:

    1) Are the leadership framework and process pragmatic?

    2) Does the executive team support the logic and plausibility of the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R?

Design and Methods Overview

This descriptive single-case study will describe how a leadership development program was designed as a SCA at HE&R (Yin, 2003). This study will progress through three distinct phases. Phase one of this study begins with the literature review, which will introduce and explicate the logic of a synthesized leadership framework and outline the process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Phase two of this study describes how the leadership framework and process were used to design a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R. In phase three of this study the HE&R executive team and two subject matter experts will provide a qualitative formative assessment of the leadership framework, related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R.

Clarification of Terms, Concepts, Models, and Frameworks

Terms, concepts, models, frameworks, and acronyms in this research incorporate refined meanings specific to the fields of leadership, organizational strategy, and business. They need clarification because diverse groups, including academic disciplines and practitioners, often infer different meanings. Therefore, the following section clarifies the meanings, as related to the purpose of this research, of the terms, concepts, models, frameworks, and acronyms used in this study.

- Context: an analytic approach for recognizing potential sources of SCA arising from combinations of internal and external elements relative to use value (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Weihrich, 1982).

- Followers: engaged individuals with integrity who possess the critical thinking skills and level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for actively supporting a leader to positively influence the leadership process (Charan et al., 2011; Kellerman, 2010; Kelley, 1992; Lahti, 1999; Tichy, 1989; Veslor et al., 2010).

- Leader Development: increasing individual capacity for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process (Veslor et al., 2010).

- Leaders: individuals possessing level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process (Charan et al., 2011; Lahti, 1999; Tichy, 1989; Veslor et al., 2010).

- Leadership Development: organizational improvements to realize sustainable validity (Veslor et al., 2010).

- **Leadership:** a dynamic process involving three factors—leaders, followers, and context—for realizing sustainable validity (Hughes et al., 2009; Kellerman, 2012; Veslor et al., 2010).

- **Leadership Framework:** an integrated pragmatic conceptual framework that strategically defines leadership to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs.

- **Long-Term Superior Organizational Performance:** a standard of organizational excellence determined by comparing selected organizational metrics against the industry average over an extended period (Magretta, 2012).

- **Strategic Framework:** an organization's vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives that combine to form an organization's foundation through which all strategic decisions should be vetted.

- **Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA):** imperfectly imitable factors that generate and capture unique value (Barney, 1991; Barney, 1995; Porter, 2008).

- **Sustainable Validity:** an established direction, alignment, and commitment for achieving long-term superior organizational performance (Barney, 1991; Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Magretta, 2012; Monette et al., 2011; Porter, 2008; Veslor et al., 2010).

- **Use Value:** a customer's subjective assessment of the perceived bundle of benefits of a product or service in relation to the customer's need and/or desire (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000).

- **VRIO Framework:** four criteria (valuable, rare, imitability, organization) used for determining the potential of organizational resources to secure SCA (Barney, 1995).

Research Outline

This research study focuses on designing a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R. Chapter one provided a general overview of the issues involved, HE&R, researcher positionality statement, genesis of the dissertation, problem and purpose statements, research question and related objectives, significance of the research, and introduced the leadership framework and related concepts and terms. The following chapter summaries provide an outline for the balance of the dissertation.

Chapter two reviews and synthesizes relevant research literature to develop and explicate the logic of a leadership framework and to outline the process for using the leadership framework as a tool for designing leadership development programs as SCAs.

Chapter three reviews the research design, methods, and data collection and analysis procedures utilized to describe the design of a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R and to formatively assess the leadership framework, related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R.

Chapter four will describe how the leadership framework and related process were used to design a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R.

Chapter five will provide formative assessments and analysis, based on guided interviews with the members of the HE&R executive team and two subject matter experts, of the leadership framework, related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R.

Chapter six will assimilate and discuss the research findings in light of the research question and related objectives. I will offer suggestions and possible implications for leadership and organizational strategy. I will present potential future research streams and offer recommendations for practitioners adopting the leadership framework and process to design leadership development programs as SCAs.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Overview

Most organizations recognize the strategic importance of leadership for achieving

long-term superior organizational performance (Cohn et al., 2005; Porter, 1996).

Executives and boards of directors list leadership development as a top priority and

dedicate significant resources to support related initiatives (Berke, 2005; Biggs, 2004;

Ready & Conger, 2007; Rothwell, 2010; Ulrich et al., 2008). The problem resides in the

fact that most of these leadership development initiatives fail to meet the stated objectives

(Charan, 2005; Ready & Conger, 2007) due to the undifferentiated use of leadership

development and leader development, the ubiquitous use of strategy and leadership, and

the equivocal understanding of how strategy interfaces with leadership (Charan, 2005;

Clardy, 2007; Cohn et al., 2005; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010). The leadership and strategy

fields have made significant advances independently of one another, but have not

leveraged these gains collectively to synthesize a strategic understanding of leadership.

The vast literature focused on both strategic leadership and strategic leadership

development highlight this problem. The strategic leadership literature introduces

preliminary work in developing a strategic leadership framework and a robust

understanding of the concept. For example, Hughes (1998) introduced an integrative

framework for strategic leadership, one that highlighted the interactions between the

individual leader, competitive environment, and the organization. Kjelin (2009)

appreciated the need for a more refined understanding of strategic leadership and

therefore conducted a concept analysis. Despite these preliminary efforts at providing a

more refined and robust understanding of strategic leadership, the literature remains almost exclusively focused on exploring the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors required of organizational executives to formulate, implement, and evaluate organizational strategy (see Adair, 2010; Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Finkelstein, Hambrick, & Cannella, Jr., 2009; and Montgomery, 2008). While this focus remains informative and provides role clarity in the form of executive competencies, it implies that leadership represents a person or a position, as opposed to a dynamic process. As such, this unrefined use of leadership does not capture the advances made in the scholarship of leadership, but instead promotes the undifferentiated use of the terms leaders and leadership. Strategic leadership also positions strategy and leadership as a function held exclusively for executives, whereas organizational strategy and leadership permeates all levels of an organization.

Moreover, the literature exploring strategic leadership development, often positioned as a key for securing sustainable competitive advantage, arose from the call for strategic human resource management (see Barney & Wright, 1998; Pfeffer, 1994). The concept of strategic leadership development, however, promotes the undifferentiated use of refined terms. In this instance, strategic leadership development and leader development represent a singular concept, that being the development of individuals holding managerial positions in organizations (see Hitt & Ireland, 2002). In much of this literature leadership development focuses exclusively on executives and senior level positions, thereby ignoring the significant advances made in the leadership literature differentiating between leader development, follower development, and leadership development.

The challenge facing organizations interested in designing leadership development programs as SCAs rests with developing a conceptual framework that addresses these issues in an integrative fashion, providing refined definitions and the differentiated use of concepts. The conceptual framework should also provide a process to focus and guide their efforts. Therefore, this challenge provided the impetus for extensively reviewing both the leadership and organizational strategy literature to determine how the advances made within both of these disciplines could be meaningfully integrated for practical implementation.

The leadership framework materialized by synthesizing relevant takeaways from both the leadership and organizational strategy literatures, and using ideas from strategy formulation and program theory assessment to create a related process for using the leadership framework. The following sections review the leadership and organizational strategy literature to unearth and fashion the main factors used for developing the leadership framework, followed by the presentation of the leadership framework and its related concepts. Then a review of strategy formulation and program theory assessment highlights their influence on the process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The final section will introduce the process whereby specific organizations can design leadership development programs as SCAs, tailored to their unique conditions and settings using the leadership framework.

Leadership Framework Foundations

Organizations exist in a competitive environment shaped by both the realities of a knowledge and service-based economy and the continuous transformation driven by recurrent technological innovation (Amit & Schoemaker, 1993; Bennett & Lemoine,

2014; Lawler III, 1994; Teece et al., 1997). These dynamics magnify the value and importance of people for organizational success. Employees provide the knowledge required for organizations to compete, and they also communicate the organization's unique value proposition to the customer. Organizations also depend on leadership to successfully navigate the turbulent business environment, with the goal being to realize long-term superior organizational performance. Accordingly, organizations have recalibrated their focus and have invested considerable resources into implementing programs, systems, and processes designed to develop their leadership and people (Berke, 2005; Biggs, 2004; Ready & Conger, 2007; Rothwell, 2010; Ulrich et al., 2008).

Leadership and organizational strategy are complementary processes that guide the design and implementation of many of these leadership development programs (Campion et al., 2011; Porter, 1996; Rothwell, 2010; Schippmann et al., 2000). The disappointing results of many of these initiatives, however, stems from the ubiquitous use of strategy and leadership. The common use of these concepts has led to an unrefined understanding and application of both terms. The leadership and organizational strategy literatures do not offer unified solutions or parsimonious guides for practitioners. Moreover, scholars have yet to leverage and synthesize the significant advances achieved in both fields into an integrated pragmatic conceptual framework to guide the design of leadership development programs.

Organizational strategy research primarily focuses on theory and esoteric questions devolving the field from being user-friendly and pragmatic into an obscure academic exercise impenetrable to practitioners (Hambrick, 2004). The leadership literature compounds the confusion by introducing over fifteen hundred different

leadership definitions and approximately forty leadership theories (Kellerman, 2012).

Organizational strategy and leadership researchers rely on archaic lexicons and

understandings of the other field and only tangentially discuss how leadership and

organizational strategy interface. For example, leadership scholars weave organizational

strategy into the leadership discussion as a business skill that individual leaders need to

possess at the executive level (see Adair, 2010; Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Finkelstein et

al., 2009; and Montgomery, 2008). On the other hand, organizational strategy scholars

position leadership simply as one component--along with group dynamics,

communication, and organizational change--of the motivating function of management[4]

(see David & David, 2011). Organizational strategy scholars acknowledge the

importance of leadership and advancements in the discipline, but appear apathetic when it

comes to integrating the advances made in both fields. Teece (2007), a prominent

organizational strategy researcher states, "Since there is already an extensive literature on

culture, commitment, and leadership, these issues are not discussed further. However, it

would be a significant oversight in a summary statement of the dynamic capabilities

framework to ignore them completely. Their full integration into the framework is left to

others," (p.1334).

  A well thought out conceptual framework addressing the amalgamation of

leadership and organizational strategy would help to fill this gap in the literature and

provide a pragmatic tool for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development

programs as SCAs. The following sections review and highlight the critical factors from

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[4] The four other major functions of management include planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling
(David & David, 2011).

the leadership and organizational strategy literature that informed the development of such a conceptual framework.

Leadership

Burns's (1978) oft-cited quote "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth," (p.2) might have been accurate in 1978, but since that time scholars have continued to add meaningfully to the leadership research. As a multidisciplinary field of study, leadership has attracted scholars from diverse arenas who explore and research leadership from different perspectives and paradigms (Goethals & Sorenson, 2006; Kellerman & Burns, 1984). This has resulted in a proliferation of leadership definitions and theories nearing fifteen hundred definitions and forty theories (Kellerman, 2012), none of which are correct or incorrect (Bass & Bass, 2008). The increased diversity of leadership scholars and their collective research contributions have led to a more holistic understanding of leadership.

The field of leadership advanced when scholars from different academic backgrounds discerned leadership as a process, not as an individual. Burns (1978) mused "if we know all too much about leaders, we know far too little about *leadership*," (p.1). This implicit call for a bifurcation between leader and leadership marked an important step in advancing the field. Leadership scholars have since conceptualized leadership as an overarching process, with leaders, followers, and context subsumed as contributing factors within the leadership umbrella (Bass & Bass, 2008). Consequently, research streams have evolved and loosely focus on one of the following: leaders, followers, context, or the development of models and frameworks of leadership (see Bass & Bass, 2008).

Fiedler (1967), Burns (1978), and Hollander (1978), followed by Gardner (1993), helped influence the leadership dialogue and research toward this taxonomy of leadership. These authors, in aggregate, theoretically pointed to the complexity of leadership as a process involving leaders, followers, and context that operates to achieve common goals. The scholarship of leadership (Kellerman, 2012) in turn progressed from its singular leader-centric focus to the conceptualization of leadership as a dynamic process involving and impacted by leaders, followers, and context. Over time leadership scholars unofficially adopted this basic taxonomy to guide research, ground dialogue, and advance understanding. Subsequently, the field of leadership has slowly evolved from leadership definitions to a more holistic yet nuanced conceptualization of leadership, represented through models and frameworks developed for specific purposes.

Hughes et al. (2009) identified this subtle shift and proactively developed the Interactional Framework for Analyzing Leadership, using Fiedler's (1967) contingency model and Hollander's (1978) transactional approach as the building blocks. According to this model, the complex interactions occurring between leaders, followers, and the situation serve as an aid for analyzing leadership. Hughes et al. (2009) define leadership as a "process of influencing a group toward accomplishing its goals," (p.6). Kellerman (2012) refuses to define leadership, but she does offer a model closely resembling the Interactional Framework. According to Kellerman's (2012) Equilateral Triangle Model, leadership involves a process of three equally important factors--leaders, followers, and context--acting as a mechanism for change, group effectiveness, or achieving common good. This model differs from the Interactional Framework in two important ways.

First, Kellerman (2012) uses context instead of situation to describe the third factor of her equilateral triangle model. Hughes et al. (2009) introduced a taxonomy of situation useful for navigating and understanding the complexity of today's business environment. Task, organization, and environment comprise the three units of analysis useful for drawing attention to different elements impacting the leadership process. Hughes et al. (2009) acknowledge, however, that the situational factor of the Interactional Framework could encompass countless elements. For example, history significantly impacts individuals, organizations, and society and, therefore, contributes to the situation. Hughes et al. (2009) opted to only tangentially and implicitly address history by mentioning the element of time, which might partially account for their semantic adoption and use of the term situation. This term implies a present temporal element, a focus on the now, whereas context explicitly identifies and includes history and a broader conceptualization of influential forces. Therefore, given Kellerman's (2008, 2012) affinity toward the power of history, and its general importance for understanding how factors influence the leadership process, her use of context marks a noteworthy divergence from the Interactional Framework.

Second, Kellerman (2012) offers three different possible outcomes derived from the Equilateral Triangle Model of leadership, whereas Hughes et al. (2009) offer only one. The subtle implication of this difference highlights the importance of developing a model of leadership that fits the purpose to be served by the model. Moreover, this distinction marks the important difference between the scholarship of leadership and its application (Kellerman, 2012). Most organizations focus on leadership's application for specific purposes and, therefore, require models of leadership with a more pragmatic

bent. Veslor et al. (2010) promote such a model of leadership, the DAC (Direction, Alignment, Commitment) Model.

The DAC Model emphasizes "setting direction, creating alignment, and building and maintaining commitment," (Altman, Rego, & Harrison III, 2010, p. 226). The applied nature of this leadership model stresses the outcomes of direction, alignment, and commitment for achieving organizational effectiveness and sustainability. Veslor et al. (2010) stress the critical distinction between leadership and leader within the DAC Model, noting that leadership as an overall process, in addition to individual leaders, can produce DAC. The differentiated use between leadership and leader proves critical, especially when discussing leadership development programs. The DAC Model also adds to the dialogue the importance of developing a leadership model that makes sense to practitioners accountable for organizational outcomes. Lastly, the DAC model emphasizes the applied nature of leadership models for guiding initiatives driving organizational effectiveness and sustainability.

The basic taxonomy of leadership, coupled with the contributions from the Interactional Framework (Hughes et al., 2009), the Equilateral Triangle Model (Kellerman, 2012), and the DAC Model (Veslor et al., 2010), combine for a holistic yet nuanced understanding of leadership. The critical factors from the leadership literature that proved useful in developing an integrated conceptual framework of leadership and strategy are as follows: (a) leadership as a dynamic process; (b) the differentiated use of leadership and leader; (c) leaders, followers, and context as three factors positively impacting the leadership process; (d) a pragmatic bent with a focus on outcomes; and (e) the design and utilization of leadership models for a specified purpose.

Organizational Strategy

Organizational strategy focuses on how best to combine factors and elements to secure sustainable competitive advantage (SCA) in order to achieve long-term superior organizational performance (Barney, 1991; Barney, 1995; Magretta, 2012; Porter, 2008; Teece et al., 1997). Organizational strategy scholars primarily focus on understanding and recognizing sources of SCA because of the central role this concept plays in achieving long-term superior organizational performance. SCA, as defined for this research, refers to imperfectly imitable factors that create and capture unique value (Barney, 1991; Barney, 1995; Porter, 2008). Two broad research streams guide organizational strategy research, and both of these perspectives inform the SCA concept: (a) the externally oriented model focused on the product side, driven by neoclassical economics and industrial organizational literature, and most notably associated with Porter's competitive forces model (Lado et al., 1992); and (b) the internally oriented model focused on the resource side, driven by the resource-based view of the firm, and most notably associated with Barney's VRIO model (Barney, Ketchen, & Wright, 2011; Lado et al., 1992).

The organizational strategy literature contributes three significant points that helped inform the development of an integrated conceptual framework of leadership and strategy. First, organizational strategy offers a pragmatic bent that emphasizes securing SCA, which is pivotal for achieving long-term superior organizational performance. Second, organizational strategy underscores the importance of customers and external and internal elements for securing SCA. Third, organizational strategy researchers produced frameworks that outline relevant criteria required for evaluating the potential

for securing SCA. This section reviews the organizational strategy literature to develop

these points.

      Organizational strategy's pragmatic bent. The popular definitions, models, and

frameworks of leadership that incorporate vague, general, and common goals as the aim

of leadership add value to the scholarship of leadership by not limiting leadership's

scope, but these ambiguous targets do not provide clear guidance for practitioners. For

example, Hemphill and Coons (1957) state "toward a shared goal" (p.7), House, Hanges,

Ruiz-Quintanilla, Dorfman, Javidan, Dickson, and Associates (1999) use "effectiveness

and success of the organization" (p.184), Ulrich et al. (2008) make reference to "getting

the right results" (p.1), and Northouse (2009) invokes "common goals" (p.3). In order to

advance the universal and complex understanding of leadership, these open-ended

statements intentionally do not include parameters. While they aid in advancing the

scholarship of leadership (Kellerman, 2012), they do not offer specific and clear

objectives to guide executives responsible for organizational outcomes. Bass and Bass

(2008) support and advocate refining and focusing the broad understandings of leadership

to meet specific purposes. Therefore, by integrating the overall aim of organizational

strategy with a holistic yet nuanced understanding of leadership the broad scholarly

understandings of leadership can be focused on meeting the pragmatic needs of

practitioners (Veslor et al., 2010).

      Organizational strategy establishes long-term superior organizational performance

as the clear overall standard for organizations to strive. As the standard for

organizational excellence, long-term superior organizational performance compels

organizations to establish appropriate metrics to evaluate organizational performance

(Magretta, 2012). Importantly, for an organization to meet the excellence standard, the metric scores must be superior to the industry average over an extended period. These metrics vary according to the organization and the context within which the organization operates. For example: a stock value might be warranted for a publicly traded company, numbers of individuals served by a program might be warranted for a non-profit, and policy effectiveness provide focus for a governmental agency. The point here is not the specific metric, but simply that professionals responsible for organizational outcomes use an appropriate metric as a proxy for organizational performance as a comparison against the industry average over time.

Porter (2008) identified SCA as being essential for achieving long-term superior organizational performance and strategy scholars have focused their research efforts on determining and understanding sources of SCA. The concept of SCA helps to explain how organizations existing in a highly competitive business environment achieve long-term superior organizational performance. SCA combines strategy specific understandings of the terms 'sustainable' and 'competitive advantage' to form the central concept driving organizational strategy research. First, sustainable refers to the inability of competitors to exactly duplicate or substitute the accrued benefits of a specific competitive advantage (Barney et al., 2011; Porter, 2008). Second, competitive advantage refers to generating and capturing a unique value (Barney, 1991; Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Porter, 1985). The word unique implies that no other organization in the industry generates or captures the same value at the same time (Barney, 1991). The combination of 'sustainable' and 'competitive advantage' forms the powerful strategic

concept of SCA, which for this research project refers to imperfectly imitable factors that create and capture unique value.

Long-term superior organizational performance, achieved by securing SCA, offers a standard of excellence for organizations to pursue. Professionals responsible for organizational outcomes have the concrete objective of securing SCA in order to achieve long-term superior organizational performance. This pragmatic target for organizations sharpens the focus of leadership and informs the development of an integrated leadership and strategy conceptual framework by providing a specific purpose and standard of excellence for organizations.

Organizational strategy's contribution to context. The basic taxonomy of leadership includes context, a concept that highlights the importance of elements external and internal to the organization that directly or indirectly impact the leadership process (Hickman, 2010). For example, context explicitly identifies the importance of history, both at the macro and organizational levels (Hickman, 2010). Context underscores the complexity of leadership and helps broaden the thinking of organizational decision-makers. External elements might include the industry, technology, sector, culture, economy, and politics (David, 1988; Hickman, 2010; Porter, 1980), whereas internal elements might include organizational culture, organizational climate, business model, organizational structure, and labor (Barney, 1995; David, 1988). Delimiting external and internal elements proves futile because of the fluid business environment and the resulting state of rapid, continuous change. It could also potentially constrain and narrow the thinking of organizational decision-makers, thus preventing them from taking into account and recognizing the less obvious but potentially relevant elements external and

internal to the organization. In this light, the previous examples of external and internal elements are meant for illustration purposes, not as an all-encompassing list.

Porter (2008) focused on external elements when he developed the Five-Forces Model as a tool for competitive analysis within the field of organizational strategy. The competitive forces approach was the dominant paradigm in the 1980's, derived from the industrial organization economic tradition(I/O) (Teece et al., 1997), and relied on two implicit assumptions: (a) firms are homogeneous in terms of strategic resources and capabilities they control; and (b) strategic resources are perfectly mobile between firms (Barney, 1991). The Five-Forces Model focuses on product side analysis and provides information regarding an organization's competitive positioning within a specific industry by analyzing five forces: (a) rivalry among competing firms; (b) potential entry of new competitors; (c) potential development of substitute products; (d) bargaining power of suppliers; and (e) bargaining power of consumers (Porter, 1980). The model introduced targeted analyses of external elements for potential sources of SCA.

Porter (1985) also recognized the importance of internal resources as potential sources of SCA as evidenced by his concept of the value-chain, which stresses the importance of all activities of a firm (internal and external) to deliver value. But it was Barney (1986) who specifically highlighted the invaluable nature of internal elements as sources of SCA. Barney (1986) built upon Penrose (1959), Rubin (1973), and Wernerfelt (1984) and focused research on internal organizational resources as potential sources for SCA. Barney (1991) challenged the implicit assumptions of Porter's (2008) work by arguing for the heterogeneity of organizational strategic resources because of their imperfect mobility across organizations. Barney's (1991) new assumptions caused a

paradigm shift within the organizational strategy arena, which resulted in a distinct

research stream that introduced organizational resources as potential sources of SCA and

influenced how organizational decision-makers viewed and analyzed internal elements.

A resource-based view (RBV) investigates organizational resources as forming the basis

of SCA. Resources, according to the RBV, include all organizational assets and

capabilities employed to deliver value, such as financial, physical, human, and

organizational (Barney, 1995).

Porter (2008) and Barney (2001) changed the way executives conceptualize their

organizations by highlighting the importance of both external and internal elements as

potential sources of SCA. Their research also focused on the concept of value because of

its central importance to SCA. Value affected both the I/O and RBV approaches to SCA

in two important ways. First, by considering value, the importance of integrating and

aligning organizational resources with external opportunities and threats resurfaced, thus

validating the importance of both internal and external elements[5]. Second, by reflecting

on the concept of value, specifically use value (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000), customers

became a central concept. Use value, as defined for this research, refers to a customer's

subjective assessment of the perceived bundle of benefits of a product or service in

relation to the customer's need and/or desire (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000).

Organizational strategy scholars Porter (2008) and Barney et al. (2011) influenced

the field of strategy through their research of SCA and drew attention to the importance

of customers relative to value. Ultimately, customers determine the value of products

and services through their subjective assessment of the perceived bundle of benefits of a

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[5] SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) is one of the most recognized and commonly used tools for the competitive analysis and matching of internal and external elements.

product or service in relation to the customers' need (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000). Use value becomes integral to understanding SCA and therefore requires special consideration.

Criteria for determining SCA. Barney's (1995) Valuable, Rare, Imitability, and Organization (VRIO) Model establishes criteria for determining the potential for organizational resources to secure SCA. The assumptions of the RBV remain the same and apply to the VRIO Model: (a) heterogeneity of organizational strategic resources; and (b) resources are imperfectly mobile across organizations (Barney, 1991). For example: across organizations decision-makers differ in their knowledge, education, experience, and skills; therefore, they may not recognize or appreciate the value of the same strategic resources (Barney, 1986). Moreover, organizations possess different histories, cultures, and climates and incorporate varied and unique organizational systems, processes, and procedures to deliver value to customers (Barney, 1995). These idiosyncratic resources can develop into imperfectly imitable strategic resources that help organizations secure SCA.

The four criteria of Barney's (1995) VRIO Model for determining the potential for SCA highlight how elusive and difficult it is to secure SCA. First, the resource must add value by aligning with and leveraging external opportunities. Second, rareness connotes benchmarking against other organizations to determine the number of other competing firms that already possess the resource. A resource may be valuable, but if possessed by a significant number of competing firms, then the resource only leads to competitive parity (i.e., the possession of essential resources required to compete in a given industry), not SCA (Barney, 1995). Third, the resource must be imperfectly

imitable, meaning that the value generated and benefits accrued by the organization

cannot be perfectly duplicated or substituted by other organizations. Barney (1995)

identified components of resources that constitute imperfectly imitable resources, such as

unique organizational history, social complexity, and causal ambiguity. Fourth,

organization refers to an organization's ability to leverage and take advantage of the

resources that have the potential to secure SCA. According to the VRIO Model, all four

criteria must be satisfied for an organizational resource to qualify as a SCA.

   Organizational strategy's contributions summarized. The organizational

strategy literature offered the following important contributions that were foundational

for developing an integrated conceptual framework of leadership and strategy. First, the

focus on securing SCA to achieve long-term superior organizational performance

provides a pragmatic orientation for organizational decision-makers. The concepts of

SCA and long-term superior organizational performance offer clarity about the desired

direction and organizational outcomes, and Barney's (1991) VRIO Model offers criteria

for evaluating factors for their probability of securing SCA. Moreover, the introduction

of the concept of use value plays a central role in helping to identify combinations of

internal and external elements as possible sources of SCA. Second, the practice of using

frameworks as tools for identifying combinations of elements that could secure SCA for

organizations supports the rationale for the leadership framework. These contributions

merged with a refined understanding of leadership to inform the development of an

integrated conceptual framework of leadership and strategy.

The Leadership Framework

The leadership framework and related concepts serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool for organizational decision-makers tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The leadership framework provides practitioners with a refined strategic understanding of leadership, a defined outcome for leadership, and differentiated concepts to help promote unity of understanding within organizations. It serves a specific purpose and falls within the realm of leadership application, not leadership scholarship (Kellerman, 2012). The preeminent leadership scholars encourage developing leadership models and frameworks for specific purposes and thereby inspiring research of this type (see Bass & Bass, 2008; Northouse, 2009).

The use of the term leadership framework resonated for this study for two reasons. First, the strategic understanding of leadership incorporates different concepts into a unified whole, thus representing more complexity than a mere definition of leadership connotes. Second, more than a definition of leadership, the leadership framework also serves as a tool for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Therefore, the term leadership framework conveys this broader purpose more effectively as opposed to referring to it as a nuanced definition of leadership. This section combines the significant contributions from the leadership and organizational strategy literature to introduce the leadership framework and its related terms.

The combined contributions of Kellerman (2012), Hughes et al. (2009), and Veslor et al. (2010) expand the basic taxonomy of leadership (i.e. leadership as a process

involving leaders, followers, and context) to help establish the rationale for the leadership framework. These three models of leadership support the development and use of pragmatic models and frameworks for specific purposes, the use of leadership as a lens for analysis, and highlight the applied nature of leadership in relation to specific organizational outcomes. The organizational strategy literature contributes the concepts of SCA and long-term superior organizational performance that provide the leadership framework with a specific goal and an operational imperative for organizations. These main points from the leadership and organizational strategy literatures provided a more informed and nuanced understanding of leadership. The resulting synthesized understanding of leadership positions leadership as a dynamic process involving three factors—leaders, followers, and context—for realizing sustainable validity, whereby the term sustainable validity constitutes an established DAC for achieving long-term superior organizational performance. The following discussion illuminates the thinking and logic required to arrive at the definitions of leaders, followers, context, and sustainable validity.

Leaders

Within the leadership framework, the term leaders constitute individuals possessing level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process. The level-specific language of this definition came from the thinking of Charan et al. (2011) who argue that for individuals to successfully advance within an organization, they need the right skills, business values, and time horizons to add the right value at their respective level. The Competency-Based View of Human Resources roundly supports this thinking as evidenced by its best practice of identifying the knowledge, skills,

behaviors, and other attributes required for employees to be successful in specific job classifications (Lahti, 1991; Tichy, 1989). The purpose of leaders, which is to gain the support of others to positively influence the leadership process, comes directly from Veslor et al. (2010) and their pragmatic and applied approach to leadership.

Based on the definitions of leadership and leader, the leadership framework differentiates leadership development from leader development. Leadership development pertains to organizational improvements for realizing sustainable validity. The leadership development umbrella, therefore, can include different initiatives such as positive changes in organizational processes, systems, or programs specific to improving leaders, followers, and context, whereas leader development focuses specifically on increasing individual capacity for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process (Veslor et al., 2010).

Followers

Within the leadership framework, the term followers describe engaged individuals with integrity who possess the critical thinking skills and level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for actively supporting leaders in order to positively influence the leadership process. The "level-specific" and "knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics" language shares the same logic and background as described for leaders. The idea of positively impacting the leadership process comes directly from the work of Veslor et al. (2010).

Followership has evolved into an independent research stream in large part stemming from the seminal work of Kelley (1992) and the subsequent works of Kellerman (2008) and Riggio, Chaleff, and Lipman-Blumen (2008). These authors have

offered different typologies for followers, but they uniformly envisage ideal followers as engaged individuals who possess the critical thinking skills and integrity required to make informed decisions about voicing opinions contrary to established directives.

Context

Context is the third factor in the dynamic leadership process and espouses an analytic approach for recognizing potential sources of SCA arising from combinations of internal and external elements relative to use value. Use value refers to a customer's subjective assessment of the perceived bundle of benefits of a product or service in relation to the customer's need and/or desire (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000). Organizational strategy scholars Porter (2008) and Barney et al. (2011) influenced the field of strategy through their research of SCA and drew attention to the importance of customers relative to value. This research adds to their contributions by expanding the internal/external dichotomy of context into a triad by adding the concept of use value (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000). By opening the frame of reference considered by organizational decision-makers, context provides a vehicle through which to help understand and organize the complex business environment. This research thereby transforms context into a thinking tool designed to help organizations recognize internal and external elements, in relation to use value, that reveal potential sources of SCA (see Figure 2).
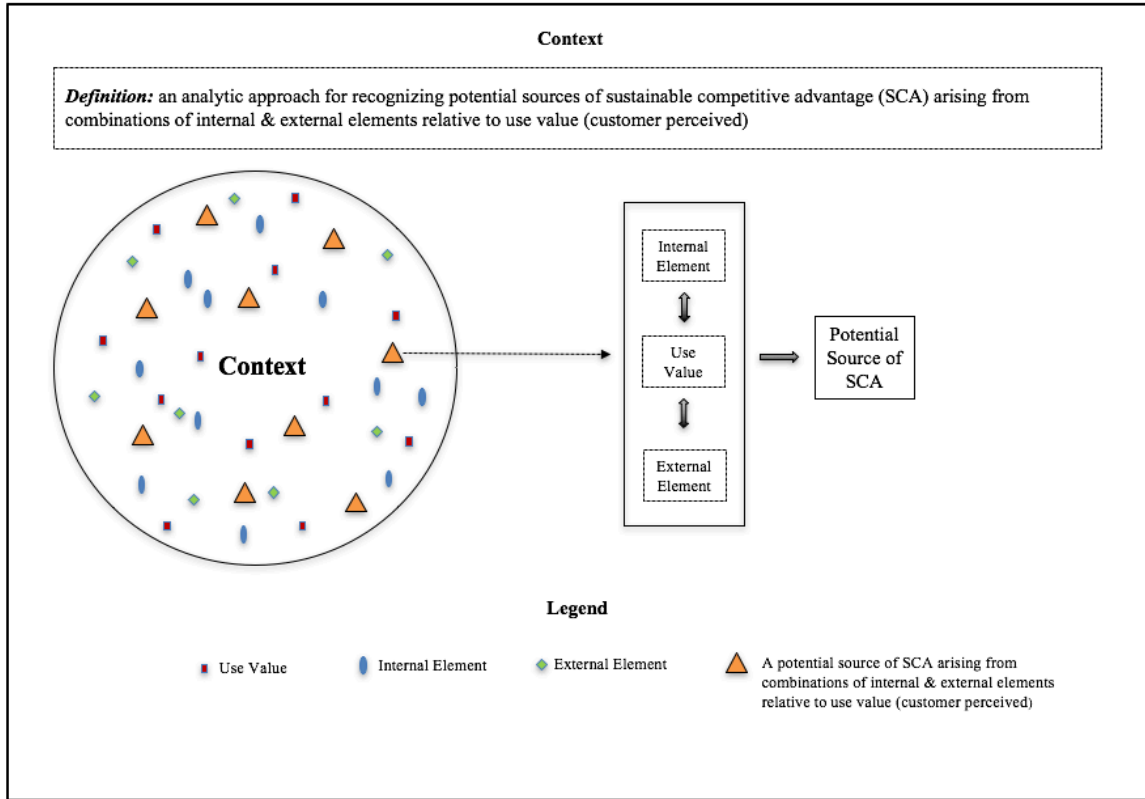
Figure 2. Context explained as part of the leadership framework.

Sustainable Validity

This research introduces the concept of sustainable validity to capture the nuanced strategic purpose and desired outcome of the leadership process, which is an established DAC of leaders, followers, and context required to achieve long-term superior organizational performance. SCA is the central concept critical for achieving long-term superior organizational performance. Therefore, an established DAC of leaders, followers, and context is necessary for generating and capturing unique value, which is the basis for securing SCA. The DAC of leaders, followers, and context is the actualized effort of organizational decision-makers who identified and matched the factors and elements that demonstrated the potential for securing SCA (see Figure 3).
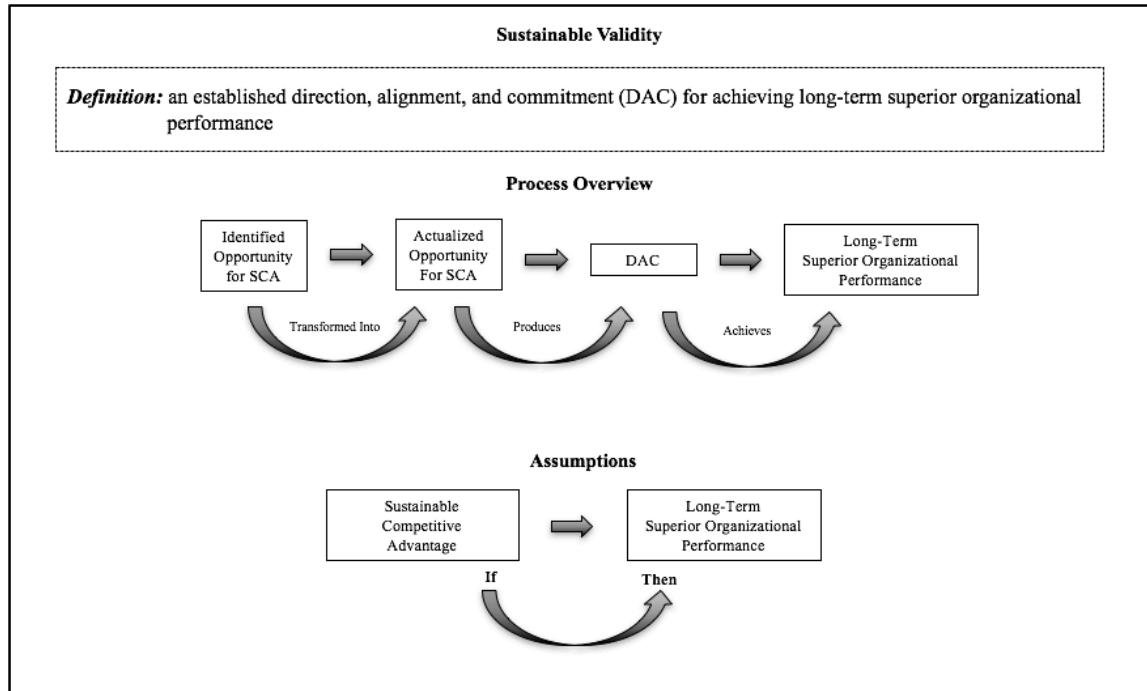
Figure 3. Sustainable validity explained as part of the leadership framework.

The choice combination of sustainable and validity to embody the specific

strategic purpose of the leadership process emerged logically. Pragmatically, introducing

a new term to represent the holistic understanding and synthesis of multiple concepts,

defined and understood for a specific purpose, helps simplify communication and

understanding. Sustainable represents the importance of generating and capturing unique

value in the face of competition (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Magretta, 2012), with the

understanding that unique specifically signals that other firms cannot perfectly imitate the

accrued benefits (Barney, 1991). Validity came from the research methods literature,

specifically from content validity. Monette et al. (2011) explain content validity in

relation to measurement instruments and state that content validity refers to the degree a

measurement instrument accounts for all of the elements of the construct being measured.

Borrowing loosely from this understanding of content validity and applying it to a

different situation, validity signals the importance of identifying, matching, and

leveraging all of the relevant factors and elements required for achieving SCA.

Therefore, sustainable validity constitutes an established DAC of leaders, followers, and

context for achieving long-term superior organizational performance. The leadership

framework's process works through the complexities involved in realizing sustainable

validity, whereas sustainable validity defines the strategic purpose and desired outcome

of the leadership process.

Process for Designing Leadership Development Programs as SCAs

The previous sections outlined the rationale for the leadership framework,

provided definitions of related terms, differentiated leadership and leadership

development from leader and leader development, and established sustainable validity as

the ideal leadership outcome. Moreover, this research transformed context from a mere

heuristic for viewing internal and external elements into an analytic approach for

identifying potential sources of SCA. Context's analytic approach captures the action

oriented, applied, and pragmatic nature of the leadership framework. This foundation

helped operationalize the leadership framework as a tool for designing leadership

development programs as SCAs.

This research borrowed ideas from both strategy formulation and program theory

assessment to develop a three-stage process for designing leadership development

programs as SCAs using the leadership framework as a tool. Stage one, Discover, is a

three-step process for selecting the opportunity for securing SCA. Stage two, Design,

uses a three-step process to deliver an articulated theory of the actualized opportunity.

Verify is the third stage and proceeds through two steps to validate the logic and

plausibility of the actualized opportunity (see Table 2). The following sections explain

the process and highlight the contributions from strategy formulation and program theory

assessment.

Table 2

Process for Designing Leadership Development Programs as SCAs

Stage	Influence	Steps	Outcomes
I. Discover	Strategy Formulation	*1. Establish* Establish the organization's strategic framework: vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives *2. Identify* Identify opportunities for securing SCA using the leadership framework and organization's strategic framework *3. Isolate & Select* (a) Isolate the opportunity(s) for securing SCA that satisfy(s) the VRIO model's criteria (b) If there are several opportunities for securing SCAs that satisfy the VRIO model's criteria, then select the opportunity that drives the organization's strategic framework, has the highest probability of success, and delivers the best projected Return on Investment (ROI)	Opportunity for securing SCA selected
II. Design	Program Theory Assessment	*1. Inquire* Analyze research and best practices associated with initiatives related to the selected opportunity for securing SCA *2. Develop* Develop a program/initiative that actualizes the opportunity *3. Produce* Produce a logic model	Articulated theory of the actualized opportunity
III. Verify	Program Theory Assessment	*1. Assemble* Assemble an expert review panel *2. Validate* Conduct interviews with each member of the expert review panel to validate the logic and plausibility of the actualized opportunity	Based on the feedback received from the expert review panel, two options are available: 1. Proceed to implementation planning; or 2. Return to Stage II

Stage I: Discover. Organizational strategists and decision-makers typically rely on three generic stages of strategic management, strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, to establish strategies and related plans for achieving long-term superior organizational performance (most strategy textbooks include versions of these stages, see as examples David & David, 2011 and Wheelan and Hunger, 2012). Strategy formulation refers to the art and science of emerging, evaluating, and selecting strategies to secure competitive advantages and progresses through the generalized steps of establish, identify, and select to achieve this end (David & David, 2011). The purpose of strategy formulation revolves around using specific tools and analytic thinking to select strategies that move organizations closer to achieving their long-term objectives. This purpose helped inform the development of Discover, the first stage of the process, but there are also important differences to note (see Table 3).

Table 3

Strategy Formulation vs. Discover

Name	Step I	Step II	Tool(s)	Step III	Tool(s)
Strategy Formulation (Stage I of Strategic Management)	***Develop*** --Develop the organization's vision & mission statements	***Identify*** --Identify opportunities for gaining competitive advantages	IFE & EFE matrices	***Establish & Select*** --Establish Long-Term Objectives --Match & select strategies	SWOT, SPACE, BCG, IE, Grand Strategy, & QSPM
Discover (Stage I of the process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs)	***Establish*** --Establish the organization's strategic framework (vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives)	***Identify*** --Identify opportunities for securing SCAs	Leadership Framework	***Isolate & Select*** --Isolate the opportunity(s) for securing SCA --Select the opportunity for securing SCA	1. VRIO Model (isolate) 2. The Organization's Strategic Framework (select) 3. Projected ROI (select)

Note. Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix

First, strategy formulation centers on selecting strategies that move organizations closer to securing competitive advantages, whereas Discover focuses on emerging and selecting opportunities for securing SCA to realize sustainable validity. Second, strategy formulation and Discover offer different tools for selecting strategies and opportunities. The Discover stage relies less on popular strategic management tools and matrices[6] and more on the leadership framework and the VRIO Model. Third, step one of strategy formulation establishes the organization's vision and mission, whereas the first step of Discover also includes establishing the vision and mission statements, but adds core values and long-term objectives.

The addition of core values and long-term objectives to the first step of the Discover stage establishes an organization's strategic framework at the beginning of the process. Having an established strategic framework provides organizational direction and, therefore, becomes important for identifying potential opportunities for securing SCA. Therefore, having an established strategic framework at the beginning of the process becomes critical for organizational strategists charged with identifying and selecting opportunities to secure SCA because the strategic framework serves as an important guide and reference.

This research defines an organization's strategic framework as the vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives that combine to form an organization's foundation through which all strategic decisions should be evaluated. A vision statement projects an idealized form of the organization in the future, and the mission statement conveys what the organization does and why the organization exists (Pearce & David,

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[6] Popular strategic management matrices include Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Weaknesses (SWOT), Strategic Position and Action Evaluation (SPACE), Boston Consulting Group (BCG), Internal-External (IE), Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM), and Grand Strategy.

1987). Core values provide the timeless principles of the organization, unchanged by

evolving business models and strategies (Lencioni, 2002). Long-term objectives signify

the projected outcomes required of selected strategies for an organization to fulfill its

vision and mission while living its core values (David, 1988). The strategic framework,

defined for this research as the vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives that

combine to form an organization's foundation through which all strategic decisions

should be evaluated.

The first stage of the process, Discover, advances through a linear three-step

process--Establish, Identify, Isolate and Select--to produce an opportunity for securing

SCA. Step one, Establish, requires the establishment of the organization's strategic

framework. If the components of the strategic framework are already established, then

one needs to confirm with the organization's executive team that the vision, mission, core

values, and long-term objectives stand as composed. On the other hand, if one or more of

the strategic framework's components have not been established, then the executive team

should collaborate to establish the organization's strategic framework.

Step two, Identify, uses the leadership framework to identify opportunities for

securing SCA. Context, leaders, followers, and the organization's strategic framework

serve as the means for identifying opportunities for securing SCA. Opportunities

recognized from using context must align with the organization's strategic framework,

meaning that the opportunities must drive the organization's vision, mission, core values,

and long-term objectives. The opportunities have to also take into account the current

state of the organization's people, meaning both leaders and followers. After

opportunities for securing SCA have been identified, the next step in the process is to isolate and select one opportunity for securing SCA.

Step three, Isolate and Select, uses the four criteria of the VRIO Model to isolate those opportunities that qualify as potential sources of SCA from those that do not. If the isolation effort produces more than one opportunity, then two different benchmarks determine the opportunity to be selected and advanced to the Design stage. The first benchmark is the probability of success, with success referring to the feasibility of implementation and execution. The second benchmark is projected return on investment. After applying these benchmarks to the isolated opportunities, the opportunity that possesses the best probability of success and best projected ROI advances as the opportunity for securing SCA. The process progresses to Design, the second stage, after an opportunity has been selected.

Stage II: Design. Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman (2004) position theory as the foundation for programs, and as such, assert that theory should be expressed in a manner that can be assessed. Organizational decision-makers exert significant resources when implementing new programs or initiatives and should have assurances that these programs and initiatives were built on solid foundations, using relevant theory, before moving forward with implementation. Persons responsible for designing programs or initiatives, or actualized opportunities in the case of the leadership framework process, should explicate and evaluate the theoretical base of the program or initiative. Therefore, Stage two of the process, Design, delivers an articulated theory for the actualized opportunity, and stage three of the process, Verify, validates the logic and plausibility of the articulated theory.

The Design stage of the process advances through a linear three-step process--Inquire, Develop, Produce--to deliver an articulated theory for the actualized opportunity. For the purpose of this research, an articulated theory refers to the stated expression of the theory of an actualized opportunity manifested in a logic model (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). Step one in the Design stage, Inquire, calls for an analysis of research and best practices associated with initiatives related to the selected opportunity for securing SCA. This proactive step came from program theory assessment's best practice of assessing an articulated theory against research and best practices (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004).

Step two of the Design stage, Develop, focuses efforts on developing a program or initiative that actualizes the opportunity for securing SCA. Development centers on leveraging the research and best practices noted in step one to produce an actualized opportunity built on a solid foundation. The third step of the Design stage, Produce, generates a logic model of the actualized opportunity, thus delivering the articulated theory. The Kellogg Foundation (2004) and Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman (2004) advocate for the use of logic models to explicate the theory of programs and initiatives. Logic models provide a vehicle through which to clearly express the linkages between the outcomes, processes, assumptions, and theory of a particular program or initiative (Kellogg Foundation, 2004). The pragmatic approach of the logic model and its easily understood illustrative format prove invaluable when explaining the initiative to stakeholders, especially those decision-makers with the authority to approve funding (see Figure 4) (Kellogg Foundation, 2004).

	---------------------Work Planned--------------		----------------------------------Intended Results--->		
Inputs	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Initial Outcomes**	**Intermediate Outcomes**	**Long-Term Outcomes or Impact**
Enter necessary program resources, constraints, and influences. e.g., money, staff, laws, regulations, etc.	Enter the program actions you will take to meet your goals, or fulfill your mission. e.g., this may include critical process steps or even services provided	Enter quantifiable statements measuring expected product or services activities. e.g., number of services provided, number of products distributed, number of consumers served, etc.	Enter anticipated changes in program participant's knowledge, attitudes, or skills, "as measured by…" e.g., consumers gain knowledge about…	Enter anticipated changes in program participant's behavior resulting from the initial outcomes, "as measured by…" e.g., consumers used skills to achieve…	Enter anticipated changes in the condition you wish to affect or a status you wish to achieve for the program participants, "as measured by…" This may take the form of an impact statement, i.e., what impact do you anticipate achieving? e.g., consumers become… or consumers gain… or improved xyz system… or threat eliminated… etc.

IF   Then   IF   Then   IF   Then   IF   Then   IF   Then   Effect Realized

|---------------------------Formative Evaluation (improve)----------------------------|------------------Summative Evaluation (prove)-------------|

Assumptions:
List any theoretical assumptions you make about how your program will work?
List any assumptions you make about inputs (participants, staff, internal environment, external environment, etc.)?

Figure 4. Hybrid logic model outline. Anderson (2011) adapted and modified the model outline from University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development, Evaluation Symposium 2006.

Logic models are not tightly controlled or rigid in their format and allow for flexibility and creativity in their use. The Kellogg Foundation (2004) presents a general template for logic models and also describes theory, outcomes, and activities as three different approaches to logic models. Moreover, the Kellogg Foundation encourages creativity in the use of logic models and approaches employed, as evidenced by the hybrid logic model, a combination of approaches required to meet the need. Regardless of the approach used, logic models present a series of 'if…then' statements that explicitly illustrate the connections between resources, processes, outcomes, and theory (see Figure 4), therefore presenting a holistic picture easily understood by all stakeholders (Kellogg Foundation, 2004).

Stage III: Verify.   The last stage of the process, Verify, draws from the program theory assessment work of Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman (2004). Specifically, they state as critical the assessment of the logic and plausibility of the theory and assumptions of programs. They cite the work of Chen (1990), Rutman (1980), Smith (1989), and Wholey (1994) who advocate for the use of expert review panels for such purposes. Therefore, the first step of the Verify stage, Assemble, requires the formation of a group of experts to serve as a review panel. The expert review panel should be comprised of an organization's executive team since they represent the final decision-makers and strategists of the organization (Beaver, 2002). In addition, select decision-makers in senior-level positions of authority who are functional experts in areas related to the actualized opportunity should also be included as subject matter experts.

Step two of the Verify stage, Validate, produces two possible outcomes: (a) the expert review panel validates the logic and plausibility of the actualized opportunity and therefore proceeds to implementation planning; or (b) the expert review panel does not validate the logic and plausibility of the actualized opportunity and therefore the actualized opportunity returns to Stage Two, Design, to address the concerns raised. The process for using the expert review panel to validate the logic and plausibility of the theory and assumptions of the actualized opportunity was left open by Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman (2004). Therefore, in order to help ensure independent thought about the the logic and plausibility of the program, the Validate protocol calls for individual guided interviews. These separate interviews explore the thoughts of the members of the expert review panel relative to the program being logical and plausible, meaning implementable, user-friendly, and feasible.

Process Summary

      The process employs three stages to produce a verified (i.e. logical and plausible) actualized opportunity for securing SCA (see Figure 5). Ideas from strategy formulation and program theory assessment merged to develop the three stages of the process, Discover, Design, Verify. The linear process and steps in each stage provide practitioners with a pragmatic tool for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The process was developed with a pragmatic bent and with practitioners in mind, staying true to the leadership application orientation of this study.
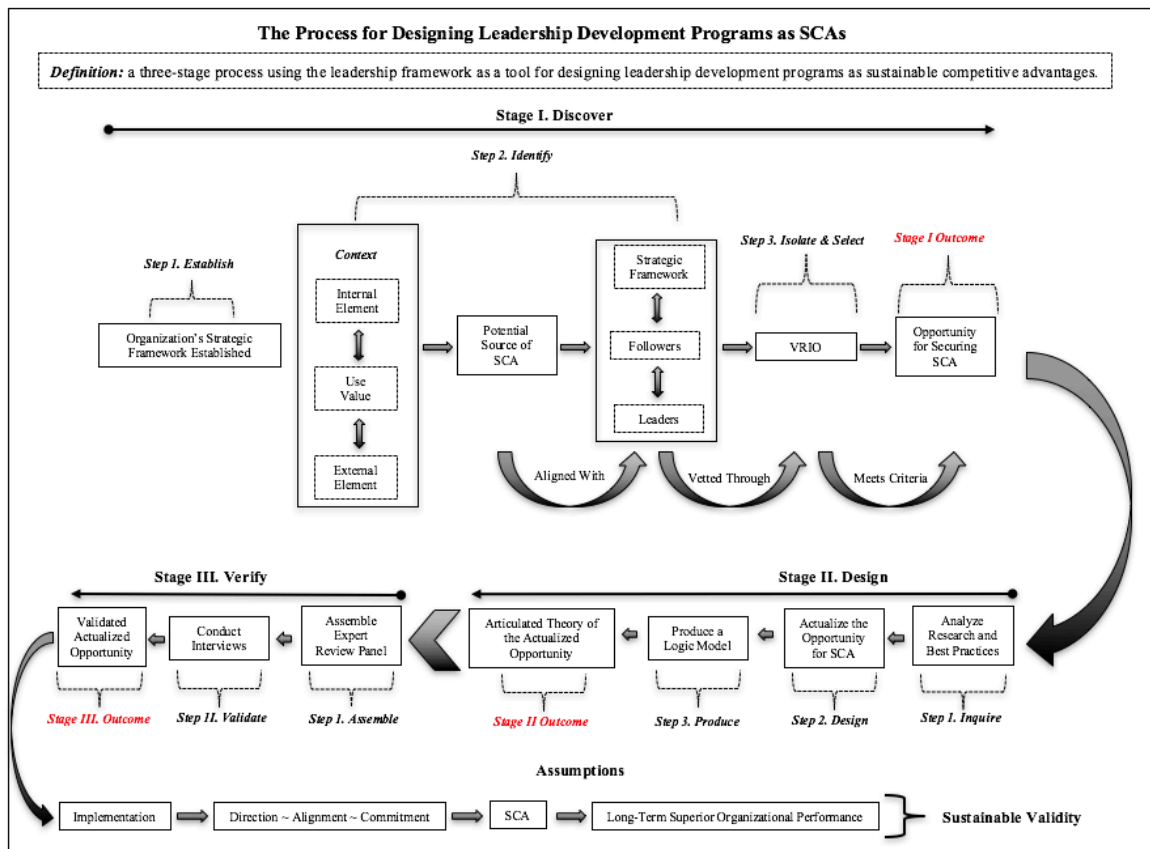
Figure 5. The process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs.

Chapter Summary

Organizational decision-makers and stakeholders consistently rank leadership development as a top priority and dedicate required resources to act on this priority. The outcomes of leadership development initiatives and programs have failed to deliver on expectations (Charan, 2005; Ready & Conger, 2007), leaving organizations searching for solutions. The research literature suggests that this problem resulted from the undifferentiated use of leadership development and leader development, the common use of leadership and strategy leading to an unrefined understanding of these concepts, and the lack of effort to synthesize the advances made in both leadership and organizational strategy (Charan, 2005; Clardy, 2007; Cohn et. Al., 2005; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010). The leadership framework and its related process respond to this need.

The leadership framework differentiates between leader development and leadership development, provides a refined strategic understanding of leadership by integrating and combining the advances made in both the leadership and organizational strategy arenas, and provides practitioners with a pragmatic process for using the leadership framework as a tool for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Commonly used leadership terms, such as leader, follower, and context were defined in relation to the leadership framework. Moreover, concepts from organizational strategy were refined, and the concept of sustainable validity was introduced to capture the desired outcome of the leadership process.

With the foundation of the leadership framework established, the ideas from both strategy formulation and program theory assessment were instrumental in developing the three stages of the process. Stage one, Discover, progresses through three steps to guide

the selection of the opportunity for securing SCA. Stage two, Design, incorporates three steps critical for generating an articulated theory of the actualized opportunity. Stage three, Verify, calls for assembling an expert review panel who will either validate or invalidate the logic and plausibility of the actualized opportunity. Depending on the outcome of the expert review panel, the actualized opportunity can either advance to implementation planning or be sent back to the Design stage to be reworked.

This understanding of leadership emerges as an integrated pragmatic conceptual framework that strategically defines leadership to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Within this conceptual framework, leadership refers to a dynamic process involving three factors—leaders, followers, and context—for realizing sustainable validity (see Figure 1) (Hughes et al., 2009; Kellerman, 2012; Veslor et al., 2010). The leadership framework contributes to the fields of organizational strategy and leadership and also supports practitioners. First, the advances made in both leadership and organizational strategy were synthesized and captured by the leadership framework for the purpose of helping practitioners design leadership development programs as SCAs. Second, associated terms and concepts were refined in relation to the leadership framework, thus providing practitioners with a unity of understanding. Third, practitioners have an outlined process for using the leadership framework as a tool for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Lastly, a strategic understanding of leadership positions sustainable validity as the desired outcome of the leadership process.

The impetus for this research arose from HE&R's desire to design a leadership development program as an SCA. To accomplish this task, a leadership framework and process was developed from a synthesis of the research literature. The following chapter outlines the methods employed to study the leadership framework and its related process in an applied organizational setting, as well as the leadership development program designed as an SCA for HE&R. This study incorporates both pragmatic and formative assessment perspectives given the leadership application and practitioner orientation of this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This chapter first reviews the research purpose, question, and related objectives of this study. It then describes the qualitative research design, associated paradigm, and the overall approach, including the three phases through which this study progresses. Next, the chapter outlines the strategies adopted to help ensure both data quality and the credibility of the findings (Patton, 2002). Lastly, the conclusion discusses the ethical considerations, and an explanation of the approach adopted to present the findings.

Research Purpose, Question, and Objectives

The purpose of the research was to meet HE&R's request to design a leadership development program as an SCA. In the previous chapter it was noted that the strategy and leadership fields have made significant advances and have complementary purposes, yet they have not synthesized their literature to form a pragmatic conceptual framework to serve as the theoretical foundation for designing leadership development programs as sustainable competitive advantages (SCAs). Therefore, the purpose of this research evolved and became twofold: (a) to develop such a leadership/strategy conceptual framework to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool used for designing leadership development programs as SCAs; and (b) to implement and assess the pragmatism of using such a conceptual framework for designing a leadership development program as an SCA in an established business organization.

Research Question and Objectives

The research question asks the following:

- How can organizations design leadership development programs as SCAs?

To address this question I developed multiple research objectives that include the following:

- Develop a conceptual framework for strategically defining leadership to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool used for designing leadership development programs as SCAs;

- Outline the process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs;

- Design a leadership development program as an SCA for an established business organization (i.e. Hershey Entertainment and Resorts, referred to as HE&R); and

- Treat HE&R as a case study and evaluate the following via a qualitative formative assessment:

    1. Are the leadership framework and process pragmatic?

    2. Does the HE&R executive team support the logic and plausibility of the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R?

Research Design and Approach

This study adopted a pragmatic approach toward research, which emphasizes implementing the research method that allows the researcher to best answer the research question (Patton, 2002). Accordingly, this study uses a descriptive single-case study that incorporates formative assessment. Yin (2003) describes the case study method as a qualitative approach to research that adopts a particular case to address "how" questions related to contemporary occurrences (Yin, 2003). Case studies also remain a standard approach in business for describing managerial processes (Yin, 2003) and as such offer a reasonable platform for exploring the leadership framework and the related process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The use of different strategies

within a case study to help answer the research question, such as formative assessments, is not only acceptable, but encouraged (Yin, 2003). Formative assessments serve the purpose of unearthing areas for improvement and refinement, especially in relation to their usefulness and accessibility to the broader business community (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). Therefore, this descriptive single-case study includes qualitative formative assessments of the leadership framework, its process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R.

The analysis focuses on the leadership framework and its related process within the context of HE&R. This research adopted HE&R as the organization for this study for two reasons: (a) the idea of creating a leadership development program designed as a SCA arose from original dialogue with the HE&R executive team; and (b) the concept of SCA resonates with HE&R because of its unique founder, Milton S. Hershey. The uniqueness of this case also supports the single-case study design. According to Yin (2003), one rationale for opting for the single-case design is the uniqueness of the case, which supports its use in this instance.

This study generally follows the linear-analytic structure of case studies and progresses through three phases (see Figure 6).
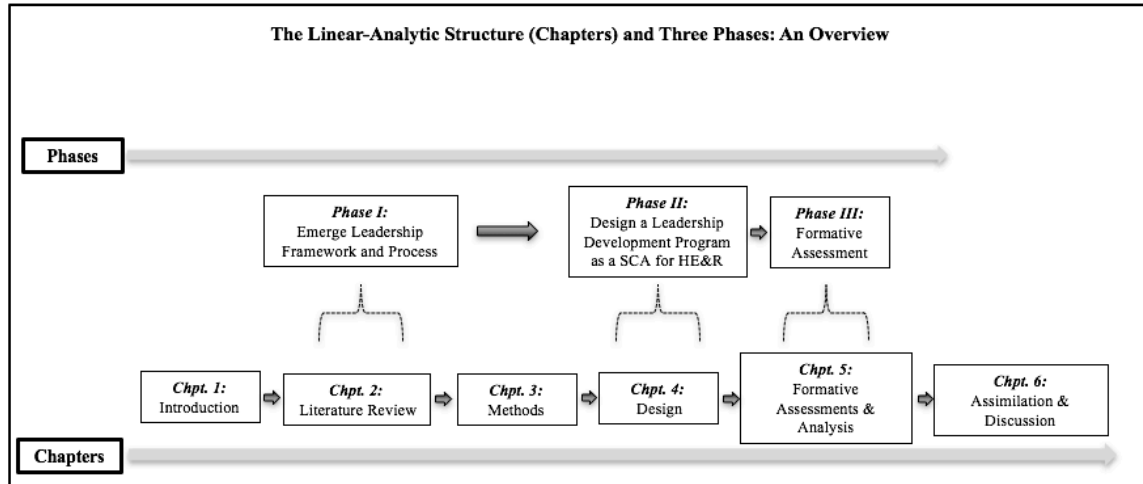
Figure 6. The linear-analytic structure (chapters) and three phases: An overview.

Yin (2003) describes the linear-analytic structure as adhering to the standard approach for presenting research: problem statement, literature review, methods, findings, and discussion. The linear-analytic approach proves useful for descriptive case studies, as well as cases prepared for dissertations, thus supporting the appropriateness of its use as a general guide (Yin, 2003). Given the nature of the research, this case study added a chapter following this one, the only minor deviation from the standard structure for presenting research, to describe in detail how I followed the process to design a leadership development program as a SCA for HE&R.

The literature review comprises Phase I and explicates the logic used in synthesizing the leadership framework and its related process. Moreover, the literature review outlines the three stage process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Phase II commences with Chapter Four and describes how the leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R was designed using the three stage process. In Phase III the HE&R executive team and two subject matter experts provide their perceived business assessment of the leadership framework, its related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R. The analysis of the

qualitative data collected from this select group of business professionals, found in

Chapter Five, constitutes the formative assessment portion of this descriptive single-case

study. The following sections elaborate on each of the three phases.

Phase I: Emerging the Leadership Framework and Process

Phase I encompasses Chapter Two and describes how the three broad theoretical

lenses of organizational strategy, leadership, and program evaluation combined to form

the leadership framework and its related process. By incorporating multiple theoretical

lenses in an integrative manner to develop the leadership framework and its related

process, the trustworthiness of the study increased. The use of multiple theoretical lenses

to interpret data, and in this case form a conceptual framework and related process, is

referred to as theory triangulation and remains a useful approach to strengthening the

trustworthiness of qualitative data (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 2002). Moreover, the use of

these theoretical lenses during the formative assessment portion of this single-case study,

theory triangulation, also strengthens the overall confidence in the assessment results

(Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009).

Phase II: Design a Leadership Development Program as a SCA for HE&R

Chapter Four details how a leadership development program as a SCA for HE&R

was designed using the leadership framework and its related three-stage process. This

chapter was organized following the three stages of the process: Discover, Design,

Validate. This descriptive analytic strategy provided the organized approach required to

effectively highlight in a detailed manner how the leadership framework guided the

design of a leadership development program as a SCA for HE&R (Yin, 2003). Chapter

Four produces two significant outcomes: (a) a detailed description of how the leadership

framework and its related process were used in an actual organizational setting; and (b) a leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R.

Phase III: Formative Assessment

Chapter Five presents the findings of the formative assessment included within this single-case study. The HE&R executive committee and two subject matter experts provided the formative assessment of the leadership framework, its related process, and the designed leadership development program. These professionals had time constraints given the executive nature of their organizational roles and responsibilities. Therefore, respecting and valuing their time, the formative assessment progressed through an efficient process for the participants, detailed in the section titled "Data Collection." The following sections outline the important components of the formative assessment, including the sampling strategy and size, data collection methods, data analysis approaches, and processes used to help ensure data quality.

Sampling strategy and size. Purposeful, criterion sampling was used to identify the subjects invited to participate in the qualitative formative assessment. For inclusion in the formative assessment, participants had to either be current members of the HE&R executive committee or subject matter experts at HE&R. Currently, the Chief Executive Officer, Vice President of Communications & Corporate Relations, Vice President of Human Resources, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, and Secretary and General Counsel comprise the seven members of the HE&R executive committee. These seven members provided the names of two senior level subject matter experts at HE&R whose functional area or subject matter expertise added value in the formative assessment of the leadership framework, process, and the designed

leadership development program. The rationale for the selection criteria--members of the HE&R executive committee and identified senior level subject matter experts-- stems from the two primary responsibilities of executives and decision-makers holding senior leadership positions: organizational strategy and leadership development (Adair, 2010; Charan, 2005). Therefore, these professionals had the expertise and experience required to provide quality formative assessments.

Data collection. The data collection progressed through an efficient process for the participants to respect their time. Each subject signed an Informed Consent Form (Appendix A) before participating in the study. The participants received a written executive summary of the leadership framework, its related process, and the leadership development program designed as an SCA. This was delivered four days prior to the formal verbal presentation of the executive summary (see Appendix B), with the intent of providing participants ample opportunity to review the material in advance of the formal verbal presentation. I then delivered an in-person thirty-minute formal verbal presentation of the executive summary to the group of participants, followed by a 15-minute question and answer session. The next step included the individual in-person guided interviews of the participants, which were designed to gather their perceptions and professional opinions of the leadership framework, its related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for their organization. I conducted the guided interviews in their respective offices located at HE&R's corporate headquarters, audio recorded with the interviewer taking notes during the interview process, and transcribed. The final step in the data collection process occurred at the conclusion of the study when

all participants were invited to listen to an hour presentation of the findings of the research and were afforded the opportunity to ask questions (Patton, 2002).

Semi-structured interview guide. The semi-structured interview guide (Appendix C) concentrated conversation around the perceptions of the interviewees concerning the pragmatism of the leadership framework (integrated theory) and its related process (the "how to" procedure), and the logic and plausibility of the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R (the outcome). The probes following these main questions, listed in the interview guide, were developed following Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman's (2004) suggested lines of inquiry for the assessment of the logic and plausibility of a program's theory. Moreover, the probes were meant to help focus the conversation on leadership theory, organizational theory, program theory assessment, and pragmatism. The semi-structured interview guide focused the interview, but also allowed for a conversational tone that encouraged greater latitude to freely explore the subject areas (Patton, 2002).

Post-interview. In qualitative inquiry, the time immediately following interviews remains critical (Patton, 2002). Therefore, I used field notes to reflect on the setting, body language, tone, and my overall interpretation and impression of the interview (Patton, 2002). I also checked to make sure the recording device worked, which it did for all of the interviews.

Data analysis. The formative assessment interview data was analyzed using traditional manual qualitative coding methods that incorporated an inductive process for convergence (Patton, 2002). The concept of convergence conveys that the data collected

and analyzed led to the formation of overarching categories, implying that the data align (Guba, 1978; Patton, 2002).

Coding process. After the interview transcription was complete, the first step in the coding process was to create groupings for the various subjects and probes from the semi-structured interview guide (Patton, 2002). I then used legal sized paper with the grouping labeled at the top of each column, followed by placing the identified actions and quotes into the appropriate column. After analyzing the data in the columns, I identified categories for each grouping. The next step was to create a Word document with the groupings and categories. I then reviewed the interview transcripts and my field notes and placed data in the appropriate grouping and category. Lastly, I applied and adhered to an inductive process so that after numerous reviews and data reductions, I had categories with internal homogeneity within categories and external heterogeneity across categories (see Appendix D for an example of this process). Internal homogeneity refers to convergence within a theme, whereas external heterogeneity refers to the mutual exclusivity of each theme (Patton, 2002).

Data quality. The quality of data remains foundational for the trustworthiness of the conclusions (Diehl, 2013; Patton, 2002). To help ensure the data quality of the formative assessment, and therefore helping to establish the credibility of the conclusions of the overall study, I incorporated member checks and an audit trail (Patton, 2002).

Member checks. Patton (2002) describes member checks as providing stakeholders the opportunity to review the data for accuracy. Participants had the opportunity to review and comment on their specific contributions throughout the interview process. During the interviews I periodically checked in with the interviewee

to make sure that my paraphrased understanding and interpretation of their comments accurately reflected their intent.

Audit trail. I kept an audit trail (Appendix D) to demonstrate both the rigor and the systematic processes employed for data analysis. The audit trail adds transparency to the research study so that others can determine for themselves if there was both rigor and the use of a systematic process for data analysis (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). The audit trail chronologically details and maintains a record of significant analytic processes and decisions in the form of a written report (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009), thus contributing to the overall credibility of the study.

Summary. The formative assessment of the leadership framework, its related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R produced quality data that helped to ensure the trustworthiness (validity) of the study's findings (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). The participants added diverse perspectives to the assessment as a result of their differing roles and functional areas. For example, the Chief Financial Officer naturally views organizational life and decision-making through the lens of finance, whereas the Secretary and General Counsel possesses an implicit bias toward the law. These diverse perspectives were critical for gaining a holistic understanding of the pragmatism of the leadership framework and its related process, and the logic and plausibility of the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R. The next section discusses the four tests of rigor that informed the different strategies used to help ensure the overall trustworthiness of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Trustworthiness of Data

Qualitative research methods and designs rely on the credibility, accuracy, and overall trustworthiness (validity) of the data, and researchers should be held accountable to these standards (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002; Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). Four tests of rigor for the trustworthiness of qualitative data were proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1981) and were clarified by Russ-Eft and Preskill (2009): Truth Value (credibility), Applicability (generalizability), Consistency (reliability), and Neutrality (confirmability). These four tests of rigor informed decisions related to the design and methods of this study to increase confidence in the findings. The data quality of the formative assessment was reviewed previously and detailed the use of member checks and an audit trail, techniques advocated by Russ-Eft and Preskill (2009) for establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative data. The following discussion includes other aspects of the study that addressed the four tests of rigor.

Truth Value (Credibility)

The truth value, or credibility, of the data refers to the believability of the study by the individuals targeted to benefit from the findings (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). The approach adopted by this study to help establish its credibility was to include multiple perspectives and approaches to provide a more holistic understanding (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). The three different phases of the study purposefully incorporated different approaches to provide diverse perspectives. Phase I adopted theory triangulation to develop both the leadership framework and its related process. Phase II included a detailed description to explain the step-by-step process used to design a leadership development program as a SCA in an established organization. Phase III

employed a formative assessment to capture the perceptions of select HE&R personnel of the leadership framework, its related process, and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R. These three phases adopted different approaches to capture diverse perspectives, thus providing a more holistic understanding and thereby establishing credibility.

Applicability (Generalizability)

The generalizability of results remains a standard for quantitative studies, meaning that one can use the results in different settings (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). The concept of generalizability takes on a different meaning within qualitative research, however, and as such should be approached using different methods. Providing detailed descriptions becomes the focus for qualitative studies and these rich and thick descriptions (Patton, 2002) allow readers to realize how certain aspects of the findings could apply to their own setting (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). Therefore, this study used detailed descriptions in chapters four, five, and six. Chapter Four used detailed description to outline the process followed to design a leadership development program as a SCA for HE&R. Chapter Five included thick descriptions to describe the categories inductively developed from the formative assessments and I adopted descriptive prose in Chapter Six. Overall, the approaches exercised in these three chapters provides the detailed description necessary for applicability.

Consistency (Reliability)

Within the scientific paradigm, validity requires reliability, or the replicability of the findings given similar subjects and context (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). In qualitative studies, however, the focus switches to explaining the potential inconsistencies of the

data (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). This study harnessed the transparent nature of audit trails to highlight potential inconsistencies and to document the analytic processes for analysis. According to Russ-Eft and Preskill (2009), such an approach satisfies the consistency test of rigor when judging the trustworthiness of qualitative data.

Neutrality (Confirmability)

The scientific paradigm emphasizes the importance of objectivity, meaning that the researcher's bias or motives should not influence the results (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). Qualitative research, on the other hand, underscores the belief that researchers can never truly realize objectivity, and therefore suggests making qualitative studies as transparent as possible and the results confirmable (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). This study employed both an audit trail and a researcher's positionality statement to help satisfy these two standards. As previously described, an audit trail details and maintains a record of significant analytic processes and decisions in the form of a written report to detail how different sources of data led to certain conclusions (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009). This transparency allows others to better understand the process and data used to generate the results, therefore helping to establish confirmability. My positionality statement, located in Chapter One of this study, adds transparency by disclosing those areas of my life that could bias the research (Creswell, 2009), also helping confirmability.

Ethical Considerations

HE&R provided a site approval letter (Appendix E) allowing this study to be conducted and the institutional review board (IRB) at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania approved the research before conducting the guided interviews. As part of the informed consent process, participants were informed that their participation was

voluntary, that they could withdraw anytime from the study, and that their responses would be kept confidential. Individual responses to the guided interviews were coded and reported in general themes, and other questions were reported in aggregate. Participant names were replaced with a number and then randomly assigned a letter, and all of the original interview data was kept in a locked filing cabinet. The collected data and related consent documents will be stored securely for three years as per federal regulations, after which they will be shredded.

Chapter Summary

While the overall case study follows the linear-analytic structure for presenting the research and progresses through three phases, the delivery of the findings represents both "thick description" and interpretation (Denzin, 1989). The "thick description" provides the information and background required for interpretation (Denzin, 1989; Diehl, 2013; Patton, 2002). As previously described, Chapter 4 employs the descriptive framework strategy to highlight how the leadership framework was used as a tool for designing a leadership development program as a SCA for HE&R. To complement this format, I use detailed description to guide my prose. I also use detailed description in Chapter 5 to describe the inductively developed categories from the formative assessments, supported by specific sources of data. Then in Chapter 6, I assimilate the findings and present topics for discussion. This combination of detailed description and interpretation is essential for two reasons. The thick description provides the reader with the basis for the analysis and assimilation, while the discussion helps to illuminate the thick description (Patton, 2002). The following chapter provides a detailed description of the process followed to design a leadership development program as a SCA for HE&R.

CHAPTER IV

PROGRAM DESIGN

This chapter progresses through the three stages of Discover, Design, and Verify to detail how the established process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs (see Table 2) produced the Core Values Initiative for HE&R. The Core Values Initiative proposes to more deeply embed HE&R's core values throughout the organization to help HE&R realize sustainable validity. The Core Values Initiative calls for identifying the behaviors of excellence for HE&R's four core values at each of the different organizational levels (e.g. executive, management, and individual contributor[7]). The core values remain the same, but how individuals manifest the core values behaviorally vary at the different organizational levels. The prescribed methodology for identifying the behaviors of excellence fosters employee buy-in and support and therefore becomes an essential component of the initiative. HE&R needs to purposefully integrate the behaviors of excellence for the core values into their formal performance reviews and meaningfully weighted and included in the employee compensation plan. By more deeply embedding the core values throughout HE&R using the behaviors of excellence and the performance management plan, HE&R would move closer to realizing sustainable validity. The following sections detail how the three-stage process produced the Core Values Initiative using openly available information.

Stage One: Discover

Stage one, Discover, is a three-step strategy formulation process for selecting an opportunity to secure SCA:

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[7] Charan et al. (2011) and Drotter (2011) provided a blueprint for the different generic organizational levels.

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1. *Establish:* establish the organization's strategic framework: vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives.

2. *Identify:* identify opportunities for securing SCA using both the leadership framework and the organization's strategic framework.

3. *Isolate & Select*

    (a) Isolate the opportunity(s) for securing SCA that satisfy(s) the VRIO model's criteria.

    (b) If there are several opportunities for securing SCAs that satisfy the VRIO model's criteria, then select the opportunity that drives the organization's strategic framework, has the highest probability of success, and delivers the best projected Return on Investment (ROI).

Embedding HE&R's core values more meaningfully throughout the organization emerged as this opportunity. The following sections detail how the steps of this stage informed the selection of this opportunity.

Stage One Step One: Establish

Step one calls for establishing an organization's strategic framework, consisting of a vision statement, mission statement, core values, and long-term objectives. HE&R's executive team decided that their organization's strategic framework would be stripped down to its foundational core values and purpose, thus leading to the elimination of the vision and mission statements and explicit long-term objectives (A. Helmer, personal communication, April 21, 2016). As a result, HE&R relies on their core purpose and organizational core values as their strategic framework (see Table 4).

Table 4

HE&R's Strategic Framework

Core Purpose	"Hershey Entertainment & Resorts is proud to help fulfill the dream of our founder, Milton S. Hershey, by providing value to Milton Hershey School, the largest home and school in the world, as it continues to provide opportunities for children in need," (HE&R, n.d.).
Core Values	▪ "Devoted to Legacy: Acting in a manner that reflects the dedication and integrity of our Founder ▪ Selfless Spirit of Service: Serving our employees and their families, our guests, and community and environment ▪ Team Focused: Supporting one another as we work toward common goals and earning each other's trust ▪ Respectful of Others: Treating all people with dignity, while respecting their differences and ideas" (HE&R, n.d.)

HE&R's core purpose is to provide value to the Milton Hershey School, which translates into helping children in need. HE&R delivers value in many different forms, such as providing internships, job shadowing experiences, or job readiness seminars to students enrolled at the Milton Hershey School. However, the most significant value that HE&R provides to the Milton Hershey School remains the yearly dividend it pays to the school (A. Helmer, personal communication, April 21, 2016). As a result, HE&R pursues revenue and profit increases not as an end in of itself, but as a means to increase the yearly dividend paid to the Milton Hershey School--the larger the dividend, the more children the Milton Hershey School can afford to serve.

HE&R underwent an extensive overhaul of their core values in 2003/2004, eliminating the nine core values that existed at that time. Through a process that included focus groups and executive review and discussion, HE&R identified the four current organizational core values: Devoted to Legacy, Selfless Spirit of Service, Team Focused, and Respectful of Others (A. Helmer, personal communication, April 21, 2016). The

executive team makes concerted efforts, through human resources programs and plans, to drive these core values throughout the organization.

Stage One Step Two: Identify

Step two, *Identify*, uses both an organization's strategic framework, and the leadership framework specifically developed for this research, as tools for identifying opportunities for securing SCA. The leadership framework orients one to three equally important factors for identifying potential sources of SCA: leaders, followers, and context. Context refers to an analytic approach for recognizing potential sources of SCA arising from combinations of internal and external elements relative to use value (for a detailed conceptualization of this dynamic, see figure 2 on page 41 in the second chapter). The first objective of *Identify* relies on the leadership framework to recognize potential sources of SCA. The second objective of this step incorporates recognizing those potential sources of SCA that align with the organization's strategic framework.

Objective one. Context mandated a general scan of the internal environment of HE&R and an external scan of the business ecosystem, resulting in a list of relevant internal and external elements (see Table 5).

Table 5

Internal & External Elements Identified for HE&R

Internal Elements[8]	External Elements
- The power of M.S. Hershey's legacy - Positive brand awareness & equity of The Hershey Co. - Diverse portfolio (16 properties) - Union presence - Workforce challenges of customer-facing employees - Part-time & seasonal staff - Drive to increase value to Milton Hershey School - Tenure of new CEO/President Bill Simpson - Character-Centered Culture training initiative - Commitment to training & development - Initiatives and programs mostly target exempt employees - Renewed focus on core values and core purpose	- Hospitality/Entertainment industry - Service-based economy - Increased competition for people's discretionary income - The power of social media (the new word of mouth marketing—exponentially increases reach) - Some competitors have bigger, faster, and better attractions (i.e. amusement parks, hotels, spas, golf courses)

Next, context required an analysis of the internal and external elements in relation to use value. To generate and capture use value in the service-based economy, especially the hospitality and entertainment industry, organizations rely on providing exceptional customer service to produce memorable experiences for their customers. According to the service-profit chain, exceptional customer service begins with internal customer service and ends with loyal customers who received memorable experiences, thus producing revenue growth and profitability (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, & Schlesinger, 1994). The service-profit chain also highlights that use value remains highly subjective and encourages organizations to focus efforts on providing exceptional internal customer service (Heskett et al., 194). By concentrating on the employee experience and satisfaction, organizations can help ensure that employees respond to and meet the

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[8] Some of the internal elements were confirmed with conversations with HE&R's VP of HR (A. Helmer, personal communications, January 21, 2016; April 21, 2016; and June 26, 2016).

differing expectations of customers. Therefore, a focus on internal customer service helps to generate and capture use value in the service-based economy.

The focus on internal customer service, meaning providing positive employee experience and satisfaction, as a means to help ensure use value naturally segued with the other two elements of the leadership framework, leaders and followers. The focus logically turned to identifying an initiative that would positively impact all HE&R employees in a meaningful manner. The list of external elements reinforces the importance of this focus. The service-based economy and the hospitality and entertainment industry offer such a diversity of experiences and opportunities that companies need to deliver memorable experiences to gain loyal customers. Otherwise, people will choose to spend their discretionary dollars elsewhere. Additionally, social media has expanded the reach of word of mouth marketing exponentially making memorable experiences even more critical, because with one social media post, thousands of potential customers will be either positively or negatively influenced. Finally, some competitors will always have bigger, faster, and better attractions, so HE&R differentiates their properties through consistently delivering exceptional customer service to produce memorable experiences for their customers (confirmed by A. Helmer, personal communication, April 21, 2016), thus reinforcing the importance of delivering quality internal customer service.

The internal elements analysis pinpointed the opportunity to more meaningfully embed HE&R's core values throughout the organization as a means for helping to ultimately deliver exceptional customer service and memorable experiences. First, emphasizing the core values throughout HE&R in a more meaningful manner would

reinforce both the power of the M.S. Hershey legacy and the Hershey brand. Second, a meaningful focus on HE&R's core values would act as the organizational glue consistently holding together HE&R's 16 properties, as well as serving an important function if HE&R were to expand geographically (Viinamäki, 2012). Third, an effective, efficient, and meaningful way to introduce and reinforce HE&R's core values to the thousands of part-time and seasonal staff, the most important employees because of their interaction with the customers, would help to ensure exceptional customer service and memorable experiences. Finally, more meaningfully embedding the core values throughout the entire organization would strengthen a current weakness at HE&R. The renewed focus on HE&R's core values and core purpose through training and development initiatives, such as the Character-Centered Culture (CCC) training program, mostly target exempt employees. While the CCC training program remains a strength, the fact that the most important employee to the customer, the customer-facing employee (non-exempt), do not receive the CCC training presents a weakness. By designing a core values initiative that meaningfully impacts all employees, exempt and non-exempt, would address one of HE&R's existing weaknesses.

Objective two. The second objective of step two, Identify, uses the organization's strategic framework to confirm that the identified opportunities for securing SCA align with the organization's strategic framework. In this instance, the leadership framework used in objective one pinpointed the prospect of more meaningfully embedding HE&R's core values throughout the organization as an opportunity for securing SCA. Using core values, part of HE&R's strategic framework,

as an opportunity to secure SCA stands as prima facie support of alignment between the identified opportunity and the organization's strategic framework.

Stage One Step Three: Isolate & Select

Step three uses the VRIO model's four criteria to isolate those opportunities that qualify as potential sources of SCA. If after this process there remain multiple opportunities, then the one that drives the organization's strategic framework, has the highest probability of success, and delivers the best projected ROI gets selected. In the case of HE&R, step two produced only one opportunity for securing SCA. Therefore, step three vetted the opportunity through the established criteria of the VRIO (Valuable, Rare, Imitability, Organization) model. The following sections highlight the vetting process using the four criteria of the VRIO model.

Valuable. Barney (1995) defines a valuable resource as something that adds value by aligning with and leveraging external opportunities. The opportunity for HE&R to more meaningful embed their organizational core values throughout the organization meets this criterion. The core values opportunity focuses on all employees, both leaders and followers. The internal focus on all employees, according to the service-profit chain (Heskett et al., 1994), leads to loyal customers, increased revenue, and profit because loyal employees ultimately create loyal customers. The internal focus on all employees directly aligns with and leverages the external elements identified relative to HE&R. For example, loyal employees deliver memorable experiences, which remain critical for helping to ensure that customers spend their discretionary dollars at one of the HE&R properties. Memorable experiences also motivate customers to voluntarily share those experiences via various social media platforms.

Yee, Yeung, and Cheng's (2010; 2011) research empirically supports the propositions of the service-profit chain. Moreover, Powell's (1992) research supports the positive impact of the RBV (Resource-Based View), or the focus on internal elements as the key to securing SCA. Powell (1992) found that organizations that focus on internal resources deliver supernormal profits. In addition, the importance of core values to organizational success has been raised by academics such as Philip Selznick (1956), William Ouchi (1981), and Schein (2010), made trendy by popular business books (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Collins & Porras, 1994), and supported through research (Dahlgaard, Dahlgaard, & Edgeman, 1998; Rosenthal & Masarech, 2003; Devero, 2003; Fitzgerald & Desjardins, 2004; Järvensivu, 2007; Johnson, 2009; Dolan & Altman, 2012).

Three of HE&R's core values, "Selfless Spirit of Service", "Respectful of Others", and "Team-Focused" directly drive service quality, a critical component of the service-profit chain. "Selfless Spirit of Service" helps to create a service climate that leads to enabling the service-profit chain (Liao & Chuang, 2004). Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) found that respect, which constitutes HE&R's core value of "Respectful of Others", stands as a determinant of perceived service quality. HE&R's core value of "Team-Focused", or teamwork, materialized as a central feature driving service quality (Ueno, 2010). These three core values help drive the service-profit chain, which allows HE&R to compete successfully for people's discretionary income by providing memorable experiences through exceptional customer service. HE&R's core value of "Devoted to the Legacy" helps substantiate the imitability test, as detailed in the

imitability section of this chapter. Based on this review, the Core Values Initiative

satisfies Barney's (1995) definition of valuable.

Rare. To pass the rareness test, Barney (1985) suggests benchmarking against

other organizations to determine the number of other competing firms that already

possess the resource. In this case study, that translates into how many other competing

firms meaningfully embed their core values throughout the organization. Lencioni

(2002) argues that the number of organizations that have meaningful core values, let

alone the number of organizations that then meaningfully embed those core values

throughout the organization, remains rare. Moreover, Hinkin and Tracey (2010) analyzed

human resource practices of those companies in *Fortune* magazine's list of the one

hundred best companies to work. They used their analysis to benchmark the best

practices of human resources. In reviewing the identified best practices, three related to,

either directly or indirectly, core values: organizational culture valuing people, well-

aligned performance management policies, and compensation plans accounting for

organizational values. Given the importance of employees to the service-profit chain,

one would figure that hospitality and entertainment companies would dominate the list

and set the standard for human resources best practices. However, in the 2009 list of top

100 companies to work for, hospitality and food and beverage companies were scarce.

Out of 100 companies, Marriott International, Four Seasons Hotels & Restaurants, and

Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants were the only three hospitality companies, and Starbucks

was the only food and beverage company (Hinkin and Tracey, 2010). The list for 2016

includes only five hospitality companies: Kimpton Hotels & Resorts (#20); Hyatt Hotels

(#47); Hilton Worldwide (#56); Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts (#70); Marriott

International (#83); and The Cheesecake Factory (#98) ("One hundred best companies", n.d.). These results served as a proxy measure for determining the number of other direct competitors that already meaningfully embed their core values throughout the organization. According to this proxy measure, the dearth of competitors meaningfully embedding their core values clearly satisfies the rareness test as defined by Barney (1985).

Imitability. The third criterion of Barney's (1985) VRIO model requires the imperfect imitability of the resource, meaning that the value generated and benefits accrued by the organization cannot be perfectly duplicated or substituted by other organizations. Barney (1995) elaborated on this concept and identified components of resources that constitute imperfectly imitable resources, such as unique organizational history, social complexity, and casual ambiguity. HE&R's organizational history is unique given the legacy of the founder, Milton S. Hershey, and his desire to help children in need. The fact that HE&R's core purpose remains to deliver value to the Milton Hershey School, the largest home and school in the world offering opportunities to children in need, provides a unique drive to produce business results. "Devoted to Legacy" prominently surfaced as an HE&R core value and helps to ensure that all employees understand this exceptional social purpose. Based on this unique history and social purpose, HE&R arguably meets the imperfectly imitable criterion establish by Barney (1995).

Organization. The final criterion of Barney's (1995) VRIO model requires that organizations possess the ability to take advantage of the resources that have the potential to secure SCA. HE&R's renewed focus on core values and core purpose, as evidenced

by the strategic framework, provides the necessary executive-level support for new initiatives leveraging the strategic framework. The resource commitments already made to the core values, such as the Character-Centered Culture (CCC) training initiative requiring all exempt employees to complete the CCC training within the first 18 months of employment, or the continuation of Legacy Checks[9], support the fact that HE&R continues to proactively invest significant resources into such initiatives (A. Helmer, personal communication, January 21, 2016). HE&R also factors core values into performance appraisals and compensation for exempt employees (A. Helmer, personal communication, May 26, 2016). HE&R understands the critical importance of their core values and could readily adopt and implement an initiative that would more meaningfully embed their organizational core values throughout the organization.

Stage One Summary

The Discover stage surfaced the opportunity for HE&R to secure SCA by more meaningfully embedding the organizational core values throughout the organization. HE&R's executive team decided that their strategic framework included only their core purpose and core values (see Table 4). The leadership framework and HE&R's core values and core purpose helped to identify the opportunity to more meaningful embed HE&R's core values throughout the organization. Lastly, this core values opportunity met all of the criteria established by Barney's (1995) VRIO model, therefore confirming the potential to secure SCA. The next stage highlights how this opportunity to more meaningfully embed core values throughout HE&R evolved into the Core Values Initiative.

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[9] Employees nominate other employees to receive a gift certificate for exceptional performance related to one of HE&R's core values.

Stage Two: Design

Stage two of the process, Design, advances through three steps to deliver an articulated theory of the actualized opportunity:

1. *Inquire:* analyze research and best practices associated with initiatives related to the selected opportunity for securing SCA.

2. *Develop:* develop a program/initiative that actualizes the opportunity.

3. *Produce:* produce a logic model.

Stage one identified that by more meaningfully embedding organizational core values throughout the organization that HE&R could secure SCA. The following sections detail how each step of stage two--Inquire, Develop, and Produce--informed the design of the Core Values Initiative for HE&R.

Stage Two Step One: Inquire

Step one required an analysis of the research and best practices associated with meaningfully embedding core values throughout an organization in the hospitality and service industry. Four broad clusters of related research literature proved invaluable for this analysis: 1) core values/values/value-based leadership[10]; 2) service/service quality/service-profit chain/hospitality management; 3) human resources/performance management; and 4) competency/competency-based human resource management[11]. The results of the analysis identified six critical factors for meaningfully embedding core values throughout an organization (see Table 6). The six critical factors for meaningfully

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[10] See Malbašik, Rey, and Potočan (2015) and Paarlberg and Perry (2007) for detailed literature reviews.

[11] Individual level core competencies and organizational level core competencies (Lahti, 1999) share similarities with organizational core values, therefore the competency/competency-based human resource management research cluster proved informative.

embedding core values throughout an organization served as the foundation for

developing the Core Values Initiative for HE&R.

Table 6[12]

Six Critical Factors for Meaningfully Embedding Core Values

Critical Factors	Influences/Sources
1. Core values integrated throughout all human resources plans, especially performance appraisals and compensation plans	Lencioni (2012); Argandoña (2003); Viinamäki (2012); Grojean, Resick, Dickson, & Smith (2004); Hinkin & Tracey (2010); Liao & Chung (2004); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011); Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004); Lahti (1999); Lado & Wilson (1994)
2. Performance appraisals linked to compensation plans and incorporate explicit and clear behavioral expectations	Grojean, Resick, Dickson, & Smith (2004); Hinkin & Tracey (2010); Ueno (2010); Liao & Chung (2004); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011); Sun, Hsu, Wang (2012); Sergeant & Frenkel (2000); Bitner, Booms, Tetreault (1990); Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004); Montague (2007); Tziner &kopelman (2002); Posthuma & Campion (2008); Lahti (1999); Lado & Wilson (1994); Lado (1992)
3. Core values meaningfully weighted in both the performance appraisals and compensation plans	Hinkin & Tracey (2010); Ueno (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011); Sun, Hsu, Wang (2012); Sun, Hsu, Wang (2012); Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004); Lado & Wilson (1994); Lado (1992)
4. Employees involved in defining the behaviors associated with the core values relative to their level in the organization (core values manifest differently at various organizational levels)	Argandoña (2003); Viinamäki (2012); Pruzan (1998); Buchko (2007); Liao & Chung (2004); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011); Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Tziner &kopelman (2002); Posthuma & Campion (2008); Charan, Drotter, & Noel (2011); Lahti (1999)
5. Adopt a hybrid behavioral observation scale (B.O.S.) method for identifying the core value behaviors at each organizational level and for frequency rating system used in performance appraisals (involves employees)	Buchko (2007); Liao & Chung (2004); Tziner &kopelman (2002); Drotter (2011); Grote (1996)
6. Continual improvement	Argandoña (2003); Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004)

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[12] See Appendix F for detail on each factor by the influences and sources and associated research cluster.

These critical factors for meaningfully embedding core values point toward the importance of including core values in both performance appraisals and compensation plans (critical factors one, two, and three). The research clearly pointed toward using behaviors to evaluate performance, and by synthesizing the research, employee involvement in defining the behaviors associated with the core values for their level in the organization (critical factor four). Research on rating systems for performance appraisals favor the use of behavioral systems, but the two approaches supported by the Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Behavioral Anchored Rating System (B.A.R.S.) and Behavioral Observation Scale (B.O.S.) have not been widely adopted by organizations because of the time and cost associated with developing them (Grote, 1996; Tziner & Kopelman, 2002; Weatherly, 2004). Therefore, a hybrid process emerged for developing and using a behavioral frequency scale for performance appraisals that reduces the time and cost associated with developing the behavioral frequency scale (critical factor five) (Buchko, 2007; Drotter 2011; Grote,1996). Due to the nature of the changing workforce and the rapid developments and fluctuating business environment, the behaviors associated with the core values need continual assessment and improvement (critical factor six). The six critical factors for meaningfully embedding core values throughout organizations serve as the foundation for the Core Values Initiative. The next section presents the Core Values Initiative, the actualized opportunity for meaningfully embedding HE&R's core values throughout the organization.

Stage Two Step Two: Develop

The Core Values Initiative meaningfully embeds HE&R's core values throughout the organization. The six critical factors identified in step one served as the guide and support for the Core Values Initiative (see Table 7).

Table 7

The Core Values Initiative and Associated Critical Success Factor(s)

Core Values Initiative	Associated Critical Success Factor
1. Identify the behaviors representative of the core values for each of HE&R's organizational levels (behaviors of excellence) using the hybrid B.O.S. method	4. Employees involved in defining the behaviors associated with the core values relative to their level in the organization (core values manifest differently at various organizational levels) 5. Adopt a hybrid behavioral observation scale (BOS) process for identifying the core value behaviors at each organizational level and for frequency rating system used in performance appraisals (involves employees)
2. Incorporate the behaviors of excellence into the performance appraisal using a behavioral frequency scale as the rating system	1. Core values integrated throughout all human resources plans, especially performance appraisals and compensation plans 2. Performance appraisals linked to compensation plans and incorporate explicit and clear behavioral expectations 3. Core values meaningfully weighted in both the performance appraisals and compensation plans
3. The pay-for-performance plan links directly to the performance appraisal and includes two broad buckets: business results (the right results) and core values (the right way)	2. Performance appraisals linked to compensation plans and incorporate explicit and clear behavioral expectations 3. Core values meaningfully weighted in both the performance appraisals and compensation plans
4. Behaviors of excellence incorporated into other relevant human resources systems	1. Core values integrated throughout all human resources plans, especially performance appraisals and compensation plans
5. The behaviors of excellence, performance appraisal, and pay-for-performance plan need to be monitored and assessed, making improvements resulting from the assessments	6. Continual improvement

The Core Values Initiative requires HE&R to identify the behaviors representative of the

core values for each of HE&R's organizational levels. The hybrid B.O.S. (Behavioral

Observation Scale) method provides the action steps for identifying these behaviors of

excellence (see Table 8).

Table 8

The Hybrid Behavioral Observation Scale (B.O.S.) Method

Hybrid B.O.S. Steps
1) Create a worksheet with general directions, followed by questions designed to capture the behaviors of excellence
2) Identify high-performers (consistently get the right results, the right way) per each organizational level
3) Hold a kick-off meeting with each group of high-performers to explain the Core Values Initiative, their role, and the worksheet. Emphasize to participants that answers provided on the worksheets will remain confidential and will be used to emerge general themes and related behaviors, therefore no attributions will be made. Allow the high-performers one week to complete and return the worksheet.

4) Code the data (the answers received)
    ▪ Step 1: Select an organizational level and read all of the worksheets for that level to get a general feel for the responses
 	
    ▪ Sep 2: Review the data to identify common words and statements
 	
    ▪ Step 3: Identify major themes and related behaviors
 	
    ▪ Step 4: Review the major themes and related behaviors to check for redundancy; if there is redundancy with themes and related behaviors, merge to form an overarching theme with related behaviors (repeat this step until there is no redundancy)
 	
    ▪ Step 5: Review the behavioral examples within each theme for validity (do they belong or should they be moved elsewhere)
 	
    ▪ Step 6: Review, edit, and wordsmith the statements to reflect a positive orientation

5) Hold a review meeting with the high-performers for each organizational level to review and validate the identified themes and related behaviors: Does the final product reflect original responses? Does the final product communicate behavioral expectations clearly?   ▪ Note the corrections, changes, comments and revise the final product accordingly
6) Review the final product with the management and/or executive team for approval or revision. If revisions are made, then hold another meeting with the high-performers to review changes.
7) Engage in formative assessments (improvements, changes, updates, flexibility)   ▪ Continuous review and feedback are required over time to help ensure accuracy and that behaviors evolve and grow with the company (stay current and relevant).

Note. Adapted from Buchko (2007), Drotter (2011), and Grote (1996).

HE&R then needs to incorporate the behaviors of excellence into their performance

appraisal using a behavioral frequency scale as the rating system (see Figure 7).

Core Values: The Right Way	
Determination[13]	
Behaviors of Excellence	Note: [This is where the identified behaviors would be listed]
Notes/Comments	
Evaluation	**Almost Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost Always**

Figure 7. Behavioral frequency scale example.

The performance appraisal system must link directly to the compensation plan. This pay-

for-performance compensation plan then revolves around two broad buckets for

determining the amount of an employee's earned pay increase: business results (the right

results) and core values (the right way). To drive the importance of the core values, the

behaviors of excellence should count toward 40% of the pay-for-performance plan

(Hinkin & Tracey, 2010; see Figure 8).

Management Scoring Weights
▪ *The Right Results: 60% of Overall Evaluation*
➢ 20% = Department Goals
➢ 20% = Management Goals
➢ 20% = Personal Performance Goals
▪ *The Right Way: 40% of Overall Evaluation*
➢ 40% = Core Values

Figure 8. Pay-for-performance weighting example.

HE&R should incorporate the behaviors of excellence into other relevant human

resources systems, such as job descriptions, the hiring process, onboarding, training and

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[13] Determination is not one of HE&R's core values. This is for illustrative purposes only.

development, and succession planning. Lastly, the behaviors of excellence, performance

appraisal, and pay-for-performance plan need to be monitored and assessed, making

improvements based on the assessments. The next section produces the Core Values

Initiative logic model.

Stage Two Step Three: Produce

Step three required the development of a logic model to explicitly illustrate the

holistic picture of the Core Values Initiative, connecting the inputs to the long-term

outcomes (see Figure 9). The logic model parallels the connections between loyal

employees and increased revenue and profit, the critical connections of the service-profit

chain. It also follows the tenets of the leadership framework to help HE&R realize

sustainable validity. The next section details the final stage of the process used to design

a leadership development program as a SCA for HE&R.

Theoretical Assumptions	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Initial Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes

Organizations pursue long-term superior organizational performance
 	
Sustainable competitive advantage leads to long-term superior organizational performance
	1. HE&R core values
	
	2. HE&R organizational levels (bands) identified and confirmed
	
	3. Support of Board of Directors and Executive Committee
		1. Identify core value behaviors of excellence for each organizational level (band) following the prescribed method
		
		2. Update performance review templates for each organizational level to include the core value behaviors of excellence and related frequency scale
		
		3. Update Pay-for-Performance plan weighting core values: "The Right Results, The Right Way"
		
		4. Update remaining components of the HE&R Performance Management plan to include Core Value behaviors of excellence
		  --Job descriptions
		  --Hiring process
		  --Onboarding
		  --Training & development
		  --Succession planning
			1. Employee buy-in
			
			2. More employees consistently demonstrate HE&R core value behaviors of excellence
			
			3. Role clarity with clear expectations
			
			4. Common language
				1. Improved organizational direction-alignment-commitment
				
				2. Increased number of high-performers throughout HE&R
				
				3. Increases in customer experience throughout all HE&R properties
				
				4. Increased generation and capture of use value
				
				5. Increased employee loyalty (engagement)
					1. Secured sustainable competitive advantage
					
					2. Increase in number of loyal customers
						1. Realize sustainable validity (long-term superior organizational performance)

Input/Initiative Assumptions	HE&R core values are the timeless principles foundational for fulfilling M.S. Hershey's dream HE&R Core Values Initiative is valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and the organization possesses the capability to implement and drive initiative HE&R core values generate and capture use value (customer perceived) HE&R approaches performance reviews as an important component for growing and developing people and provides continuous and consistent feedback throughout the review period					

Figure 9. Core values initiative logic model.

Stage Three: Verify

Stage three employed two steps to assess the logic and plausibility of the theory and assumptions of the Core Values Initiative. First, the subjects for this research study were assembled, consisting of HE&R's executive team and two subject matter experts from human resources. Second, each of the subjects were individually interviewed, and collectively they validated the logic and plausibility of the Core Values Initiative. However, instead of moving forward directly with implementation, they plan to first discuss the time, cost, and the resource implications of the Core Values Initiative and more thoroughly project the return on investment before moving forward to implementation. The next chapter presents these findings, and the rest of the findings of the research, in more detail.

CHAPTER V

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The twofold purpose of this research was to develop a synthesized leadership

framework and process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs, and to

implement and assess the pragmatism of using them for designing such a program in an

established business organization. To accomplish this purpose, I established multiple

research objectives that progressed through three phases. Phase I of this study used a

literature review to develop a synthesized leadership framework and process for

designing a leadership development program as a SCA. Phase II details how I used the

leadership framework and process to design such a program for HE&R, the Core Values

Initiative. This chapter represents Phase III and presents the formative assessments of the

leadership framework, process, and Core Values Initiative. These formative assessments

serve the purpose of highlighting various areas for consideration in the hopes of making

the leadership framework, process, and Core Values Initiative more useful and accessible

to organizations and practitioners. The formative assessments rely on the perspectives of

the participants within the context of HE&R. The first two sections of the chapter focus

on providing a more refined understanding of HE&R and offering a general participant

profile. The remaining three sections present the formative assessment findings of the

leadership framework, process, and Core Values Initiative.

Participant Profiles

The nine participants included the seven members of HE&R's executive

committee and two subject matter experts (see Table 9).

Table 9

Participant Job Titles

HE&R Executive Committee	Subject Matter Experts
1. Chief Executive Officer/President	1. Director, Organizational Development
2. Chief Financial Officer	2. Director, Training and Development
3. Chief Operating Officer	
4. General Counsel & Secretary	
5. VP, Communication & Corporate Relations	
6. VP, Human Resources	
7. VP, Marketing & Analytics	

The six male and three female participants have a combined 137 years of service at

HE&R, with the longest tenure being 26 years and the shortest being less than one month.

The substantial professional experience with companies other than HE&R, such as

executive experience at PepsiCo, Yankee Stadium, and Marriot International provides a

balanced professional perspective (see Appendix G for individual participant profiles).

All of the participants hold undergraduate degrees (see Table 10), with one participant

earning two undergraduate degrees. The majority of the undergraduate degrees relate to

business.

Table 10

Undergraduate Schools Attended and Degrees Earned by Participants

Undergraduate Degrees Earned: 10	
School	*Degree*
Stockton University	Business Management
Central Penn	Business Administration & Management
Pennsylvania State University	Management
Appalachian State University	Hotel & Restaurant Management
Franklin & Marshall	N/A
Villanova University	Political Science Accounting
Randolph-Macon	N/A
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Marketing/Marketing Management
The University of Texas at Austin	N/A

Note: N/A indicates that the participant omitted their specific degree on their public profile.

Five participants hold advanced degrees, consisting of two Juris Doctorates, one Masters

in Business Administration, one Masters in Human Resources/Industrial Relations, and

one Masters in Adult and Continuing Education and Teaching (see Table 11).

Table 11

Graduate Schools Attended and Degrees Earned by Participants

Advanced Degrees Earned: 5	
School	*Degree*
Duquesne University School of Law	Juris Doctorate
University of Texas School of Law	Juris Doctorate
University of Pittsburgh	Masters, Business Administration, Finance
Pennsylvania State University	Masters, Adult & Continuing Education & Teaching
St. Francis University	Masters, HR/Industrial Relations

Some participants continued their learning through significant professional development

activities, such as executive education programs. The executive education programs

attended focused specifically on leadership (3), executive development (3), functional

areas (2), and service (1) (see Table 12).

Table 12

Executive Education Programs Attended by Various Participants

Executive Education Programs: 9	
Organization	*Program*
Boston University	Mini-MBA for Lawyers
The Aspen Institute	Aspen Executive Seminar
University of Pennsylvania, Wharton	Executive Development Program
University of Pennsylvania, Wharton	Reimagine Your Leadership
Columbia University, Columbia Business School	High Impact Leadership
Cornell University, School of Hotel Administration	General Managers Program
Harvard University, Harvard Business School	Achieving Breakthrough Service
University of North Carolina, Kenan-Flagler Business School	Executive Development Program
Dartmouth College, Tuck School of Business	Leadership & Strategic Impact

The nine participants offered diverse perspectives because of their different functional areas, educational backgrounds, and various professional experiences.

HE&R Alignment

Chapter One provided a general overview of HE&R by presenting a basic introduction to the company and its history. This section provides a more detailed account of how HE&R operates. Participant responses to questions focused on the context of HE&R and its leadership development initiatives clearly indicate that this company remains anchored to the M.S. Hershey legacy, its core purpose, and its people. The purpose of these questions was to establish if the systems and processes of HE&R, and the thinking of the participants aligned with HE&R's stated purpose and core values. The questions centered on HE&R's commitment to training and development, personal key accountabilities, the board of trustees' focus, perceived opportunities and challenges, and the participants' perspective on the union. The results indicate that HE&R strives to reinforce the M.S. Hershey legacy and brand, use the core purpose to guide decision-

making, and that HE&R genuinely values its people. The focus on people and the drive

for financial results to increase the dividend paid to the Milton Hershey School surfaced

as the prominent narrative when discussing training and development, personal key

accountabilities, the board of trustees' focus, perceived opportunities and challenges, and

the union. The findings reveal that HE&R's core purpose and core values drive and align

this company, as opposed to merely being espoused.

Board of Trustees' Focus

HE&R's core purpose is to provide value to the Milton Hershey School, most

notably through the yearly dividend paid to the school. The focus and drive to increase

revenues and profit stem directly from the unique social purpose of providing

opportunities for children in need. Participant F highlights this sentiment:

> So, at the heart of everything we do is this idea of this, that there's something out
>
> there which is greater than us. If you can't get excited about being a part of a
>
> company that at its core helps kids in need, you know, this probably isn't the right
>
> place for you. (Participant F)

All of the participants (9/9 [100%]) indicated that while the board of trustees' main

focus was total shareholder return, which includes financial performance measures like

EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization), that this

focus stems from the desire to increase the amount of the yearly dividend paid to the

school to provide opportunities to more children in need. Participant F elaborated on

how the financials work:

> The school is, you probably know this, but the school can't, the school has a $12
>
> billion endowment, which sounds, you know that obviously is a lot of money, but

they can't touch that. So the school's operating budget comes solely from the money that's provided via dividend through its assets, or through the investment income that's spun off by the trust. So it's a much smaller sub set, and they have a huge financial obligation in meeting the needs of over 2000 kids, and it costs over $100,000 to house and educate those kids. You know, we recognize that each additional $100,000 in dividend that we are able to provide the school, means potentially another kid they can take in, a child in need. (Participant F)

The focus on increasing the amount of the yearly dividend paid to the school to provide opportunities for more kids in need aligns with the reason shared by participants for wanting to grow HE&R.

HE&R's Opportunities and Challenges

A majority of the participants (6/9 [66%]) identified growth as one of the major challenges facing HE&R, with a 100% consensus of those participants that this drive to grow comes from the desire to help more children. Participant H conveyed this very directly, stating that HE&R needs to "drive EBITDA growth, so we can pay a higher dividend, so they can support more kids." HE&R's core purpose permeates the organization's decision-makers, poignantly stated by Participant G, "Where else do you work where you have such a singular purpose? That no if, ands, or buts, the entire company rallies behind." However, this singular social purpose and unique history also present significant challenges.

Being associated with the Hershey Company brings with it the stewardship of both the Hershey brand and legacy. While the Hershey brand and legacy both serve as strengths, and both provide enormous opportunity, they both also present unique

challenges. Four passages shared by three different participants identified this paradox.

Participant D explicitly identified this by stating:

> I think every one of our strengths, you know you've heard this, every one of our
>
> strengths is our biggest weakness.... We have a 100-year legacy, so in turn we're
>
> very nervous about doing anything that would screw up that 100-year legacy.
>
> (Participant D)

Participant F highlighted the significant impact that the Hershey brand and legacy have

on HE&R:

> We like to joke as a Hershey entity we receive a lot of scrutiny, I'd say, especially
>
> in our local community, and a lot of that is attributed to the fact that we carry
>
> both the responsibility of the brand and the legacy, and those are, I like to tell
>
> people who are coming into the organization, those are awesome responsibilities,
>
> and weighty responsibilities, both. Because everybody feels that they have a stake
>
> in both that brand and that legacy, especially people in this region.... Legacy, it's
>
> hard to explain how dominating the idea of that legacy is to us, and I don't know
>
> if other companies experience it. (Participant F)

Participant F also highlights how the Hershey brand and legacy factor into decision-

making at HE&R:

> So it's so unique, and then it goes back to this idea that the concept of legacy
>
> plays so heavily on the strategic decision making the company undergoes.
>
> Understanding, okay, how does this impact that legacy? (Participant F)

Participant G further illuminates how the power of the Hershey brand affects

organizational decision making:

I think what continues to, you know, you talk about what keeps people up at

night? It's just being associated with such a strong name. So we have the billion-

dollar brand across the street, so making sure what we do every day supports not

only the school, but continues to keep the brand reputation as top of mind and as

flawless as it's always been.   (Participant G)

These challenges arise largely because of the tremendous amount of good works directly

related to M.S. Hershey's legacy and as a result of the Hershey Company's business

success. Nevertheless, that legacy and brand also bring with it a history of striking

workers and related organizing activities.

HE&R and the Union

The Chocolate Workers Local No. 464 Bakery, Confectionary Tobacco Workers'

and Grain Millers International Union, AFL-CIO formed in 1938 and represented the

workers of the Hershey Company and HE&R. As Participant C explained, "You know, a

lot of this goes back to Mr. Hershey's days when the union was formed. And this is just

carry over." Participant H adds more perspective about the union at HE&R:

It's a legacy, 19', 38', 39' the chocolate workers struck, they formed a union, and

Milton Hershey was crushed because he was the paternalistic person. That doesn't

mean he was paying them what they needed to be paid the living wage...but he

was paternalistic and he did a whole lot more for them than a whole lot of other,

of the robber barons. They were called the robber barons for a reason, because

they robbed people. So he was crushed by it, but that union is the chocolate

workers local, and that's the union for our, all of our employees. Our doormen,

our housekeepers, our landscapers, the mechanics at the park, the electricians,

they're all chocolate workers local, so it is a huge legacy union. (Participant H)

The participants discussed the union in terms of working together with fellow team members to help ensure a win-win scenario, meaning that the executive focus remains on the fact that the people of HE&R provide the foundation for business success. Participant C described the relationship as "more of a partnership, we view it that way. We're going to be right sometimes. We're going to be wrong sometimes." Participant B reinforced this outlook, highlighting the human element, "Put it in our terms. Who do they represent here? We don't say workers or laborers. We say team members. Fellow employees." So while there exists a professional and positive working relationship with the union representatives, or as described by Participant G, "as good as a union as you can get," it remains a negotiated relationship. Participant H underscored this reality by stating:

And then again they're a little tricky too, it's not, you know, a real aggressive

union but it can be a difficult union to deal with at times. There are awesome,

awesome people, and there are some tough cases. You know, hard cases. And

overall it's a really, really great group of people who are working to make the

company better, and they understand our job is to serve guests.... But you know

there's still a union mentality in some of them which is, 'Why do I have to do

that? So and so doesn't have to do it, if so and so doesn't have to do it, you can't

do that cause you're not in the union.' You do get pockets of that. (Participant H)

The overall positive relations with the union negates the desire to move forward with any efforts at decertification. Participant B expressed this sentiment by stating, "Why do you usually want to decertify a union? Because they're horrible. We're not having issues with

the union." Participant C reinforced this perspective by stating, "And we're not going to ever try to decertify them. I just don't see the benefit in doing that, and plus that is a huge risk. So no, it's okay." So the union remains part of the M.S. Hershey legacy and HE&R accepts that responsibility. As noted by Participant C, "We found a way to find common ground, it's something that you deal with. But if we're doing things the way we're supposed to be doing, and being fair and consistent, you're not going to have problems." This executive perspective on the union derives from the overarching focus at HE&R on genuinely valuing all of their employees.

Training and Development and Key Accountabilities at HE&R

The M.S. Hershey legacy does include the union, but it also provides the foundation for not only effectively working with that union, but for successfully operating the business. The M.S. Hershey legacy provides a blueprint for success: genuinely care for people and the business results will follow. Participant F explains:

> Because if you look at Mr. Hershey, you go to Mr. Hershey's model, he understood, he built the town, he built the services because he recognized that a happy and contented person will end up invariably providing a better service to others. And it's really the same model. (Participant F)

HE&R's focus on people and business results, remembering that the drive for business results comes from their core purpose of providing value to the Milton Hershey School, permeates the organization. According to Participant B:

> Our assumption is, by developing people to be better people, and you may have better performers, you know, whatever you want to call it, our assumption is, you

develop people to be better people, profit will follow. That's our assumption.

(Participant B)

This focus on people and the drive for financial results to increase the dividend paid to the Milton Hershey School aligned with the reasons provided for investing in training and development and with how the participants view their key accountabilities.

All of the participants (9/9 [100%]) completely support HE&R's considerable investment into training and development. Participant C reinforced this commitment by stating, "And we have made ourselves a pledge that when we have a bad year, and we're going to have one, we are not going to cut training and development." The overwhelming view of training and development at HE&R focuses on developing people to be better people, with the understanding that financial results materialize as the byproduct of these efforts. Two participants used the same example to reinforce the fact that they genuinely invest in training and development to grow and develop people as the primary focus. HE&R incorporates Stephen Covey's (1989) book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change* into their Character-Centered Culture curriculum. The two participants pointed to the fact that HE&R would not so prominently include Covey (1989) in their curriculum if they did not believe in developing people as an end in and of itself. Participant F explains, "So if you look at *7 Habits for Effective People.* It's not effective business leaders, right, it's effective people." Participant B uses the same example, "Why would we do Covey? To develop people. We stop short of saying in the business.... So yeah, that's exactly why we do it. To develop people to be better people." HE&R invests in training and development because it's the right thing to do, and because it produces the desired business results. As

Participant I stated, "So, it's sort of hand in hand, isn't it?" This symbiotic relationship between genuinely valuing people and business results also manifested itself when participants responded to questions about their key accountabilities.

All of the participants (9/9[100%]) stated that their key accountabilities revolved around building their teams and hitting their numbers. Three participants directly used the phrase "build our teams and hit our numbers", one participant emphasized the need to "get the right results the right way", and five participants stated that growing their team was their primary key accountability. These answers support the narrative that HE&R's primary focus remains people, with the understanding that the business results will follow. Participant C clearly conveys this message by stating, "So I mean, what do you want on your tombstone? We built our teams and we hit our numbers." This statement offers a useful summation of how all the participants understood their key accountabilities.

The findings from the participant interviews that focused on the context of HE&R and its leadership development initiatives indicate that HE&R works hard at aligning its processes, systems, and thinking with the M.S. Hershey legacy and brand, genuine concern for people, and its core purpose. The history of HE&R and its singular focus on helping children in need makes HE&R a unique case. The most significant finding remains the fact that the participants interviewed consistently demonstrated that they live and drive the core purpose and core values at HE&R, and that the Hershey legacy and brand present both opportunities and challenges.

Leadership Framework Formative Assessment

The leadership framework represents an integrated pragmatic conceptual framework that strategically defines leadership to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. This section presents the findings from the guided interviews that focused on the participants' perceptions of the pragmatism of the leadership framework. This section also presents noted strengths, a critical factor for success, an opportunity for improvement, points of interest, and an inductively arrived at theme. The purpose of presenting this information is to help make the leadership framework more useful and accessible to other organizations and practitioners. As the following sections will detail, the participants found the leadership framework pragmatic, but they also noted items for consideration and offered several opportunities for improvement.

The Leadership Framework's Pragmatism

The interview questions directly related to the perceptions of the pragmatism of the leadership framework indicate that all of the participants (9/9[100%]) found the leadership framework pragmatic, meaning useful, logical, and practical. The questions used to determine perceptions of pragmatism centered around the perceived logic, practical sense, and usefulness of the leadership framework. Table 13 highlights the portions of the responses from each of the participants that help to convey their perceptions of the pragmatism of the leadership framework.

Table 13

Perceptions of the Pragmatism of the Leadership Framework

Participant	Sample Responses
A	"It makes perfect sense.... All of it together makes sense.... Reading it the first time I could get it.... This plus this is truly sustainable validity." (Participant A)
B	"Yeah it does (make practical sense and useful).... And this whole idea of context, this whole idea of strengths and opportunities--yeah they come together and create sustainable competitive advantage. I get the idea.... Yeah, it made sense." (Participant B)
C	"But the framework I think itself is very interesting. Oh yeah, yeah (makes practical sense, it's useful).... This makes a lot of sense.... No, you know what I think it made me think about was that this kind of puts a model to what I think we're trying to do. So it was almost like a validation of what we're trying to do.... I think it's interesting to be able to marry our process with this model." (Participant C)
D	"[So it's fair to say that you find it to be practical and useful] Absolutely.... This is clean, simple. I think it's really well done.... I really think it's solid.... I really like it.... I like the three intersecting circles. Really where the sweet spot is, to me, it works really well. Where I think, traditionally you want very defined words as a society, we just want the, tell us the answer, great, that's the answer. And I think this is doing more than that, I think it's giving us a great, to use your word, framework. Work within this framework and you're going be in good shape." (Participant D)
E	"Conceptually I think it's an accurate assumption of what leadership should be.... I think the concept of what you're looking at, the values of I'll call them the three stools, you have them as three overlapping circles, resonate and make sense.... As a I look at it as a professional, it makes complete sense to me." (Participant E)
F	"Yeah, I think it, there's a lot of merit to it.... I mean it seems, as I said it seems very well thought out, very well laid out, with certainly a desirable goal at its core.... I liked the interplay between the three components very much. And I thought it made logical sense how they, the interaction between leaders, followers within the context ended up producing your competitive advantage, I do like that." (Participant F)
G	"Do I agree with it? Sure absolutely. When I look at the whole kit and caboodle, it's a sustainable framework.... [So do you think it makes practical sense though? And it's useful, just generally speaking to help orient thinking?] I do, I do. But I think the language should be different per group.... So that's where the one stop, I mean maybe to your point it starts with this umbrella statement and then there's different veins that come off of it." (Participant G)
H	"It looks reasonable. A lot of the process you have is good, really, really it's a great process for assessing things." (Participant H)

Participant	Sample Responses
I	"Yes this all makes really good sense from an academic theoretical point of view. [But does the framework basically make practical sense to you and would you find it useful just to orient your thinking around leadership and sustainable competitive advantage?] Yeah, I think so, I guess so, I mean I've never seen it quite like this before but yeah, that does make sense." (Participant I)

These responses indicate initial positive perceptions of the pragmatic nature of the leadership framework, and as the next section demonstrates, various participants underscored the leader/follower dynamic, related definitions, and the attention to executive preferences as strengths of the leadership framework.

Noted Strengths of the Leadership Framework

The participants noted three strengths of the leadership framework: the leader/follower dynamic, the clarity of related definitions, and the attention to executive preferences. A majority of the participants (5/9[56%]) elaborated on the leader/follower dynamic and stressed its significance. They emphasized the importance of realizing that people serve as both leaders and followers simultaneously. Participant D shared a story detailing the importance of being both a leader and follower, concluding the story with, "You know, so it's a transition of responsibility and that's when you can go from a leader to a follower from within the same project with different audiences." Participant I punctuated its value by stating, "I think a lot of times those followers though are leaders and I guess that is the only thing I wouldn't want us to forget about...I think that's something I wouldn't want to lose track of." The leadership framework highlights the importance of being both a leader and a follower and that dynamic resonated with a majority of the participants.

Several participants (4/9[44%]) valued the clarity of definitions related to the leadership framework. As Participant H noted, "One of my pet peeves is terminology." The leadership framework defines and differentiates terms to provide clarity and to avoid negative associations. For example, followers remains one of those words that people perceive as being negative. Therefore, the leadership framework defines followers as a positive organizational role. Participant F elaborated on this idea:

> I think the presentation of that type of model (leader/follower) would strike some
>
> on a bit of a hollow note. Because it implies, almost like the haves and the have
>
> nots, the successful and those who are non-successful. But when you actually
>
> frame the follower component specifically in a way that really resonated with, hey
>
> these aren't people who are not capable of being leaders, it's just in their specific
>
> role at that specific time they have a certain role and function to fulfill. And it's
>
> not one of subservient or servant to, it's one of completing, I'll call it the circle
>
> of the work dynamic. (Participant F)

The leadership framework required concise definitions to serve as a pragmatic tool for practitioners. Participant D believed that the leadership framework met this challenge, stating, "I really like it. I like the, you've used, you've put things in a most simple, I'll even use the word convenient, words, definitions. And I really like your definition of followers." According to these participants, one of the reasons that the leadership framework appears to have met its goal of being accessible to practitioners is because of the clarity of its definitions.

The majority of participants (5/9[56%]) commented on reasons why the leadership framework resonated with them as senior level decision makers, reinforcing

their desire for simple presentations that effectively communicate the message.

Participant A illuminated this preference, stating, "Executives like things explained quick and simple, and you were able to do that with the diagram." In addition, executives focus on the long-term success of the organization and think more like stewards. Participant I used HE&R's CEO/President as an example to emphasize this point:

> Bill in his last X number of years leading this company, his vantage point is going to be slightly different in his career path, because now he's in a position, where he's thinking, 'hey, I don't care what I'm accomplishing today, I now want to be able to look back five years from now and make sure that I', the sustainability part is probably more important to him than it is the, his short term goal oddly enough is the long-term goal. You know because of his time. And that's where I think the framework is really solid. (Participant I)

Participant F reinforced the importance of the leadership framework's goal of realizing sustainable validity by adding, "It (the leadership framework) seems very well thought out, very well laid out, with certainly a desirable goal at its core." The next section discusses a critical factor identified by several participants for the success of the leadership framework.

Critical Success Factor

Four participants (4/9[44%]) reinforced the importance of definitions, specifically related to the terms sustainable competitive advantage and followers. They expressed concern about the common understandings and perceptions of words, especially applied to sustainable and followers. For example, sustainable according to Participant F can relay the unintended message of being static, meaning that organizations will not have to

engage in either continuous learning or continuous improvement. Participant F

explained:

> The one thing I, I didn't struggle with, I just, in my mind I have some caution
>
> around it, is this idea of, it's kind of a critical idea, sustainable competitive
>
> advantage. Because, again, everyone looks at these words and puts them through
>
> their own filters. So when I hear sustainable competitive advantage, to me it
>
> seems like a great idea, but it also seems like an idea that can be a dangerous
>
> concept. Because I think when you attach the word sustainable to something, it
>
> almost means self-fulfilling. So, as I look at our own timeline here and the things
>
> that we've put in place to be successful, they've all required evolution, so my only
>
> caution and thought around that word is it, it almost implies as if your logic
>
> engine, if you do X you get Y. So, I think there has to be some recognition that
>
> sustainable competitive advantage is something that is a formula that needs to
>
> continue to be evaluated and tweaked and evolve over time, versus relying on
>
> something that is just static. (Participant F).

Participant E expressed concern over how other team members might respond to the term

followers within the context of HE&R:

> From the way it's portrayed I'm not certain if the concept of followers is aptly
>
> named to resonate in the context of the organization. So as far as looking at this
>
> for a model that we could communicate without adjusting for (followers)....
>
> Exactly, does that make me a lamb. So trying to use this as a basis or framework
>
> to truly be a model would need refinement before we could share it with rank and
>
> file. (Participant E)

To further illustrate the complications around the word follower, consider the following question raised by Participant G about the role of followers:

> But then I sat back and said, hey, do I have to accept I'm a follower in order for this framework to be successful.... Do you have to accept that you're a follower? Does everyone, in order for this to be successful, do you have to accept that in some situation in your career, whether it's entry level, even executive, you're a follower and it's okay to be a follower because it may not be your subject matter expertise in that field. Do you have to accept that, for you to be successful, not you, but for this framework to be acceptable? Because in order, I just go back to for, in order for it to be successful, do you have to accept it. Because nobody, to your point, that's kind of that cliché word, I don't want to be a follower. But then there's it, people get into why are you a follower, well maybe I'm an introvert, maybe it's this, maybe it's that, or maybe I'm just not comfortable in that subject matter. It's just more of my, it's just a question. (Participant G)

In addition, Participant H raised a point that recognized the need to explicitly communicate the prescriptive nature of the terms leader and follower. Participant H stated:

> It looks reasonable, the question I had is the term followers? Which we're all followers, but leaders and followers as you describe them don't cover everybody in an organization, because we have a lot of individuals who might not be engaged with integrity, who possess critical thinking skills. So you didn't, what you didn't get to is what I think might be a group of people who aren't, who wouldn't fall into either the leader category or the followers as defined. They are

still followers, but they're not followers with this definition that you wrote.... But

in an organization, and to be successful you have all the other pieces and parts of

the equation so, that's what, that's what's a little tricky about, if we only had

these, everything you wrote here is perfect. And again, I don't know how that fits

in your theoretical framework here, but, as I look at it, I go well this is great and

this is great, but where's everybody else. (Participant H)

This point raised by Participant H relates to the difference between prescriptive

definitions, what things ought to be, and descriptive definitions, what things are. Overall,

the concerns shared by these participants reinforce the need to effectively communicate

the refined understanding of these terms, explain the difference between prescriptive and

descriptive definitions, and the importance of giving the terms sustainable competitive

advantage and followers considerable attention when introducing the leadership

framework.

Opportunity for Improvement

Two participants (2/9[22%]) suggested that the leadership framework could be

made less academic by using more business terms and by making some of the definitions

simpler to understand by drafting them in a more conversational tone. In the following

excerpt, Participant B shares thoughts on how the leadership framework could improve:

I would say it is still academic in nature this model. So you know, to bring it into

the business world, there's still some massaging that would have to be done....

And it just, it, use of words. And context. How many businesses use context?

You know, truly the, you know, are they the opportunities and threats? Is it

strengths and weaknesses? Is it strengths and opportunities? Strengths are

internal, opportunities are external. Is it, you are really talking about, 'hey, what

are those strengths and opportunities that you can grab along with leaders and

followers to create that'. See it? (Participant B)

Participant E also referred to the leadership framework as academic and expressed that

the definition of sustainable competitive advantage did not adequately clarify the

concept:

Taking a look at this it feels very, obviously it's for your doctorate, but it feels

very academic, versus feeling that there's this correlation or connection to an

operational paradigm.... I think I am ok with it. Obviously the concept of

competitive advantage is what everybody is going for, I think it's just such a

vague feeling.... Well, I think it just, even the way you define sustainable

competitive advantage is not easy for somebody to read that and understand. I

don't know that your definition feels like it's bringing clarity to it. I think just

sustainable competitive advantage might even be more clear than trying to

understand it as perfectly imitable factors that generate and capture unique value.

It's just, that tells me nothing more than competitive advantage does.

(Participant E)

These anecdotes reinforce the importance of words and definitions and the need to tailor

them to targeted audiences. These two participants underscore the need to express

complicated concepts in familiar jargon using a conversational tone. Accomplishing this

task without losing the nuance and complexity of such terms becomes a real challenge

and a real opportunity to improve the appeal of the leadership framework.

Points of Interest

The common use of the term leadership might present challenges for executives and senior leaders attempting to design a leadership development program as a SCA. Moreover, the leadership literature adds to this confusion by introducing over fifteen hundred different leadership definitions and roughly forty distinct theories of leadership (Kellerman, 2012). Therefore, two interview questions asked the participants if they believed that everyone at HE&R understood the concept of leadership differently; and second, if the leadership framework could prove useful to help create a common language around leadership.

The significant majority of the participants (8/9[89%]) indicated that they believed that employees at HE&R would understand the concept of leadership differently, while only one participant believed that most of the employees would explain leadership in the terms of HE&R's core values, specifically selfless spirit of service. One participant thought that the executive committee would have a rather homogenous understanding of leadership because of their close working relationship, while the rest of the organization would have various understandings of leadership. Three participants thought that there would be different responses, such as associating leadership with terms such as dictator, boss, and manager. For example, Participant C stated that "I think what you would hear, at the front line part of the organization is that our employees probably have a hard time discerning the difference between leadership and management." Participant I offered that "Some would say it's more dictators, right, you know they're my boss, they're going to tell me what to do." These findings indicate the complicated

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nature of discussing leadership in organizations because of multiple understandings of the concept.

The responses to the question asking about the potential usefulness of the leadership framework for creating a common language around leadership indicate that the participants believed that it could be useful. The participants all agreed (9/9[100%]) that a common language around leadership would be beneficial. Two representative comments from the participants help to reinforce this finding. Participant D stated, "Absolutely. That common language is so darn important." Or, as Participant I shared, "Sure, that would of course be good." These findings help support the need and potential usefulness of the leadership framework for creating a common language around leadership.

Theme

The importance of words, definitions, and perceptions inductively developed as a significant theme from these findings. The noted strengths, the critical factor for success, the opportunity for improvement, and the points of interest all underscore the magnified importance of the choice of words, clarity of definitions, and perceptions of people when working with a complicated concept such as leadership. Participant F calls attention to the personal nature of leadership:

> I really do think that leadership is one of those words that is very personal based on what you value. So if I value strength and my leader is strong, that's the kind of leadership I value because it resonates with me. It can be because my father was strong growing up, or it's because I have a military background.
> (Participant F)

Understanding and acknowledging the complicated nature of the concept of leadership, especially in a diverse organizational environment, will perhaps prove useful for senior leaders charged with designing leadership development programs as SCAs.

The Process Formative Assessment

The process for designing a leadership development program as a SCA includes three stages. This section details the findings from the guided interviews related to the process and highlights the participants' perceptions of its pragmatism. The interviews surfaced noted strengths, a critical success factor, areas of concern, and an inductively developed theme. Hopefully these findings can help make this process more useful and accessible to organizations and practitioners. The results indicate that the participants found the process structured with the end user in mind, and as a result exceedingly pragmatic.

The Pragmatism of the Process

The responses to the interview questions indicate that all of the participants (9/9[100%]) found the process exceedingly pragmatic, meaning user-friendly, logical, and practical. The questions focused on determining if the participants found the process user-friendly and if it made practical sense. Table 14 presents a representative sampling from each of the participants to help convey their perceptions of the pragmatism of the process.

Table 14

Perceptions of the Pragmatism of the Process

Participant	Sample Responses
A	"It's very structured…. It makes perfect sense…. Absolutely makes practical sense…. Absolutely user friendly…. Absolutely able to follow the process…. Very logical, makes sense." (Participant A)
B	"I liked how it was laid out. You know, it has to be strategy first.... I think once you go through it, it becomes user-friendly. I do think this is something that you can take into a business and say, okay, let's really talk about developing a leadership program. Here's how we can do it...Yeah, the process is solid." (Participant B)
C	"[Does the process make logical sense?] Yeah, absolutely, yeah it does, it does. [You find it user friendly?] I did. Yes, I mean it makes very logical, common sense in terms of a linear process to get this done." (Participant C)
D	"[Does this process make sense?] Absolutely. [Does it make logical sense, is it useful, user-friendly?] Yes, and I can apply it immediately to the way we came up with our core values.... I think the balance of it's really good." (Participant D)
E	"From a research design methodology yes I agree the steps make perfect sense.... The process itself looks like a right process to me... [From what I'm hearing you say is, you know just looking at it from your perspective it appears to be user friendly, it makes sense, it's logical in the way that it's laid out for the process, correct?] Right, from a needs assessment and design implementation sure, I think it's a logical structure. (Participant E)
F	"The process seems to me to be very consistent with how I would think that any well thought out, well-developed program would be developed. But for something like this, I don't know how else you would do it because there are bodies of work out there, and there are histories out there, and trying to, needing to I should say, spend the time to understand. Because a lot of this is so much, developed so much around psychology and motivation and the human condition that those aren't things you can approach without going through these phases. [So you find it very logical and practical and user-friendly?] 100%, 100%. Yeah, this makes a lot of sense." (Participant F)
G	"[Does that, does it make general sense, does it make practical sense?] It does make general sense absolutely, absolutely. [User-Friendly?] It looks as it is." (Participant G)
H	"Yeah, it's hard to argue with any of this. What are you going to argue? [So it's easy to follow?] What are you going to argue? Are you going to argue, discover, design, verify? And the elements inside those pretty well describe what you are doing." (Participant H)
I	"[So, is it user-friendly? Does it make practical sense in your mind?] I guess so. I mean I guess, you know, right, yeah. You're always you're trying to come up with your strategy first, right, and figure out how you're going to go about doing that and then you're trying to design your program. Yeah, you know, yeah it makes good sense, yeah." (Participant I)

These responses highlight the overall positive perceptions of the pragmatic nature of the process, reinforced by the willingness of one participant to consider adopting the process for future initiatives. Participant B exclaimed, "Going forward, I could see us (using this process) if we have another big initiative." The findings suggest that the participants believe the process pragmatic and accessible. In addition to the pragmatism of the process, the participants identified four strengths, which I detail in the next section.

Noted Strengths of the Process

Various participants cited four notable strengths of the process: the logic model, continuous improvement, the Valuable, Rare, Imitability, and Organization (VRIO) model, and the ability to limit preconceived notions. Of the four, the logic model made the strongest positive impact on a majority of the participants (8/9[89%]). Various participants discussed different aspects of the logic model that appealed to them. For example, Participant A commented on the element of "reverse engineering" the process, discussing how the logic model compels people to start with the long-term outcomes and then work backward to the initial inputs. Participant B emphasized how the logic model effectively and simply represented the hospitality-profit chain, indicating that the content of the logic model resonated with executives. Participant G agreed with this sentiment and believes the logic model has lots of executive appeal, stating, "The process of it, it was simplistic, digestible, and a one stop shop.... It's an executive summary, it's a dashboard." Another nuance of the logic model that was cited by Participant D involved its appeal to different audiences:

> So I think you did a really good job of having a data perspective, as well as a
>
> verbage perspective, you can relate either way. I think you've increased your,

your target audience, people that really will then, they'll take away different

things from it in different ways. (Participant D)

The ability to convey HE&R's business model for realizing sustainable validity on one

page, and in a holistic manner, appealed to this executive audience. Participant C noted,

"I think this would help us put a process behind what we're trying to accomplish." Or,

according to Participant D "We wouldn't have otherwise, we wouldn't have defined it

this way. But it's so much cleaner." The logic model appears to have helped organize

their strategic thinking by effectively presenting an overall plan. Participant H added:

Yeah, I mean this is a model, theoretical assumptions, inputs, activities and

outputs, initial outcomes, intermediate outcomes, long-term outcomes.... We all,

we do this in our heads, we don't do it on a sheet of paper and lay it out as a logic

step. But it really is a well thought out approach to it. (Participant H)

As evidenced, a majority of the participants commented on the strength of the logic

model as a useful tool and that the contents accurately reflected HE&R's strategy for

delivering on its core purpose. Participant E, however, tempered those responses.

According to Participant E, while the logic model could serve as a discussion tool, the

content lacked impact:

I just don't know that I feel enough of HE&R resonating in this material from

what I would be looking for sitting in a seat for you to provide an overview to

me.... You could replace HE&R and put any organizational name in there.... I

don't see how it really resonates as being something uniquely developed with us.

If you were to white out HE&R and I was to read it, I would have no, I would

read it, living here at the organization for lots of years, and not have any idea that

it's actually a study to support and take us to the next level from where we're at. It

doesn't resonate for me. (Participant E)

Taking this noted exception into consideration, the other participants overwhelmingly

reinforced the positive impact of the logic model.

While the participants mainly focused on the pragmatic nature of the process and

the strength of the logic model, two participants also noted several other strengths of the

process. The importance of continuous improvement became apparent when Participant

D offered the following:

And the last part that I'll say, in returning to stage 2, when you have people that

own the process throughout, the idea of saying we have to go back can seem like

a failure, and it's not that. It is improvement, it is refinement...it is refining, it's,

that part is amazing too. So if you have the right expert panel that says 'hey, this

is really good, but it's not there', that I think is key and I think that's incredible.

(Participant D)

Participant H also emphasized that the process calls for returning to Stage II if the expert

review panel finds that the actualized opportunity requires improvement before moving

forward to implementation planning. Participant H adds, "I love that you go back if it

doesn't work. You go back." Both of these participants felt that the process promoted

continuous improvement, which they considered imperative to its success.

Participant H also commented on the VRIO model, stating, "That's good stuff.

Valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and the organization's processes and capabilities,

got it." The positive reaction to this model implied that this type of strategic thinking,

looking at factors through a refined lens, mirrors the kind of analysis executives engage.

Lastly, Participant D commented that the process and its linear structure helps to mitigate preconceived notions. According to Participant D:

> So I think the most important aspect about this, I think this eliminates
> preconceived notions. The most senior person in the room...you know having 'hey
> don't you think, I really think that blank is important, don't you?' It changes the
> process. Where when yours are establish, identify, isolate, I love that word, it
> truly is trying to make sure we're looking at things and then verifying those.
> Things are so much more, so much more, it's laid out so much better to eliminate
> the human error aspect of it. (For example) If your gut says so and then you say
> 'hey, why don't we do some research around my gut', what a surprise, we're
> going to find research that does that. And we do that each and every day,
> unfortunately. 'Hey I think we, our new select services should have Hershey Park
> tied to it'. Well then our research specifically becomes to prove that to be true.
> And, so it's...when you truly look at research, independently, you know
> autonomously, then you have an understanding...so I think that's really key.
> (Participant D)

These findings indicate that the linear structure of the process facilitates sound analysis, as does the VRIO model, both areas highlighted by the participants as strengths. In addition, the participants pointed to the logic model and continuous improvement as the other notable strengths.

Critical Success Factor

Stage III of the process, Verify, calls for the assembly of an expert review panel to validate the logic and plausibility of the actualized opportunity. Participant D called

attention to the importance of assembling an objective and unbiased expert review panel.

Participant D explained the importance of this critical success factor:

> And the one thing that I really thought was interesting is the expert review panel.
> Deciding who's on the review panel, is probably more important than anything
> else because if you do everything else right, I don't want to say more important,
> equally important...you have to make sure you have a truly unbiased group... but
> make sure you define that (expert review panel) appropriately, I think that's key.
> (Participant D)

Participant D also emphasized the importance of having various perspectives, meaning individuals from different functional areas, represented on the expert review panel. This finding highlights the importance of ensuring that the right people serve on the expert review panel.

Areas of Concern

The findings identified two areas of concern about the process, one related to the time commitment required, and the second revolved around the perceived difficulty of satisfying the criteria of the VRIO model. Three participants (3/9[33%]) expressed concern over the amount of perceived time the process would take. Participant F, for example, discussed the different preferences related to personal style, stating that some individuals need information, data, and time for analysis before making decisions, whereas other people prefer making decisions quickly. Based on this observation, Participant F felt that this process might be frustrating for those who like to make quick decisions. Nevertheless, Participant F believes that the process works well for their industry, stating:

You talk about tech companies and sending out betas, I mean I can't imagine us

ever beta testing anything with the public before it was so well vetted, any of our

products or services. Can you imagine serving a meal only to find out people

hated what we were serving. Yeah I mean, it's an interesting concept and it works

in some business segments, but for us it's again the more, even as we present

ourselves as a business and the products and services that we offer, it's much

more along these lines (information, data, and time for analysis before making

decisions.) (Participant F)

The two other participants expressed concern specifically over the amount of time, with

Participant G asking in a straightforward manner, "The only question I had was how long

does it take?" The concern over the amount of time required to complete the process

reinforces the importance of articulating the value proposition for designing leadership

development programs as SCAs. By emphasizing the potential to realize sustainable

validity, the results of a basic cost/benefit analysis should justify the time and resource

commitment as an acceptable investment.

The final concern, raised by Participant I, pertains to the VRIO model and the

perceived difficulty of satisfying its criteria. Participant I stated, "You know, just trying

to come up with the VRIO it's, that in and of itself sounds difficult." This point, along

with the concern over the time commitment required for the process, suggests the need to

proactively discuss these topics before engaging in the process. These discussions could

play an important educational role, as noted by Participant B, "This educates people

around this whole idea of looking at SCAs and leadership development.... It can help

orient people to these different terms, concepts." Nevertheless, these concerns offer

important considerations and perspectives to organizations and people considering this process. If approached creatively, these concerns could offer an organization the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue, while at the same time educating and orienting team members to the importance of these concepts.

Theme

The overwhelming positive perception of the pragmatism of the process underscores the preference of executives for precise, linear, and user-friendly processes that enable them to navigate complexity. For example, the participants gravitated to the logic model and responded positively to its ability to convey complex ideas in a user-friendly format. As Participant G stated, "It's an executive summary, it's a dashboard." In addition, various participants drew attention to words and definitions, such as the need to explicitly define who should be included on the expert review panel. These findings support the observation that executives respond to, and expect clarity. Perhaps this realization will allow people interested in introducing this process to emphasize these components, therefore focusing on items that executives appreciate.

The Core Values Initiative Formative Assessment

The leadership development program designed as a SCA, referred to as the Core Values Initiative, was a result of the first two stages of the process, Discover and Verify. The Core Values Initiative proposes to more meaningfully embed HE&R's core values throughout the entire organization. As documented in the section titled "HE&R Alignment", this study found that HE&R drives their core purpose and core values using various systems, processes, and programs. They make concerted efforts to reinforce the importance of their core values. Examples of such efforts include the Character-Centered

Culture program required of all exempt employees, the Legacy Checks program, core

values discussions during line meetings, and core values incorporated in the performance

appraisals and compensation plans of exempt employees. HE&R understands the critical

importance of its core values and as a result, the participants were already receptive to the

idea of more meaningfully embedding them throughout the entire organization.

The formative assessment of the Core Values Initiative fulfills Stage III of the

process, which calls for an expert review panel to validate its logic and plausibility. For

this case study, the HE&R executive committee and two subject matter experts served in

this capacity. The findings of the interviews indicate unanimous support for the logic and

plausibility of the Core Values Initiative.

This section provides a formative assessment of the Core Values Initiative,

reporting the findings of the interviews about its logic and plausibility. As already noted,

the participants found the Core Values Initiative logical and plausible. The following

discussion presents these findings, in addition to a noted strength, three factors raised as

critical success factors, an opportunity for improvement, and two inductively developed

themes.

The Logic and Plausibility of the Core Values Initiative

The participants unanimously (9/9[100%]) found the Core Values Initiative

logical and plausible. Table 15 presents a representative sampling from each of the

participants to highlight responses about the logic and plausibility of the Core Values

Initiative.

Table 15

Perceptions of the Logic and Plausibility of the Core Values Initiative

Participant	Sample Responses
A	"You know, you were right on the mark when you said them relating it back to themselves is a little different.... These behaviors of excellence, I like how they tie back into not only the core values, but by level.... I think this is an interesting way to look at potentially revamping some of those questions that we have on our current performance appraisal to really tie them all back into those core values.... Yeah (makes business sense)....Yeah (capture SCA).... All of this made great sense.... Right, yeah, you have it all connect. It makes perfect sense." (Participant A)
B	"So, this whole idea, I did like this a lot. I think this was well done. [If the core values are embedded throughout all of HE&R's performance management, does it have the opportunity to deliver a SCA?] Absolutely. Absolutely.... [Right, so do you think that the Core Values Initiative would be useful?]. I do, absolutely. Absolutely.... [So do you think the Core Values Initiative is worth pursuing?] Oh, 10-4, yes.... This would only help to you know, put a finer point on the pencil to make sure we are getting it the right way. So I think that absolutely would be great. So again, there's nothing on here that I think would not add value to doing." (Participant B)
C	"I think that's an area of opportunity for us.... Yeah, it's the next iteration of how we drive this further in the organization. Because, to your point earlier when you hire several thousand young people, how do you get them up to speed quickly, so that if I'm running the dippin' dots stand, that I understand what the values are and how I'm supposed to treat people.... We've got 500 plus or minus people that understand where we're trying to go, and I think we have tremendous alignment around that, imagine the power of having 6000 people, not 500 in alignment over this? Now you've really got lightning in a bottle." (Participant C)
D	"I really like it, up through our managerial level. I have no doubt that it will be incredibly effective and efficient, two entirely different things and one can hurt the other, in this case I think it's both. I think it could work really well.... The behaviors of excellence I think is great.... Pay for performance, absolutely. So, you know, we're doing some of that but we could always improve." (Participant D)
E	"[But just given that assumption that there are those, you know, those bands, does that make sense to be able to behaviorally explain those core values at each one of those levels? So that somebody would be able to know what my expectations are of those core values, of how they manifest themselves at that level?] Yes, but I think you have it way over-simplified based on our organization and the structure when we talk about bands." (Participant E)

Participant	Sample Responses
F	"I was looking through this and how you embed the core values into the process so deeply, it seemed very comfortable for me, because it feels so familiar to what we're doing in a way already. Now, the aspect of it that I thought was, I thought lots of aspects were really interesting. Specifically, when you talk about how to effectuate this in real terms at all levels of the organization." (Participant F)
G	"Understood, very good. Do I think we have opportunity, I think that's probably what you're getting at, to have it more on the forefront? I think we always do. I think we always do.... Will this help with our retention, will it help with whatever the indicators we have as a company, you know to answer your question, yes." (Participant G)
H	"[So, that makes sense?] Yup. [So the core values initiative, it's generally speaking logical, it's plausible?] Yeah." (Participant H)
I	"I mean it's logical.... So, I mean, I certainly think you can do it." (Participant I)

While these statements convey general support for the logic and plausibility of the initiative, they also demonstrate the potential positive impact on the entire organization. For example, Participant C stated, "Imagine the power of having 6000 people, not 500 in alignment over this? Now you've really got lightning in a bottle." Participant B added, "So again, there's nothing on here that I think would not add value to doing." Given the positive perceptions of the logic and plausibility of this initiative from the participants, the following sections provide a more balanced view of the participants' perceptions of the Core Values Initiative to help inform implementation planning.

In addition to being useful to HE&R, Participant B suggested that the Core Values Initiative could benefit other organizations:

> So to be honest, there are companies out there going 'dear lord we just need someone to help us create a better culture'.... There are good companies out there that have just lost their way. These could be things that they step back to and say okay, we need to create our way again. And this could help them, quote, create the way. (Participant B)

Even though other organizations might not secure a sustainable competitive advantage from implementing such an initiative, perhaps this initiative could prove useful as a means for them to achieve competitive parity. The following sections provide a more holistic picture of the Core Values Initiative.

Noted Strength

Two participants (2/9[22%]) called attention to the method for identifying the behaviors of excellence for each organizational level, a hybrid behavioral observation scale (B.O.S.) method. Taking into account executive preferences, this study adopted a hybrid B.O.S. method as a means to deliver necessary results in a reliable yet expedient fashion. Participant A noted this as a strength of the Core Values Initiative, stating, "This (hybrid B.O.S. method) seems so much cleaner, faster, to the point." The comparison referenced by this participant related to an arduous process that the HE&R used for building a competency model. Moreover, Participant G highlighted the fact that the hybrid B.O.S method adopts a continuous improvement approach, thereby helping to ensure that the identified behaviors remain relevant and useful. Participant G stated, "And the other big thing for me is making sure we evolve, they can't continue to be stagnant, because the words we use today are very different from the words that the millennials are using tomorrow." These two participants found this hybrid B.O.S. method a notable strength of the Core Values Initiative because of its perceived effectiveness and efficiency and its focus on continuous improvement.

Critical Success Factors

Three factors were highlighted as critical for the success of the Core Values Initiative: identifying the organization's levels (bands), the definition of high-performers,

and the weighting of core values in both the performance appraisal and related

compensation plan. First, Participant E underscored the complexity involved with

identifying the organizational levels (bands) for a diverse organization such as HE&R.

Participant E commented, "Yes, but I think you have it way over-simplified based on our

organization and the structure when we talk about bands." At HE&R, with its sixteen

separate enterprises, the complexity and importance of identifying the appropriate bands

becomes an important consideration. Participant D elaborates:

> I think identifying the bands is, that part's equally as important. So when we've
>
> talked about, so it's easy for us to say senior management, it's easy for us to say
>
> we have a thing called steering committee, and then we have the managerial
>
> group. And so those are clear bands, whether or not you would use those exact
>
> bands. I think then when we get back to that seasonal work force, how we
>
> defined, I think making that one band, is not the best idea. I think you would have
>
> to figure out how to band that, and again if you're looking at different
>
> applications at different companies, you know, if I'm just the hotel well we can
>
> band it as the housekeeping group, we could band it as the F&B team, we could
>
> probably subdivide that you know the a la carte restaurant versus the room
>
> service. Because, it's how you look at putting them as a group is very important.
>
> (Participant D)

For the Core Values Initiative, these participants indicate that taking the time to correctly

identify the organization's bands becomes an important factor for success.

The second critical factor for success noted by Participants G and H pertains to

the hybrid B.O.S. method. These two participants noted the importance of defining high-

performers, those individuals selected from each organizational band to identify the behaviors of excellence. Participant G stressed the importance of ensuring that the high-performers selected represent the diversity indicative of HE&R. Participant G qualifies diversity by stating:

> How we better make core values digestible, and make it institutionalized into everybody's mindset, is making sure that we have a diverse, I keep using diverse, a diverse workforce that helps build that.... It's not just an inclusive, it's making sure that what we think is digestible, is also digestible to the 25 year olds, really coming in from college and this makes sense. (Participant G)

These comments reflect the importance of ensuring that the high-performers do not only represent a homogenous group of employees. This becomes especially important for HE&R with its seasonal workforce, which includes teenagers through retired baby boomers. In addition, Participant H expressed concern that high-performers, if not properly defined, could lead to the selection of individuals that were recognized as performing exceptionally well relative to only one core value, but perhaps not performing well overall. Therefore, Participant H expressed the need to ensure that high-performers were those individuals who got the right results, the right way. Participant H explains:

> I think it's getting the accountability portion in this that is important because some people are perceived to be the nicest, best, most selfless person in the world, but as a manager they're going to have a tough time getting the job done.
> (Participant H)

Both of these participants emphasized that an organization should convey a clear understanding of high-performers before starting the selection process.

The third critical success factor involves properly weighting the core values section in both the performance appraisal and the compensation plan. The point raised focused on the importance of ensuring that the weighting of the core values section makes a significant difference. Participant H elaborated on this point:

> I did like the part, the do it right scoring quotient, having it. The trick about that, is it's all good, right, so department goals, management goals, personal goals, got it, got it got it. That's 75%. The do things the right way, well nobody does things 100% the wrong way, and if the scores are going to vary from 100-95 it's not going to make much difference in any of this math. Right, it isn't. So you're the nicest person, you get 100, and I'm a little bit of a jerk sometimes so I'm a 90 or a 95. Well that's 90% of 25. Really? I'll live with it because I'm crushing all these other numbers. So the trick is how do you, it's valuable, but it's the calibration. (Participant H)

This finding stresses the importance of thinking through how to weight the core values section in both the performance appraisal and the related compensation plan to help ensure that the results translate into a meaningful difference.

Opportunity for Improvement

Participant H raised the concern that the Core Values Initiative should explicitly state that the behaviors of excellence represent foundational building blocks for the next organizational level. As currently written, it could be misleading people to infer that once they earn a promotion, then they no longer have to exhibit the behaviors of excellence representative of the level they used to work. Participant H explains:

It's actually an 'and', not an 'or'. Yeah, it's this, plus this, plus this, equals the

executive. [I really like that it's an 'and', not an 'or'] It really is. Because as I'm

looking at it going, no no no, I have to do all of these things too. [Exactly, and

they don't go away] And they don't go away, so it's an 'and', ok, got it. Well, it's

not you do this, you do this, you do this. It's you do this, if you want to get to

here, you do this plus this, if you want to get to here, you do this plus this plus

this. (Participant H)

This indicates that the opportunity for improvement becomes explicitly communicating

the additive nature of the behaviors of excellence, reinforcing that people remain

responsible for the initial behaviors of excellence. As employees advance, they now

become responsible for an additional set of behavioral expectations.

Themes

Two themes inductively developed from the findings: (a) the importance of clear

communication, and (b) the need for a step preceding implementation planning. The

importance of clarity and definitions appears to be the common thread not only between

the critical success factors, but also between the critical success factors and the

opportunity for improvement. Participants cited the importance of clearly conveying the

complexity associated with identifying organizational bands, along with the need to

clearly and effectively communicate the definition of high-performers and the weight

associated with the core values in both the performance appraisals and the related

compensation plans. In addition, the opportunity for improvement expressed the need to

clearly explain the additive nature of the behaviors of excellence.

The second theme that inductively developed from the findings might help organizations and practitioners better transition from this process into implementation planning. Several participants (4/9[44%]) noted that while they found the Core Values Initiative logical and plausible, they would need to understand the resource implications better before moving forward with implementation planning. These participants noted that they would need to assess the costs compared to the projected benefits. For example, Participant I commented about the resource implications, "What sort of investment are we being asked to put into this idea of coming up with these behaviors? And, how much time and energy?" Participant C expressed the concern about a cost/benefit analysis, stating:

> One of the things that comes up is that 97% of our employees say, in the survey, I understand how our values work and how I can employ them during my work life every day. Which is off the charts, unbelievable. Benchmark, from a benchmark standpoint, I think the benchmark's like 60 percent. Now, whether they really believe that, at least from an engagement standpoint, we've done a good job of keeping the values front of mind. So, with this kind of effort, how much can we advance ourselves? And that's, I would want to have more conversation about that. (Participant C)

These comments suggest that after an actualized opportunity advances past the scrutiny of the expert review panel, the next logical step before moving forward with implementation planning is conducting a cost/benefit analysis to answer these sorts of questions. This finding also might indicate the heightened importance of effectively

communicating the benefit, which is sustainable validity, to persuasively make the case

that the actualized opportunity will secure a sustainable competitive advantage.

Summary of Findings and Analysis

This chapter presented a more refined understanding of HE&R, offered basic

participant profiles, and presented formative assessments of the leadership framework,

process, and Core Values Initiative. These formative assessments addressed the

questions posed by the research objectives about the pragmatism of the leadership

framework and process, and the perceived logic and plausibility of the Core Values

Initiative. Additionally, the formative assessments presented a balanced picture and a

more holistic perspective with the intent of aiding practitioners tasked with designing

leadership development programs as SCAs (see Tables 16, 17, and 18).

Table 16

Leadership Framework Formative Assessment Summary

Leadership Framework	
Category	*Participant Response*
Pragmatic (useful, logical, and practical)	Yes: 9/9 (100%)
Noted Strengths	(a) Leader/follower dynamic: 5/9 (56%) (b) Clarity of related definitions: 4/9 (44%) (c) Attention to executive preferences: 5/9 (56%)
Critical Success Factor	Reinforce definitions for sustainable competitive advantage, followers, and leaders and highlight the prescriptive nature of the definitions for leaders and followers: 4/9 (44%)
Opportunity for Improvement	Make the leadership framework less academic by using familiar jargon and a conversational tone: 2/9 (22%)
Points of Interest	(a) 8/9 (89%) indicated that HE&R employees would understand the concept of leadership differently (b) 9/9 (100%) indicated that a common language around leadership would be beneficial
Theme	The importance of words, definitions, and perceptions

Table 17

The Process Formative Assessment Summary

The Process	
Category	***Participant Response***
Pragmatic (user-friendly, logical, and practical)	Yes: 9/9 (100%)
Noted Strengths	(a) The logic model: 8/9 (89%) (b) Continuous improvement: 2/9 (22%) (c) VRIO (Valuable, Rare, Imitability, Organization) Model: 1/9 (11%) (d) Preconceived notions mitigated: 1/9 (11%)
Critical Success Factor	Assemble an objective and unbiased expert review panel: 1/9 (11%)
Areas of Concern	(a) Time required to complete the process: 3/9 (33%) (b) Difficulty of satisfying the criteria of the VRIO Model: 1/9 (11%)
Theme	The preference of executives for precise, linear, and user-friendly processes that enable them to navigate complexity

Table 18

The Core Values Initiative Formative Assessment Summary

The Core Values Initiative	
Category	***Participant Response***
Logic and Plausibility	Yes: 9/9 (100%)
Noted Strength	The hybrid B.O.S. (behavioral observation scale) method for identifying the behaviors of excellence for each organizational level: 2/9 (22%)
Critical Success Factors	(a) Correctly identify the organization's levels (bands): 2/9 (22%) (b) Defining high-performers: 2/9 (22%) (c) Weighting of core values in both the performance appraisal and related compensation plan: 1/9 (11%)
Opportunity for Improvement	Explicitly communicating the additive nature of the behaviors of excellence, reinforcing that people remain responsible for the initial behaviors of excellence: 1/9 (11%)
Themes	(a) The importance of clear communication (b) The need for a cost/benefit analysis before moving forward with implementation planning

The next chapter presents an assimilation and discussion of the research findings in light

of the research question and related objectives and offers possible implications of the

study. Additionally, the chapter introduces two noteworthy considerations, limitations,

potential future research, and recommendations for practitioners.

CHAPTER VI

ASSIMILATION AND DISCUSSION

This study adopted a descriptive single-case study method, including formative assessments, to answer the research question: How can organizations design leadership development programs as SCAs? The study progressed through three phases to answer this question. Phase I synthesized the research literature to develop a leadership framework and process to serve as a guide for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. Phase II described how I used the leadership framework and process to design such a program for HE&R, the Core Values Initiative. Phase III of the study included formative assessments of the leadership framework and process to determine if the participants found them pragmatic, and of the Core Values Initiative to determine if they found it logical and plausible. The findings indicate that the participants found the leadership framework and process pragmatic, and supported the logic and plausibility of the Core Values Initiative. Additionally, the findings provided information that will enhance their accessibility and usefulness to practitioners.

This chapter begins with an assimilation and discussion of the findings in relation to the research question and objectives. I will then discuss the implications of the study for leadership and strategic leadership and introduce two noteworthy considerations. The chapter concludes with a discussion about the limitations of the study, suggested future research, and recommendations for practitioners adopting the leadership framework and process.

Assimilation

This section presents the findings as they relate to the research question and objectives, connecting the findings back to the research literature from Chapter Two. The basic taxonomy of leadership and the strategic understanding of leadership were foundational to this study. Therefore, I introduce some of the implications they have for both leadership and strategic leadership.

Research Question and Objectives

The research question asked how organizations can design leadership development programs as SCAs. The natural first step in answering this question was to review the leadership and organizational strategy literature to locate either a framework or process to guide such an initiative. As outlined in Chapter Two, the literature review revealed that the organizational strategy and leadership fields had not coalesced to produce a framework or process to guide the design of a leadership development program as a SCA. Therefore, the first objective of this study was to develop a synthesized leadership framework and process from the research literature that together provide a unified solution and parsimonious guide for such work.

The leadership and organizational strategy literature inferred that the synthesized leadership framework and process should be pragmatic, concise, and accessible to practitioners. For example, the leadership literature details the failure of many generic leadership development programs to deliver strategic advantage or to develop leaders because of the ubiquitous and undifferentiated use of the term (see Charan, 2005; Clardy, 2007; Cohn et al., 2005; Lado et al., 1992; Ready & Conger, 2007; Ulrich & Ulrich, 2010; Veslor et al., 2010). Moreover, organizational strategy literature and research have

lost their appeal and accessibility to practitioners because they have become too esoteric and theory-based (Hambrick, 2004).

These inferred expectations informed the synthesis of the research literature to help inductively develop a pragmatic leadership framework that delivers a refined strategic understanding of leadership, which offers clarity through definitions of concepts, to guide the design of leadership development programs as SCAs. The inductively developed theme from the formative assessment of the leadership framework, which was the importance of words, definitions, and perceptions, reinforced this need for clarity. The participants (4/9[44%]) noted the clarity of the related definitions of the leadership framework as a strength, and all of the participants (9/9[100%]) found it pragmatic, meaning useful, logical, and practical. Participant A underscores the pragmatism of the leadership framework by stating, "It (the leadership framework) makes perfect sense.... All of it together makes sense.... Reading it the first time I could get it.... This plus this is truly sustainable validity." Furthermore, Participant D punctuates the framework's concise use of definitions, remarking, "I really like it. I like the, you've used, you've put things in a most simple, I'll even use the word convenient, words, definitions." The leadership framework developed from a synthesis of research literature, met the inferred expectations as evidenced by the findings of the formative assessment, and was used successfully to guide the design of a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R. These results provide support for the leadership framework and this study.

The process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs incorporates influences from the organizational strategy and formative assessment

literature. The process emerged through the aforementioned inferred expectations of the

leadership and organizational strategy literature for pragmatism, concise language, and

accessibility to practitioners. The inductively developed theme from the formative

assessment of the process, which was the preference of executives for precise, linear, and

user-friendly processes that enable them to navigate complexity, supports these inferred

expectations. The participants (9/9[100%]) found the process exceedingly pragmatic,

meaning user-friendly, logical, and practical. Participant B's sentiments represent these

findings:

> I liked how it was laid out. You know, it has to be strategy first.... I think once
>
> you go through it, it becomes user-friendly. I do think this is something that you
>
> can take into a business and say, okay, let's really talk about developing a
>
> leadership program. Here's how we can do it.... Yeah, the process is solid.
>
> (Participant B)

Additionally, a majority of the participants (8/9[89%]) responded favorably to the use of

a logic model. They liked its approach to presenting complex ideas simply, reinforcing

the inferred expectations from the leadership and organizational strategy literature for

pragmatism and accessibility to practitioners. Participant G succinctly summarizes this

sentiment, stating, "The process of it (the logic model), it was simplistic, digestible, and a

one stop shop.... It's an executive summary, it's a dashboard." These findings, coupled

with the successful use of the process at HE&R to guide the design of the Core Values

Initiative, provide support for this process and study.

Phase II of this study used the leadership framework and process to design the

Core Values Initiative at HE&R. The findings from the formative assessment of the Core

Values Initiative indicate that all of the participants (9/9[100%]) found it logical and plausible, therefore advancing the initiative out of the process and into implementation planning. One of the themes from the formative assessment of the Core Values Initiative was the importance of clear communication, which tangentially supports the inferred expectations for pragmatism, concise language, and accessibility to practitioners. Participant B supported the logic and plausibility not only for HE&R, but also for other organizations:

> So to be honest, there are companies out there going 'dear lord we just need someone to help us create a better culture'.... There are good companies out there that have just lost their way. These could be things that they step back to and say okay, we need to create our way again. And this could help them, quote, create the way. (Participant B)

The use of the leadership framework and process to guide the successful design of the Core Values Initiative for HE&R, as evidenced by the formative assessment results, provide support for the Core Values Initiative and this study.

Overall, this case study demonstrated how practitioners can use the leadership framework and process in an established company to successfully design a leadership development program as a SCA, thus addressing the research question. The positive reaction to the Core Values Initiative further supports the leadership framework and process as a means for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The next two sections present implications for leadership and strategic leadership stemming from the leadership framework used for this study.

Implications for Leadership

A basic taxonomy of leadership, which served as the foundation for the synthesized leadership framework that was developed and used for this study, has implications for the field of leadership. As detailed in Chapter Two, Fiedler (1967), Burns (1978), Hollander (1978), and Gardner (1993) influenced the direction of the leadership field toward a basic taxonomy of leadership that positions leadership as a process involving leaders, followers, and context. These factors operate together to achieve common goals. This taxonomy of leadership gently guides research, grounds dialogue, and advances understanding, yet doing so unofficially.

The basic taxonomy serves as the foundation for the synthesized leadership framework used for this study. Its broad focus and general language helped guide and orient the synthesis of the leadership framework without being restrictive or constraining, thus allowing for a specific framework to emerge to meet a specific need. In this case, to guide practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs.

The success of the leadership framework in guiding the design of the Core Values Initiative at HE&R, coupled with the fact that participants found it pragmatic, adds further support for the basic taxonomy of leadership. The rationale for this assertion stems from the fact that the basic taxonomy of leadership serves as the foundation for the leadership framework adopted for this research. Therefore, support and success of the leadership framework is de facto support of this taxonomy of leadership.

The implication that this has for the study of leadership is that this leadership taxonomy continues to serve as a practical guide for research. In this case, it successfully provided the foundation for a synthesized leadership framework geared for a specific

purpose. The basic taxonomy of leadership remains useful for leadership scholars, but perhaps it can also prove useful to practitioners. The participants largely responded that they thought people at HE&R understand the concept of leadership differently at different levels of the organization. They also all agreed that a common language around the concept of leadership could prove useful. Therefore, the implication for the practice of leadership is that the basic taxonomy of leadership can perhaps meet this need for a collective understanding by serving as a guide and common language addressing leadership.

Implications for Strategic Leadership

The literature focused on strategic leadership, and strategic leadership development does not offer a refined framework that synthesizes the advances made in the scholarship of leadership and organizational strategy. Hughes (1998) and Kjelin (2009) tried to change the direction and focus of the strategic leadership research, adding a framework and a concept analysis to the literature. Hughes (1998) offered a framework of strategic leadership that moved away from focusing on the strategic knowledge, skills, and abilities required of the top management team, and instead presented a framework of strategic leadership that focuses on the intersection between the individual leader, competitive environment, and the organization. Kjelin (2009) presented an analysis of the concept of strategic leadership in an effort to clarify the concept while aligning it with the advances made in the scholarship of leadership. Nevertheless, the focus of strategic leadership research largely remains on the skills required of those senior decision-makers who assume the responsibility for formulating, implementing, and evaluating organizational strategy.

Hughes' (1998) and Kjelin's (2009) contributions are notable because they identified the need to think differently about strategic leadership. The strategic understanding of leadership used for this study, the leadership framework, synthesized the advances made in both leadership and organizational strategy providing a refined understanding of strategic leadership. This leadership framework advances the work of both Hughes (1998) and Kjelin (2009) by offering both a framework and a refined understanding of the concept of strategic leadership. The refined understanding of strategic leadership used in this study infuses leadership with the specific goal of realizing sustainable validity. The concept of sustainable competitive advantage, which remains the focus of much of the organizational strategy research, serves as the foundation for sustainable validity. Moreover, the leadership framework was successfully used in an organizational setting and the participants perceived it as pragmatic, thus supporting its usefulness and effectiveness in organizations.

The implication for the study of strategic leadership is that the leadership framework reinforces the direction introduced by Hughes (1998) and Kjelin (2009) by offering another framework and understanding of strategic leadership to that work. Perhaps a line of inquiry will develop if scholars focus on offering additional frameworks and refined understandings of strategic leadership. This specific research stream could produce additional guides, tools, and frameworks for practitioners, as evidenced by the usefulness of the leadership framework used in this study to design the Core Values Initiative for HE&R. The leadership framework continues the research efforts of Hughes (1998) and Kjelin (2009) by introducing a framework of strategic leadership geared to guiding the design of leadership development programs as SCAs. Additionally, it

provides a more refined understanding of the concept by infusing leadership with the strategic purpose of realizing sustainable validity.

Discussion

This section introduces two noteworthy considerations. The first consideration focuses on the potential for using the leadership framework and process in the non-profit and public sectors. The second thought concerns the limited resource implications of adopting the leadership framework and process. The following discussion details these two noteworthy considerations and their implications.

Noteworthy Considerations

This case study detailed how the Core Values Initiative was designed within HE&R. The findings of the formative assessments indicate that the participants found the Core Values Initiative logical and plausible, and the leadership framework and process pragmatic. After engaging in this process for HE&R, I arrived at two potentially useful considerations. First, all organizations from all sectors, not just private for-profit businesses with unique histories and social purposes, could possibly benefit from using the leadership framework and process deployed in this study. Second, HE&R did not have to expend any time, effort, or money on data collection efforts but was able to use readily available organizational information. The following provides a more detailed account of these two considerations.

This research used HE&R as a case study to answer the question of how organizations can design leadership development programs as SCAs. HE&R is a private for-profit business with a unique history and social purpose. However, all organizations strive to realize sustainable validity, regardless of their purpose, history, or sector.

Organizations in the public sector try to serve their constituents to the best of their ability, as do non-profit organizations. Moreover, these organizations compete over scarce resources, especially funding and talented people, making their environments just as competitive as the business environment. Therefore, the desire to design leadership development programs as SCAs should appeal to all organizations, regardless of purpose or sector. I believe that the leadership framework and process can be useful for all organizations looking to realize sustainable validity, not just private for-profit businesses with a unique history and social purpose.

The other noteworthy consideration of this study is that the leadership framework and process can save organizations considerable time, money, and effort. Most organizations must remain judicious with the allocation of their resources, including money, time, and people. The leadership framework and process implemented in this study requires time for analysis, dialogue, and intentional deliberation, as do any initiatives for designing new processes, systems, and programs. However, most organizations already have much of the information necessary to use the leadership framework and process because of their strategic planning efforts. The leadership framework and process provides organizations with a tool to analyze existing information differently. If, however, organizations have not engaged in strategic planning, and therefore do not have the required information, then the leadership framework and process may still help by orienting and focusing that process. The time, effort, and money saved from organized and focused execution could be significant.

I share the first noteworthy consideration because HE&R, as a service organization with an alignment with a social responsibility (i.e., support for the children

attending the Milton Hershey School), suggests that the framework and process used in this study may also provide opportunities for non-profit and public sector organizations wishing to realize sustainable validity. It may help to ensure that these organizations, designed to serve people and the common good, will achieve long-term superior organizational performance. I recognized the second noteworthy consideration as I reflected on my experience and realized that HE&R did not spend any time, money, or effort in collecting any new data. Therefore, recognizing that the perceived resource implications could dissuade some practitioners from adopting the leadership framework and process, I thought this notable aspect of my experience might prove informative.

Study Limitations

This section presents three primary limitations of the study, with HE&R posing the first limitation. HE&R's unique history, social purpose, and complexity, coupled with the fact that it is a private for-profit organization wholly owned by the Hershey Trust, positions HE&R as an extremely rare case. These facts, however, also served as the rationale for adopting a descriptive single-case study, which provided an organized approach to detail how to design a leadership development program as a SCA. Resultantly, practitioners may potentially see its applicability to their organizations.

The limited amount of time I spent interviewing each of the participants presents the second limitation, while also noting the amount of time interacting with the participants. Outside of the time I spent at HE&R attending initial meetings to discuss the ideas, feasibility, and potential benefits of the study, I interacted with each of the participants during a sixty-minute presentation. The participants also received a twelve-page executive summary of the leadership framework, process, and Core Values

Initiative, including a glossary, for their review four days in advance of the presentation (see Appendix B). The participants' perceptions and responses were based on these interactions as opposed to being based on a more collaborative effort. A limitation of this study, however, centers on the fact that I was afforded only one hour to interview each participant to capture their perceptions on a variety of complex ideas and concepts. Perhaps more data could have emerged given the opportunity for extended interview sessions.

The third and final limitation of this study is that there was only one perspective presented, that of the senior level decision-makers of the organization. This perspective was critical given the strategic nature of this study, but it was limited. The rest of HE&R's team members did not participate.

Future Research

Possible future research focuses on three general areas. First, studying the leadership framework and process in a variety of different organizational and industry settings will mitigate the limitations resulting from using HE&R in this study. For example, private for-profit organizations that do not have a unique history or social purpose, or come from industries other than entertainment and hospitality. Organizations from the public and non-profit sectors, or publicly traded corporations would present different organizational settings from HE&R. Also, organizations operating in different stages in their organizational life cycle, from start-up through mature, might serve as a useful contrast to HE&R's established business. These potential studies, especially organizations from the public and non-profit sectors, would help explore whether the leadership framework and process would prove useful for other organizations.

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Secondly, follow-up research with HE&R to determine if they implemented the Core Values Initiative would supplement the findings of this study. If HE&R did not move forward with the initiative, the reasons offered would provide useful information for further evaluating the leadership framework and process. If they did move forward and implement the initiative, researching the impact of the program over an extended time would help determine if the program served as a SCA as theorized.

The third general area for possible future research involves the Core Values Initiative. This study presents synthesized information from various research literature that helped to design the Core Values Initiative. By implementing the Core Values Initiative, other organizations might not meet the criteria for securing SCA, but they might still gain a competitive advantage, or at the least competitive parity. Therefore, studying the Core Values Initiative and its impact on various organizations might shed some further light in this area.

<div align="center">**Recommendations**</div>

I offer five recommendations for using the leadership framework and process. These recommendations come from my experience using them at HE&R and from the formative assessments. The specific areas from the formative assessments that informed these recommendations are the critical factors for success, opportunities for improvement, areas of concerns, and the themes. These areas underscore the importance of recognizing the value of concise language and continuous improvement as two approaches for mitigating complications and confusion when dealing with complex situations and concepts, such as organizations, leadership, and strategy. I offer five

recommendations, arrived at from both my experience and the findings of the formative

assessments, for practitioners adopting the leadership framework and process.

1. *Secure executive commitment.* Proactively discuss the resource commitment

   required in relation to the expected outcome, therefore reinforcing the concept of

   sustainable validity. The opportunity to engage in a process that will help achieve

   long-term superior organizational performance will resonate with the focus and

   goals of an organization's executive team.

2. *Introduce the basic taxonomy of leadership first.* The basic taxonomy of

   leadership is the foundation for the leadership framework and executive teams

   need to first understand this conceptualization of leadership before moving

   forward.

3. *Reinforce the purpose and definitions of the leadership framework.* Emphasize

   that the leadership framework is a tool meant to guide and orient thinking and call

   attention to the prescriptive nature of the related definitions. Reinforce the idea

   that sustainable competitive advantage requires continuous improvement.

4. *Determine who should serve as an expert review panel.* Spend considerable time

   deciding who should serve on the expert review panel to ensure an objective and

   unbiased review.

5. *Emphasize the importance of continuous improvement.* Take extra time to

   reinforce to an organization's executive team that continuous improvement is

   woven into the leadership framework and the process. The leadership framework

   mandates ongoing analysis due to the fluid nature of context, and the process

underscores its importance by explicitly stating that it is acceptable if the expert review panel recommends returning to Stage Two.

Conclusion

In a complex and rapidly changing environment where organizations and their executive teams strive for long-term superior organizational performance, most senior level decision-makers have turned to leadership development initiatives. This study produced a synthesized leadership framework and process for designing leadership development programs as SCAs, the cornerstone for achieving long-term superior organizational performance. This leadership framework and process acted as a guide to successfully design such a program for HE&R, the Core Values Initiative, using readily available organizational information.

The findings from the formative assessments of the leadership framework and process show that the participants found both pragmatic, meaning accessible, useful, and logical. The leadership framework orients people to a refined understanding of both leadership and strategy, providing clear definitions that differentiate terms and concepts. The process incorporates a clear, linear format that can be presented on one page, adding to its appeal to practitioners.

The leadership framework and process retain the complexity and nuance required for designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The successful design of the Core Values Initiative for HE&R, coupled with the findings of the formative assessments, indicate that the leadership framework and process can help guide practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs. The recommendations should

provide additional insights to those practitioners who adopt the leadership framework and

process to successfully guide their efforts.

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Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form will be printed on IUP Letterhead

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Presenting a Framework and Process for Designing Leadership Development Programs as Sustainable Competitive Advantages: A Case Study at Hershey Entertainment and Resorts

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. You are eligible to participate because you are a member of the Hershey Entertainment and Resorts (HE&R) Executive Committee.

The purpose of this study is to understand how organizations can design leadership development programs as sustainable competitive advantages (SCAs). The objectives of this research include developing a leadership/strategy conceptual framework, using said conceptual framework to design a leadership development program as a SCA at HE&R, and incorporating a qualitative formative assessment to evaluate the leadership/strategy conceptual framework and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R. The information gained from this study may help us to better understand how to leverage both leadership and strategy in a pragmatic, feasible, and useful manner to guide the design of leadership development programs as SCAs. Participation in this study will require approximately 5 hours of your time. First, you will receive relevant information to review in advance of an hour presentation of the leadership/strategy conceptual framework and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R. Second, you will participate in an hour guided interview, which will be audio-recorded, to capture your perceptions and opinions about the leadership/strategy conceptual framework and the leadership development program designed as a SCA for HE&R. Third, at the conclusion of the study, you will be invited to an hour presentation to listen to the results of the research and to ask questions.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigator, IUP, or HE&R. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying the Principal Investigator. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and will have no bearing on your professional standing with HE&R. Your responses will be considered only in combination with those from other participants. The information obtained in the study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but your individual responses will be kept strictly confidential.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below and return it to the Principal Investigator. Take the extra unsigned copy with you. If you choose not to participate, you do not need to take any further action.

Principal Investigator:	**Faculty Sponsor:**
Mr. Travis A. Berger	Dr. John A. Anderson
Doctoral Student	Professor
Department of Sociology	Department of Sociology
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Indiana, PA 15705	Indiana, PA 15705
610-796-1380	717-720-4098
bytq@iup.edu	jaa@iup.edu

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B

Executive Summary for HE&R

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Administration & Leadership Studies (ALS)

HE&R Leadership Development Program

Executive Summary & Supporting Documents

Prepared by Travis A. Berger
Doctoral Candidate
Administration and Leadership Studies
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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This research emerged a leadership development initiative for HE&R that will: (a) reinforce the four core values; (b) drive the core purpose; (c) secure a sustainable competitive advantage; and (d) help achieve long-term superior organizational performance (see the Leadership Development Program: Core Values Initiative Logic Model). The Core Values Initiative calls for identifying the behaviors of excellence for the four core values at each of the different organizational levels (ex: executive, management, individual contributor). The core values remain the same, but how individuals manifest the core values behaviorally needs to be different at each organizational level (see the Behaviors of Excellence Generic Example). The prescribed methodology for identifying the behaviors of excellence fosters employee buy-in and support and therefore becomes an important element of the initiative (see the Method for Identifying Core Value Behaviors of Excellence). The behaviors of excellence for the core values need to be included in formal performance reviews using a frequency scale (see Performance Appraisal Frequency Scale Generic Example). The behaviors of excellence for the core values also need to be added to HE&R's Pay-For-Performance plan and meaningfully weighted (see Pay-For-Performance Weighting Example: The Right Results, The Right Way). Embedding the core values throughout HE&R's performance management plan will effectively allow all of the HE&R properties to generate and capture unique value, thus increasing the number of loyal customers. The Leadership Framework and the related process used to identify and design the Core Values Initiative materialized from the academic research literature.

1

Leadership Framework

Leadership: a dynamic process involving three factors—leaders, followers, context—for realizing sustainable validity

Sustainable Validity: an established direction, alignment, and commitment (DAC) for achieving long-term superior organizational performance

Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA): imperfectly imitable factors that generate and capture unique value

Leaders: individuals possessing level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics essential for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process.

Context: an analytic approach for recognizing potential sources of SCA arising from combinations of internal & external elements relative to use value (customer perceived)

Followers: engaged individuals with integrity who posses the critical thinking skills and level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics essential for actively supporting a leader to positively influence the leadership process.

Leaders   Followers

Sustainable Validity

Context

Legend

A potential source of sustainable competitive advantage arising from combinations of internal & external elements relative to use value (customer perceived)

Assumptions

SCA → Long-Term Superior Organizational Performance

If   Then

2

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Stage	Influence	Steps	Outcomes
I. Discover	Strategy Formulation	*1. Establish* Establish the organization's strategic framework: vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives *2. Identify* Identify opportunities for securing SCA using both the leadership framework and the organization's strategic framework *3. Isolate & Select* (a) Isolate the opportunity(s) for securing SCA that satisfy(s) the VRIO model's criteria (b) If there are several opportunities for securing SCAs that satisfy the VRIO model's criteria, then select the opportunity that drives the organization's strategic framework, has the highest probability of success, and delivers the best projected Return on Investment (ROI)	Opportunity for securing SCA selected
II. Design	Program Theory Assessment	*1. Inquire* Analyze research and best practices associated with initiatives related to the selected opportunity for securing SCA *2. Develop* Develop a program/initiative that actualizes the opportunity *3. Produce* Produce a logic model	Articulated theory of the actualized opportunity
III. Verify	Program Theory Assessment	*1. Assemble* Assemble an expert review panel *2. Validate* Conduct interviews with each member of the expert review panel to validate the the logic and plausibility of the actualized opportunity	Based on the feedback received from the expert review panel, two options are available: 1. Proceed to implementation planning; or 2. Return to Stage II

The Process for Designing Leadership Development Programs as SCAs

Definition: a three-stage process using the leadership framework as a tool for designing leadership development programs as sustainable competitive advantages.

Theoretical Assumptions	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Initial Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
Organizations pursue long-term superior organizational performance Sustainable competitive advantage leads to long-term superior organizational performance	1. HE&R core values 2. HE&R organizational levels (bands) identified and confirmed 3. Support of Board of Directors and Executive Committee	1. Identify core value behaviors of excellence for each organizational level (band) following the prescribed method 2. Update performance review templates for each organizational level to include the core value behaviors of excellence and related frequency scale 3. Update Pay-for-Performance plan weighting core values: "The Right Results, The Right Way" 4. Update remaining components of the HE&R Performance Management plan to include Core Value behaviors of excellence --Job descriptions --Hiring process --Onboarding --Training & development --Succession planning	1. Employee buy-in 2. More employees consistently demonstrate HE&R core value behaviors of excellence 3. Role clarity with clear expectations 4. Common language	1. Improved organizational direction-alignment-commitment 2. Increased number of high-performers throughout HE&R 3. Increases in customer experience throughout all HE&R properties 4. Increased generation and capture of use value 5. Increased employee loyalty (engagement)	1. Secured sustainable competitive advantage 2. Increase in number of loyal customers	1. Realize sustainable validity (long-term superior organizational performance)
Input/Initiative Assumptions	HE&R core values are the timeless principles foundational for fulfilling M.S. Hershey's dream HE&R Core Values Initiative is valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and the organization possesses the capability to implement and drive initiative HE&R core values generate and capture use value (customer perceived) HE&R approaches performance reviews as an important component for growing and developing people and provides continuous and consistent feedback throughout the review period					

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1) Create a worksheet with general directions, followed by questions designed to capture the behaviors of excellence

2) Identify high-performers per each organizational level

3) Hold a kick-off meeting with each group of high-performers to explain the Core Values Initiative, their role, and the worksheet. Emphasize to participants that answers provided on the worksheets will remain confidential and will be used to emerge general themes and related behaviors, therefore no attributions will be made. Allow the high-performers one week to complete and return the worksheet.

4) Code the data (the answers received)

   - Step 1: Select an organizational level and read all of the worksheets for that level to get a general feel for the responses

   - Sep 2: Review the data to identify common words and statements

   - Step 3: Identify major themes and related behaviors

   - Step 4: Review the major themes and related behaviors to check for redundancy; if there is redundancy with themes and related behaviors, merge to form an overarching theme with related behaviors (repeat this step until there is no redundancy)

   - Step 5: Review the behavioral examples within each theme for validity (do they belong or should they be moved elsewhere)

   - Step 6: Review, edit, and wordsmith the statements to reflect a positive orientation

5) Hold a review meeting with the high-performers for each organizational level to review and validate the identified themes and related behaviors: Does the final product reflect original responses? Does the final product communicate behavioral expectations clearly?

   ➢ Note the corrections, changes, comments and revise the final product accordingly

6) Review the final product with the management and/or executive team for approval or revision. If revisions are made, then hold another meeting with the high-performers to review changes.

7) Engage in formative assessments (improvements, changes, updates, flexibility)
   - Continuous review and feedback are required over time to help ensure accuracy and that behaviors evolve and grow with the company (stay current and relevant).

6

Determination

Individual Level Contributor

- Exerts effort necessary to meet goals, assignments, and job responsibilities
  - ➢ Works through to the end to meet deadlines
  - ➢ Willing to do the extra to get the right result, the right way
- Takes initiative and proactively looks for work
  - ➢ Goes above and beyond
  - ➢ Does the extra, those little things that make the biggest difference
  - ➢ Solutions finder--remains persistent in the face of adversity
  - ➢ Completes additional work when time warrants
- Works to potential every day
  - ➢ Meets short-term objectives while progressing toward long-term goals
- Willing to adjust work schedule to meet goals and deadlines

---

Management

- Creates a climate that fosters a "go getter" attitude
- Willing to put in the effort as a "player-coach" if required
  - ➢ Develops a team with a reputation for consistently meeting deadlines
- Exerts effort and time to consistently deliver both operational and strategic priorities
- Embraces cross-functional projects outside of role
- Meaningfully assists team members if their work assignment gets derailed

---

Executive

- Drives organizational processes and systems required to actualize strategic framework
- Provides the resources required to deliver strategic framework
- Dedicates efforts required to develop and support executive peers and members of management
- Consistently exudes energy, drive, and passion
  - ➢ Action oriented and consistently delivers value
- Tirelessly acts as the organization's brand ambassador

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Core Values: The Right Way						
Determination[1]						
Behaviors of Excellence	Note: [This is where the identified behaviors would be listed]					
Notes/Comments						
Evaluation	**Almost Never**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5** **Almost Always**

[1] Determination is not one of HE&R's core values. This is for illustrative purposes only.

Management Scoring Weights

- The Right Results: 60% of Overall Evaluation

    ➤ 20% = Department Goals

    ➤ 20% = Management Goals

    ➤ 20% = Personal Performance Goals

- The Right Way: 40% of Overall Evaluation

    ➤ 40% = Core Values

- Articulated Theory: the stated expression of the theory of an actualized opportunity manifested in a logic model

- Context: an analytic approach for recognizing potential sources of SCA arising from combinations of internal and external elements relative to use value

- Core Values: represent the timeless principles of the organization, unchanged by evolving business models and strategies

- Followers: engaged individuals with integrity who possess the critical thinking skills and level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for actively supporting a leader to positively influence the leadership process

- Leader Development: increasing individual capacity for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process

- Leaders: individuals possessing level-specific knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics essential for gaining the support of others to positively influence the leadership process

- Leadership Development: organizational improvements to realize sustainable validity (long-term superior organizational performance)

- Leadership: a dynamic process involving three factors—leaders, followers, and context—for realizing sustainable validity (long-term superior organizational performance)

- Leadership Framework: an integrated pragmatic conceptual framework that strategically defines leadership to serve as the theoretical foundation, analytical lens, and tool for practitioners tasked with designing leadership development programs as SCAs

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- Long-Term Superior Organizational Performance: a standard of organizational excellence determined by comparing selected organizational metrics against the industry average over an extended period

- Strategic Framework: an organization's vision, mission, core values, and long-term objectives that combine to form an organization's foundation through which all strategic decisions should be vetted

- Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA): imperfectly imitable factors that generate and capture unique value

- Sustainable Validity: an established direction, alignment, and commitment for achieving long-term superior organizational performance

- Use Value: a customer's subjective assessment of the perceived bundle of benefits of a product or service in relation to the customer's need and/or desire

- VRIO Framework: four criteria (valuable, rare, imitability, organization) used for determining the potential of organizational resources to secure SCA

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Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Guidelines for the Semi-Structured Interview Guide

General Overview. The interview guide focuses attention on specific topics to be

explored during a one-hour interview. The questions and probes are not exhaustive, nor

do they all have to be asked. They are meant to provide a general framework. The

interviewer has the freedom to explore the predetermined topics in a conversational style

by wording questions spontaneously to match the tone of conversation.

Organization of Predetermined Topics. The interview guide focuses on five topics.

I.   HE&R Context (explore the lived experience within HE&R from the perspective
     of the executive team, focusing on direction and alignment)

II. Leadership Development at HE&R (explore the connection of leadership
     development programs to HE&R's strategy and the benefit of existing programs
     from the perspective of the executive team)

III. The Leadership Framework (participants will have a visual of the leadership
     framework during the interview)

IV. The Process (participants will have a visual of the process during the interview)

V.   The Leadership Development Program (participants will have the program logic
     model during the interview)

Note: Before the individual interviews, the participants will receive an executive

summary explaining the leadership framework and process used to design the leadership

development program for HE&R. The participants also will listen to a one-hour

presentation introducing and explaining the leadership framework, the process, and the

leadership development program designed as a sustainable competitive advantage for

HE&R.

I.   HE&R Context

- What are your key accountabilities?

- How is the yearly performance of your functional area evaluated?

- Briefly, how does the Board of Directors evaluate HE&R's yearly performance?

  ➢ Is this the same for the executive committee? If not, what is the

    difference?

- In your opinion, what are HE&R's two or three biggest opportunities?

- In your opinion, what are the two or three biggest challenges facing HE&R?

II.   Leadership Development at HE&R

- HE&R makes significant investments into leadership development, such as training, development, and talent management. In your opinion, what drives this investment? Why engage in these activities?

  ➢ Do the results meet your expectations? Fall short? How so?

  ➢ Do these leadership development programs drive HE&R's business strategy, or not? Do they produce business results? How so?

III. The Leadership Framework

With respect to the leadership framework that I presented…

- What are your thoughts?

  ➢ Does it make practical sense to you?

  ➢ Did it make you think differently about leadership? How so?

    • How did you define leadership before this framework?

    • There are various classifications of employees at HE&R, such as management, staff, seasonal, union, and volunteers. In your opinion, would they all define leadership the same?

  ➢ Do you believe that the leadership framework could help establish a common language around leadership?

    • How might this prove useful for HE&R? Other organizations?

IV. The Process

With respect to the process I used for developing the Core Values Initiative…

- What are your thoughts?

  ➢ Does it make practical sense?

  ➢ Is it user friendly?

  ➢ In your opinion, how might this process prove useful for HE&R in the future?

    • Do you think you could adopt this process to design other initiatives?

    • Do you think you could adopt this process to help evaluate current initiatives?

    • If not, why not?

  ➢ If you moved to another organization, would you introduce this process?

V.   The Core Values Initiative (The Leadership Development Program)

After explaining the leadership framework and process, I presented the Core Values Initiative (leadership development program as a SCA) …

- What are your thoughts?

    - Does it make business sense?

        - Do you think that this initiative has the potential to deliver a sustainable competitive advantage? How so?

    - Do you think it is worth pursuing? Would you support it?

        - If Yes: Assuming it was adopted into HE&R, how might it make a difference?

        - If Yes: How would it impact the various employee groups (management, staff, seasonal, union, and volunteer)?

        - If No: What would stop you from supporting it?

Conclusion (open thoughts)

Thank you for sharing your thoughts, opinions, and perceptions. Before we end our interview, is there anything that you want to add?

Appendix D

Audit Trail

The categories, supported by specific sources of data, were outlined in Chapter Five. The audit trail adds to these efforts of transparency by contributing an example highlighting the inductive process used to develop the critical factor for success category included in the leadership framework formative assessment. The audit trail also presents the chronological steps involved in the overall data analysis process.

The purpose of the formative assessment for the leadership framework was to explore the participants' perceptions of its pragmatism. The semi-structured interview guide included an open-ended first question, with supporting probes. The first question I asked the participants about the leadership framework was, "With respect to the leadership framework that I presented, what are your thoughts?" This type of question allowed the participants to respond in a free flowing manner. I initially reviewed the data and inductively developed the following categories, centering on the purpose of the formative assessments: research question (pragmatism), strengths, opportunities for improvement, discussion, suggestions, and miscellaneous. The miscellaneous category included useful data that did not fit into any of the other categories. For example, Participant H's comments related to the prescriptive nature of the definitions for followers and leaders. Moreover, there were several entries in the opportunities for improvement category that were not applicable to that category, such as discussions related to the term followers.

I removed the identified data from both the miscellaneous and opportunities for improvement categories and entered them into a separate untitled category for analysis. I

again focused on the purpose of the formative assessments and reviewed the data. The specific topics were not the same, such as SCA and followers, but I noticed similarities in the purpose of the data. For example, expressions such as "I think there has to be some recognition that...", "that was one thing I just thought about...", "the question I had is...", and, "I think it is important that..." were used by the participants to bring factors to my attention that they thought were critical for the successful use of the leadership framework. In reflecting about these phrases I realized that the participants were not noting strengths, nor were they suggesting areas for improvement, but they were underscoring areas of the leadership framework that they believed should be emphasized and reinforced. For example, Participant F shared:

> But I think if you think about those things that are built upon that foundation, those things have to be a little bit more nimble. So I like the idea of a competitive advantage, again it's just the idea of the sustainable. It's how you frame that in the mind of those who are listening to understand that while this sustainable competitive advantage is the result of a very dynamic process that is always evolving. So I think that was one thing I just thought about. (Participant F)

After reviewing the data placed into this untitled category, and after comparing the data to the other categories, I inductively developed the category called critical success factor. This example provides further insight into the thinking involved in inductively developing the categories.

The audit trail also presents the chronological steps involved in the overall data analysis process. The following steps chronologically details the steps involved in this process.

1. I thoroughly prepared for each interview, reviewing the guided interview, the participant's profile, and the purpose and objectives of the research.

2. After each interview, I first checked to make sure that the recorder worked. I then reflected on the interview, focusing on my initial impressions and reactions, followed by a review of my notes. This post-interview process ended with my reflection notes on the back of the semi-structured interview guide.

3. After all of the interviews were conducted, I listened to the interviews before I sent them for transcription. For each interview, I used legal sized paper with three columns on the front, and three columns on the back, to place preliminary abbreviated data. I used the following six broad groups that related to the semi-structured interview guide as the column headers: leadership framework (pragmatic), process (pragmatic), Core Values Initiative (logical and plausible), leadership development efforts at HE&R, context (key accountabilities, functional accountabilities, board focus, opportunities and challenges, union), and conclusion/other.

4. I analyzed the organized, abbreviated data for each of the six broad groups and arrived at major categories for each grouping. The information related to the context of HE&R was separated and analyzed for alignment with their stated purpose and core values. The categories for the context of HE&R were key accountabilities, functional accountabilities, board focus, opportunities and challenges, and the union. The abbreviated data that I included in the conclusion/other group I placed into one of the other groupings. I organized the abbreviated data located in the leadership framework, process, and Core Values

Initiative groupings into one of the following initial categories: research question, strengths, opportunities for improvement, discussion, suggestions, and miscellaneous. These were the initial formative assessment categories for the leadership framework, process, and Core Values Initiative.

5. Once I received the transcripts, I listened to the interviews and compared them to the transcripts to check for accuracy. I also confirmed the initial grouping and categories.

6. I then engaged in a process to review these groupings and categories and to more effectively organize the data. I created a Word document that listed the major groupings and related categories and then reviewed each transcript and placed the data from the transcripts into the appropriate grouping and category. The relevant data that did not fit into a particular category within a grouping was included in a new category titled "other".

7. I reviewed this document and data against the initial post-interview reflection notes, initial coding document, and the grouping and category analysis sheets. Moreover, I reviewed each of the groupings and categories to determine the best format for the formative assessments, dictated by the data and the purpose of the formative assessments.

8. After several revisions and continued analysis, the categories for the leadership framework, process, and Core Values Initiative were determined. During this process of review, analysis, and revision, I color coded the data that were related in each grouping. The color codes contained within each of the three groupings identified useful themes. Therefore, I included at the end of each formative

assessment a category for these themes, including a discussion of the implications for practitioners. The final categories for the leadership framework formative assessment inductively developed as follows: Leadership Framework's Pragmatism, Noted Strengths of the Leadership Framework, Critical Factor for Success, Opportunity for Improvement, Points of Interest, and Theme. The final categories for the process formative assessment inductively developed as follows: The Pragmatism of the process, Noted Strengths of the Process, Critical Success Factor, Areas for Concern, and Theme. The final categories for the Core Values Initiative formative assessment inductively developed as follows: The Logic and Plausibility of the Core Values Initiative, Noted Strength, Critical Success Factors, Opportunity for Improvement, and Themes.

9. I reviewed the themes for the leadership framework, process, and Core Values Initiative and discovered an overarching theme. The themes highlighted the importance of recognizing the value of concise language and continuous improvement as two approaches for mitigating complications and confusion when dealing with complex situations and concepts, such as organizations, leadership, and strategy. This observation was noted in the section titled "Recommendations" and informed the recommendations that I presented.

Appendix E

Hershey Entertainment and Resorts Site Approval Letter

P.O. Box 860
27 West Chocolate Avenue
Hershey, PA 17033

January 25, 2016

Dear members of Indiana University of Pennsylvania's IRB Committee:

The following is my approval letter for Mr. Travis A. Berger to conduct research for the study titled "Presenting a Framework and Process for Designing Leadership Development Programs as Sustainable Competitive Advantages: A Case Study at Hershey Entertainment and Resorts" at Hershey Entertainment and Resorts corporate offices located at 27 W. Chocolate Avenue, Hershey, PA 17033.

Mr. Berger explained to me the purpose, procedures, and benefits and risks of the research as outlined in the attached document provided to me. Mr. Berger also explained the IRB process and the reasons for the IRB, in addition to how participants will be protected throughout the study.

Mr. Berger is approved to be on site to deliver presentations, conduct guided interviews, and any other activities required to successfully complete the research. I will serve as the liaison for Hershey Entertainment and Resorts and will provide Mr. Berger any assistance required to successfully implement the research. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 717-534-3828 or ahelmer@hersheypa.com.

Sincerely,

Andrew Helmer
Vice President, Human Resources

Appendix F

Critical Factors by Research Cluster and Influences/Sources

Critical Factor One: Support from Research Clusters & Influences/Sources

Critical Factor	Research Cluster	Influences/Sources
1. Core values integrated throughout all human resources plans, especially performance appraisals and compensation plans	**a.** Core values/values/value-based leadership	Lencioni (2012); Argandoña (2003); Viinamäki (2012); Grojean, Resick, Dickson, & Smith (2004)
	b. Service/service quality/service-profit chain/hospitality management	Hinkin & Tracey (2010); Liao & Chung (2004); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011)
	c. Human resources/performance management	Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004)
	d. Competency/competency-based human resource management	Lahti (1999); Lado & Wilson (1994)

Critical Factor Two: Support from Research Clusters & Influences/Sources

Critical Factor	Research Cluster	Influences/Sources
2. Performance appraisals linked to compensation plans and incorporate explicit and clear behavioral expectations	**a.** Core values/values/value-based leadership	Grojean, Resick, Dickson, & Smith (2004)
	b. Service/service quality/service-profit chain/hospitality management	Hinkin & Tracey (2010); Ueno (2010); Liao & Chung (2004); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011); Sun, Hsu, Wang (2012); Sergeant & Frenkel (2000); Bitner, Booms, Tetreault (1990)
	c. Human resources/performance management	Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004); Montague (2007); Tziner &kopelman (2002); Posthuma & Campion (2008)
	d. Competency/competency-based human resource management	Lahti (1999); Lado & Wilson (1994); Lado (1992)

Critical Factor Three: Support from Research Clusters & Influences/Sources

Critical Factor	Research Cluster	Influences/Sources
3. Core values meaningfully weighted in both the performance appraisals and compensation plans	**a.** Core values/values/value-based leadership	--
	b. Service/service quality/service-profit chain/hospitality management	Hinkin & Tracey (2010); Ueno (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011); Sun, Hsu, Wang (2012)
	c. Human resources/performance management	Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004)
	d. Competency/competency-based human resource management	Lado & Wilson (1994); Lado (1992)

Critical Factor Four: Support from Research Clusters & Influences/Sources

Critical Factor	Research Cluster	Influences/Sources
4. Employees involved in defining the behaviors associated with the core values relative to their level in the organization (core values manifest differently at various organizational levels)	**a.** Core values/values/value-based leadership	Argandoña (2003); Viinamäki (2012); Pruzan (1998); Buchko (2007)
	b. Service/service quality/service-profit chain/hospitality management	Liao & Chung (2004); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2010); Yee, Yeung, Cheng (2011)
	c. Human resources/performance management	Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Tziner &kopelman (2002); Posthuma & Campion (2008); Charan, Drotter, & Noel (2011);
	d. Competency/competency-based human resource management	Lahti (1999)

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Critical Factor Five: Support from Research Clusters & Influences/Sources

Critical Factor	Research Cluster	Influences/Sources
5. Adopt a hybrid behavioral observation scale (BOS) process for identifying the core value behaviors at each organizational level and for frequency rating system used in performance appraisals (involves employees)	**a.** Core values/values/value-based leadership	Buchko (2007)
	b. Service/service quality/service-profit chain/hospitality management	Liao & Chung (2004)
	c. Human resources/performance management	Tziner &kopelman (2002); Drotter (2011); Grote (1996)
	d. Competency/competency-based human resource management	--

Critical Factor Six: Support from Research Clusters & Influences/Sources

Critical Factor	Research Cluster	Influences/Sources
6. Continual improvement	**a.** Core values/values/value-based leadership	Argandoña (2003)
	b. Service/service quality/service-profit chain/hospitality management	--
	c. Human resources/performance management	Suttapong, Srimai, & Pitchayadol (2014); Weatherly (2004)
	d. Competency/competency-based human resource management	--

Appendix G

Individual Participant Profiles

Chief Executive Officer/President	
Year Started at HE&R	1996
Professional Background	Williamsburg Inn, Kingsmill Resort, Gaylord Hotel, Nashville, Hyatt Hotels, Opryland Hotel, Quorum Hotels & Resorts
Executive Education	N/A
Certifications	N/A
Advanced Degree	N/A
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Hotel & Restaurant Management (Appalachian State University)
Associates Degree	N/A
Gender	Male

Chief Financial Officer	
Year Started at HE&R	1990
Professional Background	Arthur Anderson
Executive Education	Executive Development Program (University of Pennsylvania, Wharton) Reimagine Your Leadership (University of Pennsylvania, Wharton)
Certifications	N/A
Advanced Degree	N/A
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Accounting (Villanova University)
Associates Degree	N/A
Gender	Male

Chief Operating Officer	
Year Started at HE&R	2005
Professional Background	Yankee Stadium, FedEx Field, Men's US Open Championships, Volume Service America
Executive Education	General Managers Program (Cornell University, School of Hotel Administration) Achieving Breakthrough Service (Harvard Business School) Executive Development Program (UNC Kenan-Flagler Business school) Leadership & Strategic Impact (Dartmouth College, Tuck School of Business)
Certifications	N/A
Advanced Degree	N/A
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Bachelors (Randolph-Macon College)
Associates Degree	N/A
Gender	Male

General Counsel & Secretary	
Year Started at HE&R	2016
Professional Background	Marriot International, Strasburger & Price (Partner), The American University of Paris (Professor)
Executive Education	Mini-MBA for Lawyers (Boston University) Aspen Executive Seminar (The Aspen Institute)
Certifications	N/A
Advanced Degree	Juris Doctorate (University of Texas School of Law)
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Bachelors (The University of Texas at Austin)
Associates Degree	N/A
Gender	Female

VP, Communications & Corporate Relations	
Year Started at HE&R	1998
Professional Background	Deputy Attorney General, Pennsylvania Painting Red Rhinos, Corporate Counsel
Executive Education	High Impact Leadership (Columbia University, Columbia Business School)
Certifications	N/A
Advanced Degree	Juris Doctorate (Duquesne University School of Law)
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Political Science (Villanova University)
Associates Degree	N/A
Gender	Male

VP, Human Resources	
Year Started at HE&R	1984
Professional Background	Harris Savings Bank
Executive Education	N/A
Certifications	SPHR—Senior Professional in Human Resources (HR Certification Institute) HCS--Human Capital Strategist/Strategic Talent Management (Human Capital Institute)
Advanced Degree	Masters, HR/Industrial Relations (St. Francis University)
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Management (Pennsylvania State University)
Associates Degree	Associates in Management (Harrisburg Community College)
Gender	Male

Note: Served at Harris Savings Bank between 1999-2000 (One year)

VP, Marketing & Analytics	
Year Started at HE&R	2014
Professional Background	PepsiCo (15 years)
Executive Education	N/A
Certifications	N/A
Advanced Degree	Masters, Business Administration, Finance (University of Pittsburgh)
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Marketing/Marketing Management (Indiana University of Pennsylvania)
Associates Degree	N/A
Gender	Female

Director, Organizational Development	
Year Started at HE&R	2002
Professional Background	Trump Entertainment & Resorts; Wyndham Hotel Group
Executive Education	N/A
Certifications	N/A
Advanced Degree	N/A
Continuing Education	Online Courses: Masters in Organizational Leadership Online Program (Central Penn College)
Undergraduate Degree	Business Management (Stockton University) Business Administration and Management (Central Penn College)
Associates Degree	Associates in Marketing (Central Penn College)
Gender	Female

Director, Training and Development	
Year Started at HE&R	2001
Professional Background	N/A
Executive Education	N/A
Certifications	CHT—Certified Hospitality Trainer (American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute SCP—Senior Certified Professional (Society for Human Resources) SPHR--Senior Professional in Human Resources (HR Certification Institute)
Advanced Degree	Masters, Adult & Continuing Education & Teaching (Pennsylvania State University)
Continuing Education	N/A
Undergraduate Degree	Bachelors (Franklin & Marshall College)
Associates Degree	N/A
Gender	Male