Becoming a Leader in Managing Nonprofit Human Service Programs

Abstract

Based on previous studies of a leadership development program for middle managers in nonprofit human service organizations, this analysis focuses on the complexity of leadership identity formation. It features the personal characteristics and values of those working in nonprofit human service organizations, the nonprofit culture that shapes its leaders, and the process of leadership identity formation in nonprofit organizations. It concludes with implications for developing transformative and sustainable leadership experiences for educating future leaders in nonprofit human service organizations.

Keywords: leadership identity formation, nonprofits, human services

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INTRODUCTION

Nonprofit leadership development programs provide unique learning laboratories to identify how middle managers in human service organizations integrate critical reflection and developmental learning processes into the practice of leading (Austin et al, 2011). Based on the training and coaching of 40 leadership development program participants in three cohorts over a three year period, it became clear that much ambivalence and tension was associated with taking on the role of human service manager and leader. The sources of this ambivalence and tension can be traced to multiple factors that include the participant's individual identity, the high value placed on feeling connected to clients and staff, and the clash in values found in the different subcultures within the nonprofit human services organizational setting.

An understanding of the personal dilemmas that emerge when staff are promoted into leadership roles calls for nonprofit human service organizations to develop stronger support systems. These systems include on-the job-training, mentoring and coaching as well as experiential leadership development programs that provide opportunities to experiment with the effective use of power and authority, boundary management, delegation, directing, and decision-making. Without a clear understanding of the complexity involved in stepping into leadership roles in human service organizations, high-potential staff members can easily burn-out, refuse advancement, or leave human services organizations.

This analysis explores the complexity of developing an identity as a leader in the nonprofit human services arena. The major themes are derived from the research on for-profit organizations related to identity, leadership, and leadership identity formation in order to apply them to human services organizations; namely, 1) the importance of recognizing, and working with, the personal identity characteristics and values that employees bring with them into the organization; 2) the group/organizational culture that shapes leaders in the human services sector; and 3) the process of leadership identity formation.

Learning about developing leaders

The context for this analysis was a leadership development program designed for middle managers. It was built upon three pillars: 1) the concepts of organizational capacity building (Blumenthal, 2003), 2) the important differentiation between the skill-sets required to *manage* (planning and budgeting, organizing and staffing, controlling and problem-solving) and those required to *lead* (setting direction, aligning people, and motivating and inspiring) originally identified by Kotter (1990), and 3) the multiple roles of a human service manager (leadership, interactional, and analytic) identified by Menefee (2009). Throughout the first three cohorts (40 participants) it became clear that more attention needed to be given to how leadership roles were integrated into personal identities. Participants often perceived themselves as "accidental managers" in terms of being recruited into managerial roles (as opposed to aspiring for advancement). These perceptions were captured in the program participants' reflection papers, interviews, class discussions and case presentations as illustrated in the following examples of ambivalence and tension associated with assuming leadership roles in their respective human service organizations:

1) "I first began to consider social work when I was twelve after reading a story about a social services worker who helped a poor impoverished mother. I became fascinated by their relationship. I felt so distant from my clients when I became a manager and then a director."
2) "I like envisioning the possibilities for new programs and new ways to help clients that comes with my manager role, but I find it difficult to evaluate staff performance, or hold staff accountable for performance standards. It's hard to make tough decisions and be disliked."
3) "When faced with new roles, like fundraising, I find it very difficult to envision myself attending fundraising events where I need to dress-up. I can't imagine liking this part of being an Executive, as talking to wealthy people puts me in conflict with who I am and what I believe about serving poor people."
4) "As a manager, I had to find new methods of self-care because I no longer had contact with the clients and the gratitude and recognition that come with being able to help someone better their circumstances."

This array of self-reflections illustrates some of the challenges that underlie the assumption of managerial and leadership roles. These perceptions provided major challenges for participants with respect to their: 1) self-concept (how they saw themselves), 2) sense of belonging (the stakeholders they identified with, who/what gave them credibility, and how they were seen by others), 3) world view (their stories about how the world worked, how change was created, and how they wanted to participate in that process), and 4) sources of motivation (what made this promotion worthwhile, the job worth doing).

Similar to these perceptions, the participants in the leadership development program noted that when their agency leaders did not demonstrate effective leadership behaviors, they were considered suspect, incompetent, unfair, on the wrong track or isolated from staff perceptions (e.g. "the process wasn't fair" or "there wasn't enough input into a decision"). The participants in the leadership development program clearly valued relationships with leaders and authority figures when they are facilitative, non-authoritarian, and personally supportive. If these characteristics are not present, authority figures may be viewed as traumatizing and/or, in the worst case, abusive. All of these perceptions, of themselves and their agency leaders led to the exploration of leadership identity formation in nonprofit organizations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The mission and purpose of nonprofits are essential in attracting both human and financial resources to the organization. However, as Hobman et al (2011) note with regard to advancement once inside a nonprofit, the organizational mission is less important as a motivator than is an identification with, and connection to, the organization's leader. The leadership behaviors that create connections with nonprofit employees included: 1) supportive behavior associated with developing trust, 2) asking questions of employees and encouraging intellectual stimulation that signifies to followers that the leader is concerned about employee welfare, growth, and development, 3) behaviors that indicate close ties to followers, and 4) personally recognizing employee contributions (p.568).

As the literature suggests, leadership is a complex and difficult to describe. It is made up of a variety of elusive characteristics that business educators, political scientists, sociologists, psychologists and psychoanalysts have attempted to describe (DeRue & Ashford; 2010, Chatman, 2010; Nohria & Khurana, 2010). For example, the literature on leadership focuses on the traits of the leader (the great man/trait theory), what the *leader knows* (types of knowledge and expertise necessary to function effectively), what the *leader does* (ways of behaving),

and how the *leader forms a leadership identity* (being and becoming) (Ford, Harding & Learmouth, 2008; Glynn & DeJordy, 2010; Haslam, 2011; Nohria & Khurana, 2010). The literature also reflects research on how, what and by whom leadership is shaped (Ibarra, Snook, & Guillen, 2010; Ibarra, 1999; Carden & Callahan, 2007; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003; Gagnon, 2008; Hobman, Jackson, Nerina, & Martin, 2011). It focuses on the role of the individual and the group as well as the continuing question of whether or not leadership can be taught (Parks, 2005).

Leadership identity formation can be influenced by the different ways that groups and society to view their leaders (e.g. as heroes who are incapable of failure or weakness and usually capable of turning wrong into right) (Chatman, 2010; Glynn & DeJordy, 2010). While leadership is difficult to describe and define, it remains an important factor in guiding groups and organizations (Chatman, 2010; Kellerman, 2012). Based on the question, "What does it mean to 'be' a leader and how does one 'become' one?", the following three areas of research help to explain the dynamics of leadership identity formation: 1) the nature of identity, 2) leadership behaviors and leadership identity, and 3) leadership identity formation.

Identity

The definition of identity has changed over the past few decades and is now viewed as flexible and malleable. The "core self", being different from identity, is able to observe identity and shift identities over time (Singer, 2007). The core self takes action in the world through the process of taking on roles (Erickson, 1959; Sampson, 1985; Singer, 2007). Various roles enable an individual to shift their sense of belonging or membership from one group to another, inviting and enabling the core self to take numerous forms. The various forms taken by the core self when assuming different roles may eventually solidify into an "identity", a more stable psychological platform from which one takes action in the world on a regular basis (Sampson, 1985). For something to be considered an "identity" it needs to be integrated into both personal and

professional role behavior (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003) . In essence, becoming comfortable in rol e is one step in crafting an identity (Karp & Helgo, 2009; Hobman et al., 2011; Lumby & English, 2009).

Leadership Behaviors and Leadership Identity

Leadership behavior can be viewed as specific to the group that requires it. For-profit organizations have identified specific skills to enhance performance and help the organization achieve its objectives, but merely excelling at these skills can create what so me call "loyalists" who are only able to function in a specific context (Carden & Callahan, 2007). According to other researchers, leadership requires the exercise of personal power in order to step outside of dominant social discourses (leadership theories and practices are often viewed as one of these social discourses) and discover new

pathways, new truths, and the deep wisdom embedded in experience (Carroll & Levy, 2010). The ability to see and take action beyond dominant social discourse and norms requires personal power. The exercise of personal power enables those engaged in leadership activities to differentiate themselves from the group (Carroll and Levy, 2010). This demonstration of personal power, and the resulting differentiation, is essential to becoming a leader in one's own life. At the same time, leadership in any group, organization or so cial setting, requires the effective exercise of authority that is conferred, in part, by belonging to that group or organization.

In short, "leadership" appears to revolve around the central ability or "core muscle" that enables *belonging* to groups and *differentiating* oneself from groups. Leadership may be considered part of one's identity when leadership behavior is exhibited in both person al and professional arenas, and when the ability to belong and differentiate oneself can be demonstrated in both work and non-work roles (e.g. supervisor and parent) (Carden & Callahan et al., 2007; Svenginson & Alvesson, 2003; Carrol & Levy, 2010)

The process of engaging in leadership identity formation includes forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening and/or revising identity structures at both personal and professional levels so that leadership can be demonstrated in both personal and professional contexts (Svenginson & Alvesson, 2003; Carroll & Levy, 2010).

Leadership Identity Formation

Leadership identity formation often begins when one's personal identity comes into contact with a new group or organizational context. When line staff enter an organization, they do so with a set of values embedded in a personal identity that make it more or less difficult to eventually step into the role of manager and leader as defined by the organizational setting. A line staff member who is seen as a prospective leader often experiences a lengthy process of exploration in order to identify the relationship between already existing personal values and the various values encountered in the workplace that either support or challenge previously existing and internalized personal values.

As Carden and Callahan (2007) note, the following processes can be used to clarify the values and identity conflicts encountered by those in leadership roles: 1) *assimilation* (the process by which prospective leaders learn new self-concepts that more closely align them with the values and practices of the organization), 2) *compartmentalization* (the process by which prospective leaders use various methods of rationalizing in order to explain incomplete assignments or poor performance, often failing to recognize that a clash between personal and organizational values even exists), 3) *buffering* (the process by which prospective leaders use defense mechanisms to separate and order various roles, sometimes captured in the process of choosing and prioritizing between professional roles and personal responsibilities where personal commitments are often sacrificed in favor of professional activities.) 4) *continuing role conflict* (the process in which prospective leaders continue to struggle with role negotiations, feeling constantly torn between work and personal commitments), 5) *role exiting* (this process

occurs when unresolved role conflict causes managers to leave their positions), and 6) *role integration* (this process occurs when both personal and professional leadership identities can be held equally, when the individual has negotiated a family/personal context that can tolerate sacrifices to the organization and when s/he has negotiated organizational accommodations to support personal responsibilities and commitments). Managers being considered for future leadership roles are likely to experience all of these challenges. These dilemmas are encountered, tested and resolved by creating "provisional selves" (Ibarra, 1999) where they can "try on" leadership roles, experiment with the exercise of power and authority, and deal with positive and negative projections on the way to eventually becoming comfortable in a leadership role.

A sense of group belonging is the basis of individual identity formation as well as leadership identity formation. Leadership identity, like personal identity, is shaped in the context of a group. Every group establishes standards and norms. When one excels at the standards, norms and values created by that particular group, they have acquired what Jones and Mones (2009) call "contextual rank". All roles are developed and experienced in the context of "rank" (power, authority and privilege) (Mindell, 1995; Jones & Mones, 2009). Becoming comfortable in a role does not occur until one knows the rules and ranking system of the group and knows how to take action in the group that created the role.

The terminology of "leadership identity" and "leadership role" are not the same. Roles may shift very rapidly and/or multiple roles may be held at one time (e.g. father and husband, director and team member, wife and CEO in a family business). Identity and identity formation are slower moving and shaped by multiple roles taken in various settings (Carden & Callahan, 2007). Becoming comfortable in the organizational role of leader is just one step towards establishing a leadership identity.

When organizations are the cornerstone of society, climbing the organizational ladder affords us not only organizational perks and

privileges but also cultural and social privileges that can be referred to as "social rank" (Jones & Mones, 2009; Mindel, 1995).

The values in the workplace typically replicate and reinforce societal norms (Carden & Callahan, 2007; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Personal identities may become linked to organizational roles because self-concept and personal power are enhanced by the authority and privilege that accompany the position. Thus the path to leadership identity formation (where leadership is exhibited in both personal and professional settings) is more straightforward in forprofit organizations where organizational advancement and social rank are better aligned.

The requirements for achieving "contextual rank" are often very different from those required to gain "social rank" and often contradictory for the nonprofit manager. Not having achieved much "social rank", "contextual rank" is often more important among the vulnerable populations served by non-profit human service organizations and therefore more highly valued by nonprofit managers than "social rank", whereas "social rank" is often viewed as the prize one seeks to acquire in the for-profit world. For example, among homeless populations it may be a valuable skill to be able to hold the territory and the space (on a street corner) where donations are solicited. Organizational staff members and managers who work with this population and understand the norms of the homeless may be given "contextual rank" among these groups in a way that makes it easier to work with and provide social services to these groups. If, for example the manager of a shelter understands the language and the behavior displayed by a homeless person to protect his/her turf, s/he may gain considerable "contextual rank" among the groups served by the shelter, making her more able to negotiate sleeping arrangements each evening.

The effective use of power and authority in an organizational leadership role is the central point at which leaders develop the ability to handle the dynamics of *belonging* and *differentiation* and become comfortable in role. Leadership often requires the use of individual power to think and behave separately from the group in order to establish direction, as well as the ability to utilize authority, granted by the group, to

mobilize the collective energy of the group to carry out its objectives (Regan, 2008). Acquiring some level of comfort with the use of authority takes time for managers to achieve (Hill, 2003; Austin et al., 2013).

When power and authority are exercised in organizations, they generate both positive and negative projections. When decisions are made and directions established, some group members will applaud the leader with positive accolades and others will criticize the leader for making decisions that are unfair, short-sighted, or lacking thought and planning. When this happens, leaders may suddenly feel they have become the "other" in the eyes of the group (Regan, 2008). In order to continue being effective in their roles, leaders must be able to tolerate and carry these projections without becoming isolated or stand-offish on the one hand or overly confident on the other hand. Both positive and negative projections may make a leader feel separate from the group, thus encountering the old adage 'it is lonely at the top'.

The process of trying to integrate competing values appeared to be the path most often chosen by participants in the class as indicated by the dilemmas encountered and reported in reflection papers. It also appeared to be the most difficult and took longer than the eighteen months we were able to observe participants in the leadership development program. Since many program managers in the program emerged from the clinical ranks of nonprofit human service organizations, they often hold a world view that psychological well-being occurs when one is able to reintegrate the parts that have been projected, cut off, or denied as a result of various traumas. Their choice of a leadership identity formation process revolved around the value of integrating the whole person. This process of integrating and balancing the competing values found in nonprofit organizations went beyond the time set aside for a leadership development program. Based on comments from nonprofit leaders in the advisory group for this program appeared to occupy the better part of an entire career.

Successful efforts to reflect on and integrate a leadership identity across personal and professional roles can lead to: 1) an increased internal coherence (e.g. knowing self and becoming comfortable in "one's own skin'), 2) an increased sense of individual power, and 3) improved self-concept. This reflection and integration process can create an increased capacity to move more easily between personal and professional roles without the sense of jolting instability that may occur when other processes of identity formation are used to deal with competing values (e.g. buffering or trying to "order" guilt inducing decisions such as leaving work early one day to pick up the kids, and staying late the next day to make up for it and compartmentalization (e.g. where the ignoring of effective management practices slide in order to respond to constant crisis is then viewed as the nature of the work) (Svengensson & Alvesson, 2003; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Carden, & Callahan, 2007).

In summary, leadership identity formation is complete when the newly acquired characteristics that enable *belonging* and *differentiation* can be made visible in both personal and organizational settings as illustrated in Figure 1. Leadership identity formation includes: 1) encountering the values of the organizational setting, 2) renegotiating "belonging" with client or staff groups that one may be leaving and negotiating entry into new managers/directors teams that one may be joining, 3) becoming comfortable in an organizational role through the development of a "provisional self" in which power and authority can be comfortably exercised, and 4) exhibiting leadership behaviors across personal and professional roles.

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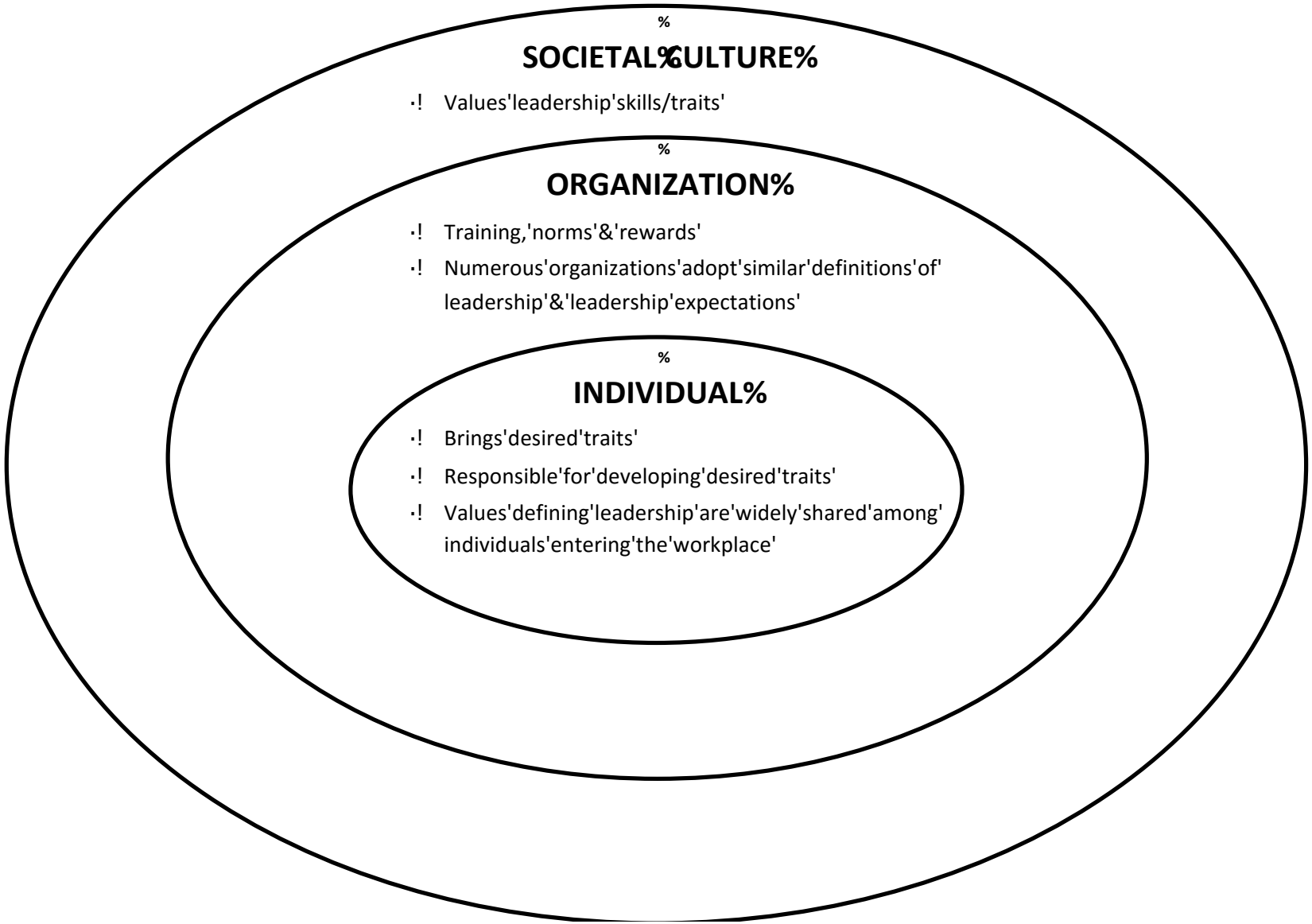


In the next section, we consider how the value systems of those who chose to enter the nonprofit sector combined with the values of the nonprofit organizational culture impact a four step process of leadership identity formation.

MIDDLE MANAGERS IN NONPROFIT HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

As we return to the focus on middle managers in this analysis, it is important to address the following questions: Who are the managers that move up the ranks of nonprofits and why are they drawn to these organizations? How are they different from those described in the literature on for-profit organizations? What do they value and what motivates them to work in nonprofits? Are there common identity themes among those who choose to work in nonprofit human service agencies?

The perceptions shared by middle management participants in the leadership development program that serves as the foundation of this analysis reflected the following characteristics: a) a desire for greater social justice, inclusion, collaboration, democratic decision-making processes, b) a suspicion of authority and organizational/collective power structures, c) a desire to maintain autonomy, d) a belief in equality and the desire to reduce role differentiation between different levels of staff, e) a preference for facilitation and mentoring rather than for directing, and f) an assumption and/or fear that the process of leading is, by its nature, directive and authoritarian as modeled by others throughout the participant's career.

As a capitalist country founded upon the Protestant work ethic, there is a clear value system underlying the "charity" work of nonprofit social service agencies (Holland & Ritvo, 2008; Pallotta, 2008). Nonprofit employees derive a personal pay-off from the fact

that "...the voluntary sector as a whole provides moral and ideological leadership to the majority of human society and often calls into question the legitimacy of existing structures and the accepted social definitions of reality in particular societies" (Smith, 1988, 2-3). Our program participants were no exception. They repeatedly share some of the classic reasons for working in nonprofits; namely, wanting to "make the world a better place". The acquisition of power, authority and privilege that are often associated with managers in for-profit organizations often clashed with the ways that the nonprofit human service managers in the program sought to "improve the world." This struggle was captured succinctly in the comment by the manager who had difficulty dressing up to go to fundraisers because she held the wealthy and the privileged accountable for the inequities in society (Austin, et al, 2013).

In addition, nonprofit managers tend to value a sense of "organizational family" where decision-making processes seek to be inclusive, democratic, and just. They can be disappointed when these processes do not exist and consider the absence of these processes to be a failed act of leadership. Program participants often commented on the "poor process" for making an organizational decision. They rarely commented on the decision itself.

The process of belonging is a central motivating factor in identity formation in general and in leadership identity formation in particular (Carden & Callahan, 2007). The groups that inspire a sense of belonging and create the motivating value systems for nonprofit leaders are more likely to be client groups with whom the prospective leader feels a sense of shared destiny and solidarity. Gaining acceptance from these groups offers leaders what has been called "contextual rank" (Mindel, 1995; Jones & Mones, 2009). Seriously held commitments to these groups impact both personal and professional identity as part of a "calling to serve". In the for-profit sector,

peer, supervisory, or family group members motivate high-potential managers to seek advancement in hopes of attaining greater "social rank" and the privileges that come with it.

Gaining "contextual rank" among client populations is an essential ingredient of success for nonprofit managers (Edwards, Austin & Altpeter, 1998). Those employees who came from the client population found it easy to gain 'contextual rank' and identified it as an asset, as was the case with one participant who introduced herself during class as a former welfare mom. First line supervisors and managers also seek to retain the "contextual rank" that enables them to be seen as belonging to, and supported by, groups of service users. The close identification between service user and service provider can make it easier to deliver services to disenfranchised groups (as described earlier in the case of the shelter manager who understood how the homeless population managed and maintained their turf).

In essence, those who enter the nonprofit sector share the values of being of service. These values and the knowledge gained from possessing "contextual rank" among client groups make them successful in service delivery and shape their expectations of managers and leaders.

Social justice values and models of social change brought into the human service agencies by its employees often involve a belief that effective services are based on connection, community, and being seen and heard as an individual. In addition to the mission of the organization, the relationship with the leader is needed to affirm the models of change held by employees seeking to make the world a better place. This relationship-building process between non-profit leaders and followers can reflect a parallel process to the one used by line workers to promote empowerment and self-sufficiency with clients. These service goals involving humanity, human connection, and human dignity find their way

into the culture of the organization and impact the relationship with leaders and staff. For precisely these reasons, the structures and processes of nonprofit human service organizations often seek to minimize hierarchy, maximize democratic involvement, and maintain close alignment with service users.

The hierarchy of the nonprofit organization may be perceived as reflecting the values of the broader society. Thus, moving beyond a first-line supervisor position into middle management positions may create tensions for middle managers who find themselves reflecting the very organizational structures, norms and values that they may have challenged in the past.

Nonprofit human service organizations are unique in the world of organizations in the same way military organizations are unique (Smith & Reed, 2010). They often contain dual subcultures. The service delivery subculture is facilitated by strong values of equality, connection, democracy and inclusion, and aims at keeping front line staff as close to clients as possible. The subculture of nonprofit executive and administration teams on the other hand are shaped by the need to comply with government funding requirements, fundraising activities, and grant maker restrictions. They are often seen as holding the hierarchical values of the broader society and are found to be suspect by front line service providers. It can often be difficult for line staff and even middle managers to recognize that leaders and executives are called upon to both bridge and champion the differing values reflected in their organizations (e.g. accountability to funders and responsiveness to the diverse needs of service providers and users). Middle managers and program directors may feel deeply conflicted as they experience the value clashes found in the dual subcultures of these human service organizations. As a result, the complexity of the nonprofit culture, with its competing value systems and structures, creates one of the most challenging leadership environments in our society.

BECOMING A LEADER IN MANAGING HUMAN SERVICES

By considering the values of those entering nonprofit human service agencies as well

as the unique subcultures that may exist in these organizations, it becomes easier to understand why the process of leadership development in the nonprofit human service sector might be so challenging. To address this challenge, we combine this nonprofit perspective with the four previously identified steps of leadership identity formation.

Step 1: Managing the competition between personal and organizational value systems

When those drawn to work in nonprofits first enter the organization, they typically discover a substantial match between personal values and the organizational culture of the client services aspect of the organization. However, advancing in the organizational hierarchy of nonprofits becomes increasingly challenging when moving further and further away from daily contact with clients. While the increase in salary is often appreciated, personal identity, self-concept and world-view may be seriously challenged for some emerging leaders at the first step of the leadership identity formation process.

The process of advancing up the organizational hierarchy may include confronting competing values and identities for those nonprofit managers holding counter-culture, progressive, and/or empowerment values that contributed to their entry into the human services in the first place (and motivated their capacity to speak "truth to power"). Promotion into a formal leadership position may result in the belief that they have become part of the "power" structure that, in the past, they believed needed to be challenged. Once these potential leaders cross the boundary into middle and upper management, they may perceive the need to leave behind the social justice reference groups that originally helped them forge their practitioner identities upon entry into nonprofit work. The move into upper management can create a gap between the mission of the organization (which they are able to hold onto as long as they are associated with the groups that are served directly by the mission of the

organization and that reinforce their identity) and the leadership demands of the organization. The tension produced by this gap can directly affect the process of leadership identity formation and raise questions about their efforts to assume leadership roles.

Step 2: Negotiating a sense of belonging and renegotiating contextual and social rank

For nonprofit employees, the groups that create "contextual rank" are often the clients and the line staff with whom they share common values and experiences. Staying close to client populations is thus very important for maintaining one's personal identity and value system among nonprofit human service managers. Program participants made it very clear that anything that widened the gap between themselves and clients, or themselves and first line employees, was difficult (e.g., one manager who entered the leadership development program recognized in the discussions about the role of leader that she would be distanced from the client and staff groups that she most valued and, as a result, dropped out of the program after the first day in order to return to her agency, resign her manager position, and return to providing client services).

When becoming a manager, the "contextual rank" associated with clients and line staff can decrease as "social rank" increases, leading to changes in one's self-concept as well as one's professional identity. The process of moving up the organizational ladder, with its increase in authority, salary, control, and privilege can be experienced as separating nonprofit managers from those with whom they seek to stand in solidarity. As a result, "contextual rank" often needs to be re-negotiated in order for these managers to become comfortable in role. For example, two recently promoted male managers entered the program struggling with their need to delegate more of their former tasks to other staff so they could take on more managerial duties such as planning, budgeting, supervising, and program design. Both men worked for agencies that served either foster children who were living independently in group homes or who were runaways living on the street. Both men had

accumulated significant "contextual rank" with reference to their high status with the client groups and struggled with the idea that their promotion to manager would separate them from these groups. They dressed, spoke and carried themselves in ways that made them accessible to clients. They did not dress to either fit in with, or impress, other managers.

Part of the adjustment to their new management roles was the need to belong and gain "rank" in a new context (other managers and program directors) with new rules for belonging. Effectively managing their departments meant the loss of time with clients and a subsequent loss of "contextual rank" as they delegated more client service work to other staff members. The need to develop new management skills and practices required mentors and the formation of new alliances with fellow managers and directors. They needed to identify role models among these new groups in order to gain a deeper understanding of the effective use of power and authority if they were to bridge the value gaps between the service delivery subculture and the management subculture of the organization. As they worked to gain "contextual rank" in these new manager and director groups, they were also confronted with the clash in values that automatically comes with the increased "social rank" of a promotion.

If promotion into management results in a loss of privilege derived from the groups that have bestowed "contextual rank", it may also threaten one's personal identity. If this is the case, a management position may need to be refused, as was the case with the manager who left the program and gave up her managerial role. For those entering or advancing in the managerial ranks of an organization, it can be challenging to move beyond individual relationships with clients and line staff to gain a broader picture of the organization-as-a-whole.

Step 3: Developing a "provisional self" that enables the exercise of power and authority and the exploration of positive and negative projections.

Once nonprofit managers begin the process of advancing in the organizational hierarchy, they often need to contend with projections and assumptions made by staff about leaders who they believe may take advantage of followers, overlook their needs, fail to consider their input, engage in the unethical use of funds and/or fail to meet the needs of clients (Pollata, 2008). For example, one manager in the leadership development program needed to explore her "provisional" managerial self in which power and authority could be comfortably exercised when she failed to provide an expected salary increase for one of her program supervisors and friends. While the manager was able to bring the program supervisor to the top of the salary range for very legitimate and well-deserved reasons, she was not able to put her in the salary grade of a manager. This manager had to tolerate the negative projections from the friend and program supervisor who felt personally wronged, betrayed and undervalued by this new manager. To remain in her position, she had to find support and resources that would enable her to retain her leadership role as the relationship crumbled and the program supervisor departed the agency. Through both personal and professional coaching, the manager found a way to reflect on and critique her behavior, learn from her experience, tolerate the projection of wrongdoing, and maintain the boundaries necessary to help her department function effectively within budget limitations.

Step 4: Integrating leadership identity (including the capacity for belonging and differentiation) across both personal and professional roles.

Successful leaders in nonprofits demonstrate the capacity to both belong to and differentiate from the groups that provide them with contextual and social rank when they set a course for the agency (along with the Board of Directors) that may not be popular with staff, advocate with city, county or state officials for better laws to support the underserved, or when they network with donors. The leadership ability to engage in belonging and differentiation is developed when emerging leaders are able to effectively utilize both personal and organizational power and authority. When power and authority are exercised in an organizational leadership role, both positive and negative projections emerge often causing leaders to experience a painful sense of separation as described by the manager who lost her friend. Acquiring thehe

capacity for nonprofit leadership often occurs with the loss of innocence when negative projections are experienced and one is perceived as the "other."

Nonprofit human service leaders who are able to integrate a leadership identity across personal and professional domains are able to tolerate being seen as separate and distinct from the group or organization to which they belong, and capable of carrying either negative or positive projections. At the same time, these leaders recognize that this experience of separation only makes them human and deepens their connection to other managers and leaders engaged in implementing the organization's mission of service and social change. As the manager who lost her program supervisor and friend noted, "I decided to move towards the conflict by viewing it as a way to deepen the connection." Encountering a larger 'belonging' in the experience of differentiation appears to enhance the capacity for personal insight, adult maturation and professional growth.

These leaders have the capacity for reflection that enables them to question their own innocence without being immobilized by guilt. It is likely that this group of leaders belongs to what Brene Brown (2012) terms the "whole hearted", those who believe that vulnerability is part of the requirement of being human and is the only thing that makes interpersonal connections possible. When they are wrong, or viewed as wrong, they engage their capacity for reflection rather than shame and are strengthened by the reality of their vulnerability and humanity rather than assuming a sense of defensive righteousness.

For those who have begun their careers as social workers, counselors, and therapists, there is significant motivation to continue the pursuit of personal growth through the process of developing a leadership identity. The growth encountered through workplace leadership challenges can also strengthen the individual in becoming a leader in his/her own life.

In summary this analysis explores the complexity of moving through four steps in the process of nonprofit leadership identify formation; namely, encountering the clash between personal and organizational values when entering the leadership role, re-establishing rank when transitioning away from client groups into administrative groups, exploring provisional selves through the exercise of power and authority in a nonprofit human services organizational culture, and encountering oneself as the "other" when unpopular decisions are made and negative projections must be carried. There are many issues (personality, age, race, gender, work experience, skills and education that can complicate leadership identity formation in non-profit organizations. Mastering the four steps of leadership identity formation may be complicated and may extend over several years. The complexity often involves transitioning from a personal identity and value system derived from proximity to client groups and line staff to a leadership role that places the new manager in the midst of a potentially suspect organizational hierarchy. While the skills needed to effectively function in role as a first line supervisor, a middle manager or senior manager may be significant (e.g. financial management, program development and evaluation, human resource management, and information systems management), the capacity for personal reflection needed to develop a leadership identity may have even higher priority for those assuming leadership positions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The development of future leaders for human service organizations needs to take into account: 1) the value systems embedded in the personal identities of prospective leaders, 2) recognition and understanding of the competing value systems within the human service delivery

system and the organizational hierarchy, 3) the loss of a personal identity centered around "doing good" and "making a difference in the world" that occurs when one steps out of the service delivery system and into the organizational hierarchy, 4) the difficulty in carrying negative projections from staff in the absence of the recognition and appreciation that comes from working with clients, and 5) the difference between the

functional skill sets required to be a manager, and the capacity for reflection required to develop a leadership identity.

Prospective leadership candidates may be more likely to succeed if they are selected not only for their functional skills but for their capacity for reflection, not only for their ability to differentiate themselves but for the humility that enables them to belong, not only for their desire to help others but for the recognition that they will often be part of the problem and in need of help from others.

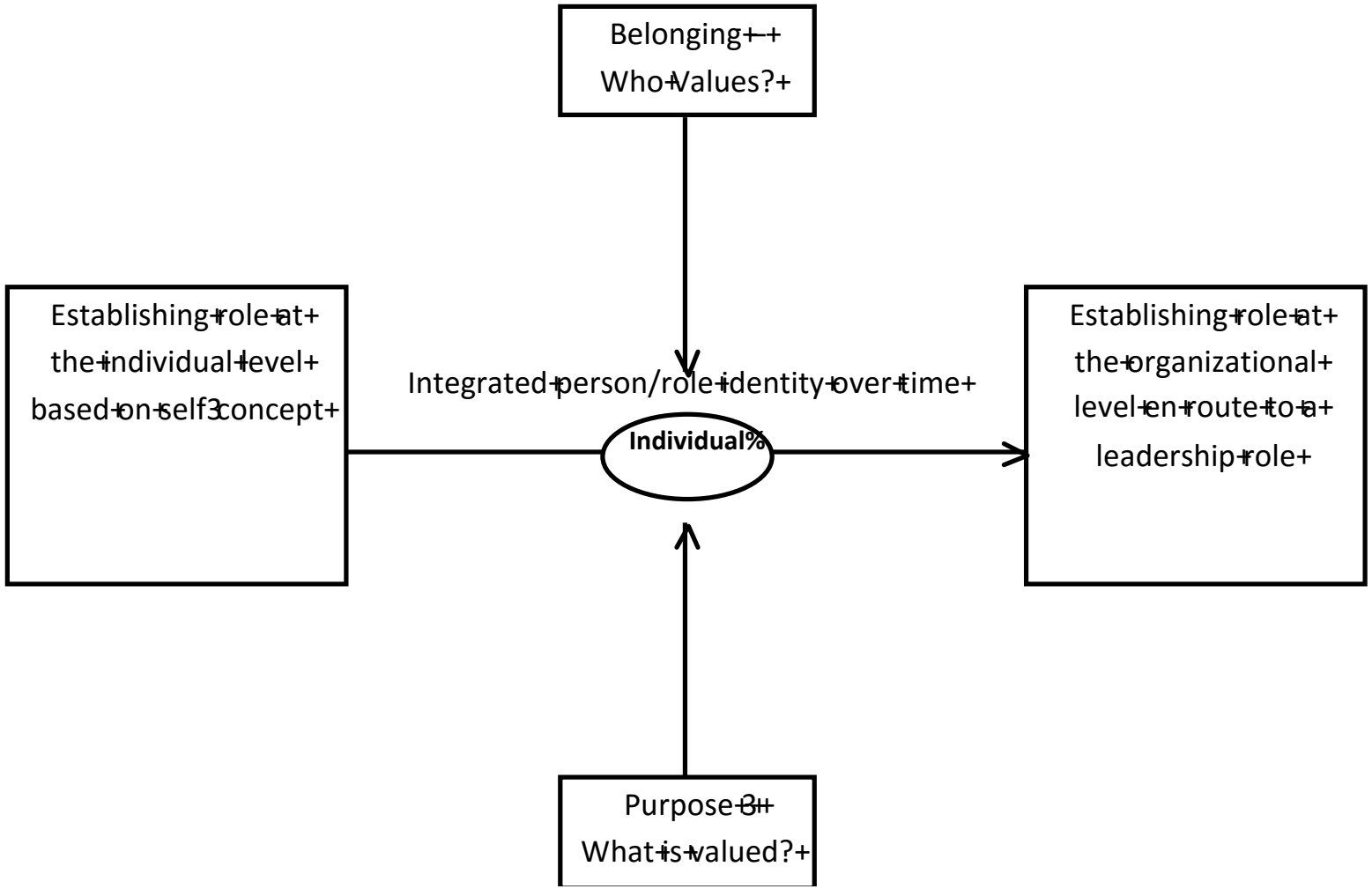
Once managers are selected for future leadership positions, human service organizations can support them by:

1. Recognizing that the decision to step into leadership roles is not only a matter of developing new skills but also a process of leadership identity formation.
2. Orienting new managers to the complexity involved in changing roles and helping them understand that ***any*** and ***all*** relationships cast them into roles that have rules that establish rank whereby both personal and professional roles impact their leadership behavior.
3. Providing newly-promoted managers with coaching support that enables them to: a) identify when and where they are experiencing value clashes between activities, structures and change models within the service delivery and management sub-systems, and b) identify both personal and professional relationships that support their values and social change efforts as well as other groups that might offer them support and connection in their new role.

4. Offering opportunities to attend experiential learning events that allow them to experiment with the use of power, authority, delegation, decision-making and boundary management as well as the coaching needed to debrief these events and their learning.
5. Engaging new managers in change projects (either within their departments or that span the organization-as-a-whole) that are time-limited and provide opportunities to engage their "provisional selves" as a way to help them become comfortable in leadership roles.
6. Supporting mentoring relationships to help new managers navigate the loneliness that may be experienced as they leave old, familiar groups that support their values and enter upper management or executive teams.

These efforts to help new managers deal with the identity issues encountered in the promotion process can support their success in their new leadership roles. Working with coaches or mentors to work through the psychological stress encountered when holding a boundary, establishing direction or making an unpopular decision may help new managers recognize that both service to clients and organizational leadership are part of the calling to serve that attracted them to the nonprofit sector earlier in their careers. It can help them reclaim the passion and motivation that originally inspired them to serve the underserved, and it can sustain them in their leadership efforts to transform nonprofit human service organizations and the broader social structures in which they exist.

Fig. 2: Leadership Identity Formation Using a Person/Role Continuum in Nonprofit Organizations



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