The Perceptions of Stakeholder Groups
Regarding the Leader Identification Process
as a Part of the Launch of a Leader Development Pool Strategy

By David Churchill

B.S. in Business Management, May 1986, Eastern Illinois University
Master of Business Administration, May 1992, Aurora University

A Dissertation Submitted to

The Faculty of
The Graduate School of Education and Human Development
of The George Washington University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education

May 17, 2015

Dissertation directed by

David R. Schwandt
Professor of Human and Organizational Studies

UMI Number: 3684951

UMI

Dissertation Publishing

UMI 3684951

ProQuest®

The Graduate School of Education and Human Development of the George Washington University certifies that David Churchill has passed the final examination for the degree of Doctor of Education as of February 5, 2015. This is the final and approved form of the dissertation.

The Perceptions of Stakeholder Groups
Regarding the Leader Identification Process
as a Part of the Launch of a Leader Development Pool Strategy

David Churchill

Dissertation Research Committee:

David R. Schwandt, Professor of Human and Organizational Studies, Dissertation Director

Andrea Casey, Associate Professor of Human and Organizational Learning, Committee Member

Margaret DeLaney Gorman Kirchoff, Teaching Faculty, School of Professional Studies, Northeastern University, Committee Member

Acknowledgments

The writer would like to thank the dissertation chair, Dr. David Schwandt, and other committee members Dr. Andrea Casey and Dr. Margaret DeLaney, Gorman, Kirchoff for their advice and support throughout the duration of this research, including the many fits and starts along the way. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of Jimmy Turner, a mentor and friend who, with great enthusiasm, encouraged me to cross the finish line shortly before his untimely passing from this earth. Finally, this accomplishment would not be possible were it not for the faithful support and encouragement of my loving wife Janice, son James, and daughters Emily and Linnea, all of whom endured the many hours I spent in pursuit of my doctorate degree.

Abstract of the Dissertation

The Perceptions of Stakeholder Groups
Regarding the Leader Identification Process
as a Part of the Launch of a Leader Development Pool Strategy

This study examined stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process as a part of the launch of a leader development pool strategy within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. Stakeholder perceptions included stakeholder expectations of, roles in, and contributions to the organization's leader identification strategy and process, which were aimed at addressing a sparse leadership bench.

This single, descriptive case study centered around a leader identification initiative involving leaders and emerging leaders who were nominated for or applied to an accelerated development program. Fourteen leaders participated in the study. Their average tenure with the organization was 14.3 years. This study examined stakeholder perceptions around three phases of the initiative: the kick-off and communication phase (Phase 1), the talent review phase (Phase 2), and the disposition and development phase (Phase 3).

The study's findings revealed agreement among stakeholder groups that (1) clearly defined roles and responsibilities were critical to building the leadership bench, (2) open and honest talent discussions were more important than the systems and processes designed to build leadership capacity, (3) the talent pool approach taken by the organization undermined true succession planning and targeted development, and (4) stakeholder expectations and involvement drove the need for planned changes in the leader identification and development strategy.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

Many organizations are reaffirming the old adage that employees are their

greatest asset and making an investment in the future of both the individual employee and

the company by developing qualified candidates to replace key leaders as positions

become vacant or to fill new leadership roles as a part of the growth of the organization.

This practice of *succession planning* has only recently been thought of as part of a

broader succession management strategy (Berger & Berger, 2011). This idea is supported

by Rothwell (2010), who stated that "in order to implement a strategic plan, organizations

require the right people in the right places at the right times" (p. 14). For an increasing

number of organizations, the practice of identifying, assessing, and developing leaders to

fill key positions in an organization by using succession planning is supplanting the

reactive mode of replacing leaders during times of natural attrition (Berger & Berger,

2011). Historically, companies have primarily been concerned with replacing key leaders

shortly before they were to leave the organization. As Greengard (2001) stated,

> In decades past, identifying, assessing, developing and promoting talent was a
> fairly simple proposition. Until the last decade or so, the CEO or board of
> directors simply decided who would be slotted into a senior management position,
> . . . a decision usually based on hunches, instincts and intuition. (p. 36)

While it is true that some of today's firms are gaining a better understanding of

succession management, research suggests that few highly successful companies marry

the leadership development and succession planning processes for optimal identification,

assessment, development, and placement of leadership talent (Berger & Berger, 2011;

DeRue & Myers, 2013). Further, the exemplary succession management approaches

practiced by leading companies suggest that the field of management development stands much to gain by a clearer understanding of how leader identification efforts inform and are informed by the stakeholder expectations and inputs of the organization's succession management strategy (Silzer & Church, 2013).

Indeed, Kur and Bunning's (2002) review of succession management and leader development practices argued that "corporate leadership development can no longer simply rely on planning the replacement of existing leaders" (p. 761). Unfortunately, many organizations confuse effective succession management with replacement planning, which is focused narrowly on identifying specific backup candidates for given senior management positions and essentially functions as a forecast (Kesler, 2002). Conversely, highly successful organizations focus on creating a comprehensive set of identification, assessment, and development practices that support the entire pipeline of talent across the organization (DeRue & Myers, 2013). Additionally, Berger and Berger (2011) called for a new succession management creed where "successful organizations proactively and systematically take action to ensure that they have the human resource capability to meet their current and future business requirements" (p. 3). The human resource capability to which this study refers is leader capability in particular.

A stakeholder approach to leader identification calls for deeper insights into the expectations of and contributions to a leader succession management strategy (Silzer & Church, 2010). These stakeholders all have a stake in seeing the endeavor succeed (Silzer & Church, 2013). In this study, the stakeholders who have both the greatest stake and the greatest potential impact include the organization's executives, the human resource development function, and those leaders responsible for identifying current and emerging

2

leaders While some research has been conducted to identify the contributions and inducements of these stakeholder groups in leadership development efforts (Nickols, 2005), little has been done to explore the perceptions of stakeholder groups in the particular activity of identifying leadership potential in the context of a leader development pool strategy (Silzer & Church, 2013). Here, Nickols includes all three of the aforementioned stakeholder groups important to this study.

The genesis of leader identification, assessment, and ensuing development within the context of a broader succession management strategy dates back to 1997, when the McKinsey study, *The War for Talent,* placed the organization's stewardship of talent on center stage. Now, in the new millennium, we find ourselves in the *talent age*. During the *agricultural age*, the economy was based on land, a physical and tangible asset. The *industrial age* that followed was powered by a manufacturing-driven economy, where greater business performance was derived through the most effective use of factories and distribution networks. This gave way to the *knowledge age,* which moved the basis of economic value to information assets through integrated communications and computer technology. Now, in the *talent age*, competitive advantage is found in the best people as organizations have discovered that they are the true source of value creation (Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Berger & Berger, 2011). This human value creation causes firms to compete not only for market share but also for talent. The increased competition makes it critical for organizations to compete for high-level talent since competitive advantage is often created through leveraging human capital (Bernthal & Wellins, 2001, 2006; Gaffney, 2005; Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 2002).

Problem Statement

Three converging factors form a great challenge for organizations in meeting today's leadership capital needs. First, the need for leadership succession has never been greater (Bersin & Associates, 2010; DeRue & Myers, 2013; Rothwell, 2010; Van Velsor, McCauley, & Ruderman, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2013). Organizations of all sizes and industries continue to face a range of leader development challenges, including decimated mid-management levels that often rob high-potential managers of critical on-the-job experiences, depleted resources for leader development, and a rapidly aging workforce that may create shortfalls of experienced managerial talent for leadership positions (Rothwell, 2010). Furthermore, U.S. workforce statistics suggest that succession management poses an incredible challenge as the baby boomer generation retires and far fewer college-educated workers are prepared to replace them (DeRue & Myers, 2013).

Second, an articulated, comprehendible leader succession management strategy eludes most organizations (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). One of the issues surrounding succession management today is that without a clear succession management strategy most organizations will continue to invest too heavily in the leader talent acquisition domain and too little in the leader talent identification, assessment, development, and retention domains (Bersin & Associates, 2010). The success of any organization relies on strategy, and the area of human capital is no exception (Worley, Hitchin, & Ross, 1996). Organizations, in an effort to change their human resources focus from one of administration to one of developing a business partner approach, increasingly look to succession management strategies, which involve both leader development and organization development (McCauley & Wakefield, 2006).

Organizations need help in clarifying what succession management entails and ensuring that the succession management strategy is of benefit to both the organization and the leaders it seeks to develop (Berger & Berger, 2011). Having a clear focus can transform succession management from an abstract boardroom idea into a more practical application, creating better talent pools from which suitably experienced and trained leaders can be drawn in the future (Van Velsor et al., 2010).

The third and final impetus for this study was the limited amount of research addressing leader identification from a stakeholder point of view (Silzer & Church, 2013). There has been some discussion of leader *development* from a stakeholder perspective in recent years (Combs & Falletta, 2000; Dunet & Reyes, 2006; Michalski & Cousins, 2000, 2001; Nickols, 2005). Nickols' research, in particular, took into account the idea that leader development should be viewed from a stakeholder perspective, while Silzer and Church (2010, 2013) specifically argued that a stakeholder view of leader identification and assessment demands more attention. Nickols (2005) defined a stakeholder as "a person or group with an interest in seeing an endeavor succeed or fail" (p. 127). Again, Nickols included the three stakeholder groups identified for the purposes of this study, while Silzer and Church included, in addition, those leaders who participate in leader identification and assessment activities. Participants in the initiative were not included as a stakeholder group in this study in an effort to bound the study.

The problem, then, is that there is a dearth of understanding of how the organization's efforts around the identification of leadership potential both inform and are informed by the stakeholders involved in such activities within the context of an attempted leader development pool strategy.

Purpose of the Study and Research Question

The purpose of this study was to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. This study addressed a single overriding research question:

RQ: What are the perceptions of various stakeholder groups regarding the leader identification process as part of a leader development pool strategy?

It was expected that the idea of *perceptions* would entail stakeholder *expectations*, *roles*, and *contributions*, among other yet unknown concepts.

Conceptual Framework

The two constructs of this study were *leader identification* (within the larger construct of leader development) and *stakeholder theory and expectancy theory,* with the idea of *talent pools in succession management* serving as the study's context. The conceptual framework, as depicted in Figure 1.1, suggests that stakeholders' perceptions both inform and are informed by the activity of leader development within a talent pool strategy.
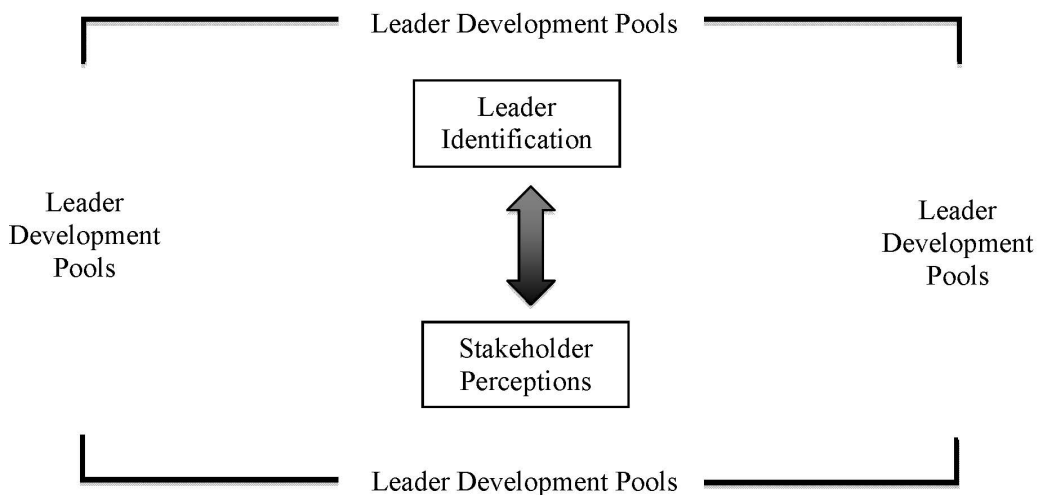
Figure 1.1. Research framework.

6

Leader Identification

Leader identification and assessment were viewed from the perspective of Silzer and Church (2010, 2013). In their recent treatise, they argued that as part of the increasing strategic role of human resources in business, organizations are focusing on identifying and developing the potential leadership talent that is needed to specifically achieve business strategies. One key component in this effort involves identifying the talent that already exists in the organization and the current and emerging leaders who have the potential to be effective in future roles with greater responsibility and complexity, usually at higher levels in the hierarchy (and in some cases attempting to identify the C-suite candidates of the future). Currently, significant corporate resources (both time and money) are being devoted to helping employees improve their current performance, identifying their broader strengths and development needs, and developing them for their next position in their career path (Silzer & Church, 2013). It was only a matter of time for this effort to extend from development for current performance, to development for performance in their next position, to development for long-term future performance (Van Velsor et al., 2010). Silzer and Church (2013) argued that this is a significant mind shift from short-term selection to long-term prediction, often over a 3- to 10-year period or more. They suggested that the prediction process is not one of matching an individual to specific known positions and responsibilities but rather predicting how much leadership potential an individual has, with additional growth and development, to be a candidate in the future for a group of possible positions. DeRue and Myers (2013) and Silzer and Church (2013) pointed out that both the individual and the future positions

are likely to change and evolve over the years before promotion into a specific leadership role is considered.

Silzer and Church (2013) suggested that in order to most effectively leverage their resources, organizations have a growing interest in identifying those individuals who have the most potential to be effective in higher-level organizational roles. Today organizations are creating sophisticated systems and programs for identifying, assessing, and developing high-potential leadership talent (Church, 2006; Parasher & McDaniel, 2008; Silzer, 2006; Silzer & Church, 2010; Wells, 2009). Silzer and Church (2013) noted that the idea of potential or talent potential, as used by many organizations, refers to the possibility that individuals can become something more than what they currently are. This implies further growth and development to reach some desired end state. Current succession management researchers have noted that over the years there has been increasing interest in identifying high-potential individuals in organizations (Berger & Berger, 2011; DeRue & Myers, 2013; Rothwell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2013). For example, during conferences of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, the number of sessions focused on high-potential leader talent identification, assessment, and development has noticeably increased in the last several years (e.g., Church, 2006; Lewis, 2007; Silzer, 2006; Silzer & Dowell, 2009a, 2009b; Silzer & Kaiser, 2008; Wells, 2009), including a number of preconference workshops (e.g., Parasher & McDaniel, 2008; Peterson & Erdahl, 2007; Yost & McCall, 2007). According to Silzer and Church (2013), the number of organizations who report having a program for high-potential leaders is also increasing.

Talent and leadership potential. Within the context of leader development

pools, organizations currently apply the principles of leader identification by utilizing the

terms *talent* and *potential* to describe the *who* and *what* of identification (Rothwell, 2010;

Silzer & Church, 2013). Silzer and Church (2013) defined *talent* in terms of knowledge,

skills, abilities, and characteristics at both the individual and collective level. Silzer and

Dowell (2010b) pointed out two additional aspects to which the notion of talent may be

applied. The first is the view that talent equals the person, in that we sometimes speak of

individuals as talent. Yet, even this perspective acknowledges that the person has specific

knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics in a particular area. The second manner in

which they ascribe a definition of talent involves the talent of a collective, a group of

people such as a pool of leaders.

Silzer and Church (2013) pointed out that in groups, talent can also refer to a pool

of employees that are exceptional in their knowledge, skills, and abilities, either in a

specific technical area (such as financial asset management), a specific competency (such

as innovative thinking), or a more general area (such as general management or

leadership potential). Moreover, in some organizations, *the talent* might refer to the entire

employee population, which is what the relatively new and somewhat murkily defined

human resources subfunctional category of "talent management" has been aimed at (e.g.,

Lewis & Heckman, 2006, Silzer & Dowell, 2010a). Many companies now have multiple

talent pools beyond their high-potential pool (Dowell, 2010; Byham, Smith, & Paese,

2012). Other versions have been called acceleration pools (Byham et al., 2012; Rothwell,

2010) or pivotal talent pools (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005). Each of these approaches is

intended to guide organizational decisions about identifying, assessing, developing, moving, and retaining emerging and current leadership talent.

Over the years, the nature of organizational talent has changed (Sears, 2003) from a focus on division of labor distinctions to an evaluation of strategic contributions to the organization. Sears suggested that "talent is knowledge" (i.e., as a competitive advantage) and that it is shaped by what customers value. In fact, the strategic basis of talent has been extended to the full range of talent management processes and systems. Silzer and Dowell (2010b) proposed that talent management "is an integrated set of processes, programs and cultural norms in an organization designed and implemented to attract, develop, deploy and retain talent to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs" (p. 17). For the purposes of this study, a portion of Lewis' and Heckman's (2006) definition of talent management will be used. They point out that talent management involves the strategic attraction, identification, development, movement, and engagement/retention of those individuals with high potential who are particular value to the organization. For the organization studied, those of particular value include emerging and current leaders at various levels in the company.

In work environments, *potential* is rarely used in relation to current work performance but is typically used to suggest that an individual has the qualities (e.g., characteristics, motivation, skills, abilities, experiences, etc.) to effectively perform and contribute in roles of increasing complexity and scope in the organization, at some point in the future (Silzer & Church, 2013). In this way *potential* is associated with possibilities for the future rather than with problems in current performance. Business organizations now want to find the leader talent with the greatest potential to maximize future

organizational success and rarely take action solely for the potential leader's future success (Berger & Berger, 2011; Rothwell, 2010).

According to Silzer and Church (2013), the term *potential* can be either a noun ("he has potential") or an adjective ("he is a potential general manager"). As a noun it is defined as "something that can develop or become actual" (Merriam-Webster, 2012). As an adjective it is defined as "existing in possibility, capable of development in actuality" (Merriam-Webster, 2012). Both uses suggest that potential may develop or is capable of development. This is an interesting linguistic observation, as many leaders, managers, and human resources professionals view the concept of potential as an inherent individual capability (e.g., either one has or does not have potential), and some consulting firms have asserted that potential factors "are extremely difficult to develop" (Rogers & Smith, 2007).

According to Silzer and Church (2013), some organizations use the term generically—"he has potential" or "she is a high-potential individual." In these cases potential is not specifically defined, and all potential is put into one general category. This suggests that potential is used as a construct that can be identified and measured independently of the context or expected end state and might be immutable across situations, much like general intelligence. Silzer and Church (2013) suggested that, in these cases, the term may actually mean general intelligence or personality characteristics. For the purposes of this study, Silzer and Church's (2013) view of *talent* was utilized: the knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics possessed by the individual emerging or current leader and a collective pool of leaders. Additionally, this study approached the term *potential* as a future orientation of individual leaders or talent

pools of leaders possessing the capacity and capability to take on greater levels of responsibility and complexity.

The Stakeholder Perspective and Expectancy

Since this research sought to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process, a brief examination of a stakeholder theory of the firm is in order and helps to solidify the context of this study. The stakeholder theory is a theory of organizations that was originally detailed by Freeman (1984) and identifies and models the groups that are stakeholders of a corporation. The theory both describes and recommends methods by which management can give due regard to the interests of those groups (Freeman, 1984). In short, stakeholder theory attempts to address the principle of *who really matters*. Freeman defined a *stakeholder* as "any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives" (p. 5). More recently, Nickols (2005) defined *stakeholder* as "a person or group with an interest in seeing an endeavor succeed or fail" (p. 127). In this study, the three stakeholder groups deemed to have an interest in and gain from the organization's leader identification and assessment processes were (1) the C-suite executives involved in developing and sponsoring the talent pool strategy and the related leader identification process, (2) the human resource development function facilitating the leader identification process, and (3) those senior leaders involved in identifying leadership potential. While those participating in the leader identification itself are also deemed stakeholders, they are excluded from this study as their main interest was deemed to have primarily singular aspects while the interests of the three aforementioned stakeholder groups include the interests of the enterprise as a whole, or at least portions of it.

Numerous views of stakeholder theory are presented in the literature, though a key distinction can be drawn between the tenets of stakeholder theory and the conventional input-output model of the firm, which views organizations as converting investor, supplier, and employee inputs into customer outputs (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). In contrast, stakeholder theory argues that every legitimate person or group participating in the activities of a firm does so in order to obtain benefits, and that the priority of the interests of all legitimate stakeholders is not self-evident (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Further, Donaldson and Preston offered four central theses related to stakeholder theory. These four theses are as follows:

1. Stakeholder theory is descriptive in that it offers a model of the corporation.

2. Stakeholder theory is instrumental in offering a framework for investigating the links between conventional firm performance and the practice of stakeholder management.

3. Although stakeholder theory is descriptive and instrumental, it is more fundamentally normative. That is, stakeholders are identified by their interests, and all stakeholder interests are considered to be intrinsically valuable.

4. Stakeholder theory is managerial in that it focuses on attitudes, structures, and practices and requires that simultaneous attention be given to the interests of all legitimate stakeholders.

These four theses combine to serve as one impetus for attempting to understand the reception and implementation of a talent management strategy from a stakeholder perspective. A stakeholder perspective helps to describe, make connections, and ensure all interests are represented in the implementation of a leader development pool strategy.

As previously noted, few studies have sought to understand leader identification from a stakeholder point of view (DeRue & Myers, 2013; Silzer & Church, 2010, 2013). While the prevailing leadership literature has, for the most part, focused on the relationship between leaders and followers in the organization (defining followers as subordinates), this research aimed to understand the identification of leaders from the perspective of those within the organization who have a stake in the succession management process itself. This approach followed Bass and Steidlmeier's (1999) suggestion to discuss "leadership in the context of contemporary stakeholder theory" (p. 200).

Thus, the stakeholder approach to leader identification proposed by Silzer and Church (2013) informed this research. The key constituencies of which they speak all have a stake in the succession management strategy in that they are interested in seeing it succeed. Moreover, without contributions from and inducements to these key constituencies, talent management efforts are not likely to succeed (Silzer & Church, 2013). This approach, having theoretical roots in the stakeholder theory of organizations (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984), relies on the contributions-inducements view of organizational stakeholders (Barnard, 1947; March & Simon, 1958). This view holds that the definitive measures of an organization's success are the extent to which it serves all of its constituencies better than the competition (Nickols, 2005; Silzer & Church, 2013). In the present context, stakeholder theory posits that leader identification both serves and depends upon multiple constituencies. Silzer and Church (2013) defined these stakeholder groups as executives, the human resources function, and those

responsible for making leader identification decisions, and these are the three groups studied as a part of this research.

Silzer and Church (2013) argued that the identification of leadership potential should be jointly owned by two of these three stakeholder groups: the organization's executives and the human resources function. Essentially there is a continuum between senior leadership ownership of leadership potential and full human resources accountability. Although historically human resources has been the keeper of the development processes that support the identification and assessment of potential leaders, in the last 10 to 15 years there has been movement toward more shared accountability in corporations (Karaevli & Hall, 2003). Moreover, a best practices study (Krupp, 2008) suggested that the chief executive officer needs to actually own and sponsor the leader identification process, not just provide support for it.

As previously stated, examining the leader identification process from a stakeholder perspective should result in a better understanding of stakeholders' roles, contributions, and expectations of and to the process. Therefore, stakeholder theory naturally precedes a discussion of expectancy theory in this case. The stakeholder approach to leader identification as proposed by Silzer and Church (2013) has theoretical roots in both stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984) and expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964, 1992). Vroom's expectancy theory is often referred to as VIE theory, standing for the major components of the theory: valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. The theory uses extrinsic and intrinsic motivators to describe the possible causes for behavior and involvement in the workplace. VIE theory proposes three conditions that move an individual forward based on motivation:

1. The expenditure of personal effort will result in an acceptable outcome level.

2. The achieved overall outcome level will bring about a specific outcome for the person.

3. The achieved outcome is personally valued (Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2001).

Vroom (1964, 1992) stated that an expectancy is defined as a momentary belief concerning the likelihood that a particular act will be followed by a particular outcome. His theory links expectancy with strength values: the greater the strength, the more likely that the act will be followed by a certain outcome. Pinder (1984) stated that if a person judges that he can achieve an outcome, then he will be more motivated to try; the higher the expectancy, then the more likely a person will exert energy to accomplish the outcome.

The idea of outcomes has deeper roots in a contributions-inducements view of organizations originally conceptualized by Barnard (1947). The contributions-inducements view of organizations states that the organization depends on its members to participate in the creation of both products and services. According to Silzer and Church (2013), the contributions and inducements involved in the leader identification process vary from organization to organization. The executive stakeholder contributions may include time, budget dollars, and energy in crafting the leader development pool strategy and the ensuing leader identification process. Human resource leaders invest their time and skills in facilitating the leader identification efforts. Likewise, the leaders involved in making leader identification decisions contribute their time and skills. Inducements might include ensuring that leadership development dollars are spent on the right leaders and

that the organization ultimately has the right leaders in the right roles, doing the right things.

Several studies have used Vroom's (1964, 1992) expectancy theory (Chen, Gupta, & Hoshower, 2006; Isaac et al., 2001; Schepman & Richmond, 2003; Smith & Rupp, 2003). All of these studies used expectancy theory to address different concepts and relationships in various workplaces as reviewed below. However, there is no evidence that expectancy theory has been applied to stakeholder involvement in the leader identification process. In seeking to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process undergoing a planned change, this study identified and documented stakeholders' expectations of and contributions to the leader identification process. This adds to the discussion on both leader identification and stakeholder and expectancy theory.

The Context of Leader Development Pools

Despite recent heightened interest, the topic of leader development pools remains largely underdeveloped (Rothwell, 2010). A key limitation is the previously established fact that the concept of talent pools as a part of a larger succession management strategy lacks consistent and clear conceptual boundaries**.** The relatively recent emphasis on leader development pools represents a paradigm shift from more traditional human resource-related sources of competitive advantage such as those that focus on upper-echelon literature and strategic human resource management towards the identification of talent specifically suited to today's dynamic competitive environment (Berger & Berger, 2011; Rothwell, 2010).

17

Succession management is a strategy that includes the specific concept of succession planning, which is "a means of identifying critical management positions, starting at the levels of project manager and supervisor and extending up to the highest position in the organization" (Rothwell, 2010, pp. 13-14). Although it is often confused with replacement planning, succession planning goes beyond replacement planning because its focus is broader than one position, department, or division (Rothwell, 2010). Rothwell argued that while often associated with planning for senior executive replacements only, succession management is broader than that and can extend as far down the organization chart as managers wish to go. It also differs from replacement planning because successors are considered by level on the organization chart. Silzer and Church (2013) noted that a leader development pool is identified underneath each level, and a typical goal is to prepare as many successors as possible to be 80% ready for promotion to any position at the next level on the organization chart. The remaining 20% of development is provided when individuals have been identified and assessed as having potential for higher-level responsibility. According to Rothwell (2010), the concept of leader development pools is usually based on three assumptions:

1. There is a goal to identify a talent pool of many people who are willing to be considered for promotion and work to be developed for it.
2. The future may not be like the past, and the competencies required at each level may be different in the future, so merely "cloning" past leaders is not appropriate.
3. Ensuing development occurs primarily on the job rather than through off-the-job training experiences.

Lewis and Heckman (2006) and Berger and Berger (2011) discussed various aspects of a leader development pool strategy that could serve as the context for this study. These researchers had four common components when describing a leader development pool: (1) identification of leadership talent, (2) assessment of leadership talent, (3) development of leadership talent, and (4) movement of leadership talent.

This research study focused on only the first of these common elements of a succession management strategy: *identification* of leadership talent. The process begins with an understanding of the strategic plan and the ramifications this plan has on the future talent needs of the organization (Berger & Berger, 2011). The identification of internal leadership talent often involves the processes of nomination and/or self-application of perceived high-potential leaders. This is followed by talent review meetings whereby executives discuss, in panel form, all of the nominees and applicants, their performance history, their experiences, and their readiness for potential senior leadership roles (Berger & Berger, 2011; Silzer & Church, 2013). In short, talent reviewers are identifying leadership talent by examining leader capacity and capability for potential (Van Velsor et al., 2010).

The leader identification process is often aided by two forms of leader *assessment* (Berger & Berger, 2011). The first is the assessment of leadership performance, often through web-enabled performance management systems. Performance management systems typically measure both the *what* and *how* of performance (Berger & Berger, 2011). The *what* of performance comprises individual performance objectives that are aligned with the organization's strategic objectives. The *how* of performance is measured by the utilization of leadership and role-specific competencies. The second type of

leadership assessment involves the assessment of the *potential* of leaders, which typically

involves tools that assess the capacity and capability for future higher-level roles and/or

behavioral assessment that ascertains the *potential runway* that a leader might have based

on his or her learning agility, that is, the predicted ability to be successful outside of one's

present context (Lombardo & Eichinger, 2000). From both the *performance* and *potential*

assessments, succession and development plans are then created, allowing for the

matching of high-potential leaders with the present and future leadership needs of the

company (DeRue & Myers, 2013).

The third common element of a leader development pool strategy involves the

development of the firm's emerging and current leaders. Development comes in many

forms and includes such activities as formal training, coaching, mentoring, and feedback

provided to those leaders who were identified and assessed as having high potential

(McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004; Van Velsor et al., 2010). Talent *movement*, the fourth

component of the strategy, is the culmination of the leader development pool process

started in the identification phase of the model (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Talent

movement can take various forms within an organization, the most traditional and formal

of which involves the vertical promotion of high-potential leaders from one level of

responsibility to the next within a function or discipline. Less common, but still utilized

by some organizations, is the horizontal movement of leaders from one function to

another (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). This internal importation and exportation of

leadership talent often allows the organization to benefit from the knowledge and skill

transfer from one (perhaps more successful) part of the firm to another (perhaps less

successful or less mature) part of the firm (Bersin & Associates, 2010). Many of today's

lean organizations find that they do not have the luxury of filling every void left by the exportation of high-potential leaders (Bersin & Associates, 2010; Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Therefore, job assignments that allow a leader to contribute to and learn from another part of the organization, while retaining his or her current leadership role, are becoming more prevalent (Lewis & Heckman, 2006).

Once again, this research study focused on only the first element of the leader development pool strategy outlined here: *identification* of high-potential leaders. While the other three common elements of a leader development pool strategy—assessment, development, and movement of high-potential leaders—are equally important, the timeframe for this study did not allow for a longitudinal exploration of the leader development pool strategy.

Potential Significance

This study adds to an understanding of the perceptions (including expectations and contributions) of stakeholder groups and their influence on the identification of leadership potential. This study further informs critical decisions related to the identification and development of organizational leaders made by stakeholder groups. By looking at leader identification through the lens of these stakeholder groups, we gain better insight into stakeholder perceptions of a leader development pool strategy. In addition, by exploring the stakeholders' perceptions of the leader identification process, we gain greater insights into the future of leader development pool strategies and processes and how they are applied in organizations (Silzer & Church, 2013).

Summary of the Methodology

An embedded single case study approach was used to answer the research question. The study site is the largest U.S.-based, for-profit partnership corrections organization to be the study site. This site was chosen for this study because the researcher is employed by the organization, and therefore has access to organizational data and the stakeholder groups who hold them. Data were collected and organized after the launch of the leader identification process. These data, including the interview questions, were organized around three phases of the process: (1) the original communication and training sessions around the leader development pool strategy and the leader identification process, from January to February 2013; (2) the pilot of the leader identification process with 77 leaders who were nominated and/or applied to the leader development pool through the leader identification process, from June to July 2013; and (3) the identification and communication (to all the stakeholder groups) of the planned changes to the leader identification process, from September to October 2013.

Data were collected from two sources. The first source was semistructured, in-depth individual interviews with 14 participants from three stakeholder groups involved in the leader identification process. Purposeful sampling was used to select interviewees who met four criteria:

- Identification as an executive (one of six in the organization), human resources leader (one of eight), or senior leader (one of 24)

- Participation in the leader identification process during all three phases of the implementation

- No direct reporting relationship between the individual and the researcher

- A willingness to participate in the study

Data were also collected from documents during phase of the process. Documents for the first phase included those about the leader identification process design, about the process plan, and about communication and education around the leader identification process. For the second phase, the talent management system itself (specifically the nomination screen and the high-potential leader application screen) were reviewed, as well as leader identification notes and decision documents that emerged from the talent review meetings and documents pertaining to the communication of leader identification decisions. For the third phase, documents pertaining to the feedback received during the postmortem exercise on the process, documents articulating the planned change based on the feedback, and documents communicating the planned change for the leader identification process were reviewed.

Data analysis techniques included pattern matching and explanation building. The analysis proceeded in five steps: (1) organizing the data, (2) reading and memoing the data, (3) describing and classifying the data into codes and themes, (4) interpreting the data, and (5) representing and visualizing the data. Since data were analyzed around the three phases of the process and the three subgroups, a comparison table was used to compare themes. Steps to ensure credibility in this process included collection of data from multiple sources, peer debriefing by a colleague who serves as an organization development professor at a local university, and member check from a participant of each of the three stakeholder groups. A case study database was used to ensure transferability.

Delimitations

The delimitations of this study were intentional and threefold:

1. This research focused on only the first element of a succession management strategy: leader *identification*. The study's timeframe did not permit examination of the other elements of *assessment*, *development,* and *movement,* which would require a more longitudinal approach (Saks, 2006).

2. When studying the process of identifying leadership potential, certain contextual variables such as career stage, age of leaders, and other moderating variables were difficult to account for, and most of these variables were excluded depending on the complexity and noise they added to the data (Silzer & Church, 2013).

3. This study focused on the stakeholders' perceptions of leader identification rather than the *effectiveness* of the final implementation of the leader development pool strategy. While inferences may be drawn about effectiveness, accurately assessing implementation effectiveness would once again require a longitudinal study over a period of time impractical for this research. That said, the researcher recognizes the need for further study on the effectiveness of leader development pool strategies and processes (Groves, 2007; Rothwell, 2010). Despite the range of best practice findings regarding the process of leader development, research suggests that few organizations empirically evaluate the effectiveness of their leader development pool practices, specifically the aspect of leader identification (DeRue & Myers, 2013; Silzer & Church, 2013).

Limitations

The limitations of the study include the following:

1. Generalizability: This study focused on stakeholders' views and roles in the identification of leadership potential as a part of a leader development pool

strategy within one organization: a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. It is

unclear as to whether or not the results are generalizable to all enterprises that

employ a leader identification and assessment process.

2. Partiality/bias: There are three main threats to impartiality: subjectivity,

inaccuracy, and bias (Yin, 2003). The case study method inherently requires

subjective and judgmental elements. Therefore, there may be subjective bias in

the findings based on the interpretations of the experiences of various study

participants representing each of the three stakeholder groups, as well as bias on

the part of the researcher, who is employed by the organization being studied.

Assumptions

The assumptions related to this study reveal bias and other potentially subjective

choices. These assumptions are as follows:

1. The individuals making up each of the three stakeholder groups would present

some amount of clarity as to their group's perceptions of, and influences on, the

leader identification process.

2. Clear, distinctive characteristics for leader identification would emerge based on

the intended succession management strategy.

Terminology

At this point, it may be helpful to define some key terms that make up the

substance of the study.

360-degree feedback (or multirater feedback): Gathering information about a person's behavior and skills from a boss or bosses, direct reports, colleagues, and other stakeholders such as customers and suppliers (Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997).

Expectancy: An action-outcome association. Expectancy takes values ranging from 0, indicating no subjective probability that an act will be followed by an outcome, to 1, indicating certainty that the act will be followed by the outcome (Vroom, 1995).

Expectancy theory: A motivation theory developed by Victor Vroom. The theory states that "the choices made by a person among alternative courses of action are lawfully related to psychological events occurring contemporaneously with the behavior" (Vroom, 1995, pp. 14-15). The theory is often referred to as VIE theory because the three key mental components are valance, instrumentality, and expectancy (Pinder, 1984).

Leaders: Those who "express the values that hold society together. Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and unite them in the pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts" (Burns, 1978, p. 452).

Leadership: "Roles and processes . . . that facilitate setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment in groups of people who share common work" (Van Velsor et al., 2010, p. 2). While this definition was used for the current study, it is recognized that "there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (Bass, 1990, p. 11).

Leader development: "The expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership

roles and processes" (McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004, p. 4). Klenke (1993)

believed that the distinction between leadership training and leader development

was often blurred.

Leadership development: "The expansion of an organization's capacity to enact basic

leadership tasks needed to accomplish shared, collective work" (McCauley & Van

Velsor, 2004, p. 4).

Leadership training: A procedure that relies on learning and attitude adjustments as a

path toward behavior change (Fleishman & Harris, 1962).

Learning: "All processes that lead to relatively lasting changes of capacity whether it be

of a motor, cognitive, emotional, motivational, attitudinal or social character"

(Illeris, 2002, p. 17). Learning is a process that leads to increased skill or

knowledge and creates the possibility for changes in attitudes, behavior, and

perspectives (Illeris, 2002).

Potential: "The possibility that individuals can become something more than what they

currently are. It implies further growth and development to reach some desired

end state" (Silzer & Church, 2013, p. 4).

Stakeholder: "Any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement

of an organization's objectives" (Freeman, 1984, p. 5). More recently, Nickols

(2005) defined stakeholder as "a person or group with an interest in seeing an

endeavor succeed or fail" (p. 127).

Succession management: "A strategy involving planned succession as a means of

identifying critical management positions, starting at the levels of project manager

and supervisor and extending up to the highest position in the organization"
(Rothwell, 2010, pp. 13–14).

Succession management system: The development of a dynamic and robust system that
creates a link between the succession planning process and the career
development of the leader or potential leader. The goal of the system is the
development of a roster of talent where every critical position within the
organization has multiple replacements (Kesler, 2002). This allows the
organization to always have the option of best fit based on the ever-changing,
global competitive environment within the industry (Kur & Bunning, 2002).

Succession planning: A means of identifying critical management positions extending up
to the highest position in the organization, describing the management skills
needed to achieve organizational objectives rather than purely departmental
objectives (Rothwell, 2010). It is important to note that succession planning tends
to be related specifically to a static planning process (Lewis & Heckman, 2006),
but does not encompass the variety of activities that must exist to develop the
talent in accordance with the purposes of this study.

Talent: "An individual's knowledge, skills, abilities and characteristics" (Silzer &
Church, 2013, p. 6).

Talent management: The strategic attraction, identification, development, movement, and
engagement/retention of those individuals with high potential who are of
particular value to the organization (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). This term is often
used interchangeably with *human capital management*.

28

Training: "A learning process that involves the acquisition of skills, concepts, rules, or

   attitudes to increase the performance of employees" (Byars & Rue, 1984, p. 156).

   Watson (1979) distinguished between *training* (formal classroom learning

   activities) and *development* (all learning experiences, both on and off the job,

   including formal classroom training).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader

identification process within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. The major

constructs of this study were leader identification, stakeholder theory, and expectancy

theory, with succession management serving as the context for the conceptual

framework. The conceptual framework, as depicted in Figure 1.1, highlights the ways in

which stakeholder expectations and contributions inform and are informed by the specific

leadership development process of leader identification. The following chapter provides

an overview of the pertinent literature found in each of the main constructs as well as the

contextual construct of succession management.

CHAPTER 2:

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the literature from which this study derives its support. The purpose of this study was to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. The literature serving as a foundation for this research includes theories of leadership, leader development, leader development pools (which serves as the context for this study), leader identification, and stakeholder and expectancy theories.

Leadership

Volumes of literature exist on the concept of leadership, and leadership researchers believe that leadership really makes a difference (Bass, 1990; Burke & Day, 1986; Clark, Clark, & Campbell, 1992; Ulrich, Zenger, & Smallwood, 1999). However, Rost (1991) analyzed a total of 587 works that referred to leadership in their titles and found that 366 of them failed to offer a definition of leadership. Bass (1990) noted, "There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 11). For the purposes of this study, the definition of leadership offered by Van Velsor et al. (2010) was used. They defined leadership as "roles and processes . . . that facilitate setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment in groups of people who share common work" (Van Velsor et al., 2010, p. 2).

From his analysis, Rost (1991) found that most leadership literature is focused on leader abilities, traits, or behaviors. Trait-based views of leadership dominated the early literature, while other perspectives on leadership soon emerged (Northouse, 2013).

Early Leadership Theories

Northouse (2013) categorized early leadership theories as trait, style, power-influence, contingency, situational, path-goal, and leader-member exchange theories. A brief description of each of these early theories is provided below.

The trait approach, the predominant leadership theory from 1930 to 1950, focuses on the personality of the leader as the primary leadership characteristic. House and Aditya (1997) described leader traits as "individual characteristics that differentiate leaders from non leaders" (p. 410).

The style (or behavioral) approach was developed through studies at the Ohio State University and the University of Michigan in the late 1940s and focuses on the behavior of leaders. Behaviorally based leadership styles include democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1998).

Power-influence theory explains leadership effectiveness in terms of the amount and types of power the leader possesses and how he or she exercises that power. Power is important not only in influencing subordinates, but also in influencing peers, superiors, and people outside the organization (Yukl, 2012).

Contingency leadership theory (also called leader-match theory) suggests that effective leadership is contingent upon matching a leader's style to the right setting (Fiedler, 1964).

In situational leadership theory, Hersey and Blanchard (1969) focused on specific management situations where the leader adapts his or her leadership style to the demands of different situations and to the developmental levels of followers.

Path-goal theory (Evans, 1970; House, 1971) focuses on how leaders motivate higher levels of follower performance by acting in ways that influence subordinates to believe valued outcomes can be attained by making a serious effort.

The key concept of leader-member exchange theory (Graen, 1976) is that leadership is a process of interactions between leaders and followers, making the leader-member exchange the focal concept of the leadership process.

Latter Leadership Theories

Latter leadership theories include transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) and team leadership (Hackman & Walton, 1986).

The term *transformational leadership* was coined by Downton (1973) and spurred by Burns' (1978) concept that transformational leaders "engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20). Bass (1985) further developed transformational leadership theory as an acknowledgment that organizations must make major changes in the way things are done in order to survive in the face of increasing economic competition. Transformational leadership is thus more clearly defined in terms of changing organizations so they are poised to become more competitive in a global society (Porter, 1985).

Bass (1998) claimed that transformational leadership can "move followers to exceed performance" (p. 2) and identified four components of this leadership perspective: charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and consideration. Yukl (2012) described

transformational leadership as the "process of influencing major changes in the attitudes and assumptions of organizational members and building commitment for the organization's mission, objectives, and strategies" (p. 269). Yukl also described transformational leadership as a shared process, involving actions of leaders at various levels and subunits of an organization, not just the chief executive, and as executed through the use of leader traits, power, and behavior as well as situational variables (Yukl, 2012).

Leadership in organizations, groups, or work teams has been one of the most popular and rapidly growing areas of leadership theory (Daugherty & Williams, 1997; Penwell, 1992; Quast & Hazucha, 1992; Riechmann, 1992). Organizational restructuring has shifted decision-making powers downward from the traditional hierarchy to more self-managed teams, empowering them in new ways (Yukl, 2012). According to Northouse (2013), with the increase in organizational work teams and their expanding role in complex and rapidly changing organizational structures, it is essential to understand the role of leadership within these teams, both to ensure that they teach success and to avoid team failure. "The practical necessity of understanding the nature of organizational teams and the leadership within them is forcing theory and research into new directions that offer great promise for understanding team leadership" (Northouse, 2013, p. 160). It is likely that team leadership theory will continue to be a focus of managerial leadership development research in the future as more organizations employ teams to accomplish core organizational goals (Yukl, 2012).

Leader Development

One of the debates that rages on in the realm of leadership is whether or not a leader can be developed if the individual is not so blessed at birth. Apparently, there is enough evidence to compel organizations to attempt to develop their leaders (McCauley & Brutus, 1998; Rothwell, 2010). First, a wide body of literature supports the position that while individuals may or may not be born with certain genetic traits normally associated with leadership, nearly all can improve their leadership effectiveness relative to their starting point (Doh, 2003). Second, numerous organizations that rely on effective leadership and, therefore, expend effort in the development of leaders have actually produced them in some number. For example, Roberts (2003) reported:

> [The] Roman ruling elite [had] great cohesiveness and competence; for progress to the highest office was a matter of selection from a field of candidates who had been well tested and trained in office. That this constitution worked well for a long time is indisputable. Rome was never short of able men. (p. 231)

Tichy (1997) was not so optimistic about the ready supply of leaders in the modern era, stating, "The scarcest resource in the world today is leadership talent capable of continuously transforming organizations to win in tomorrow's world" (p. 8). Bennis and Nanus (1997) also argued that there is a leadership crisis, citing a lack of capable, well-developed leaders.

McCauley and Van Velsor (2004) defined leader development as "the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes" (p. 4). In addition, Klenke (1993) believed that the distinctions between leader education, leader training, and leader development have often been blurred. Lynham (2000) indicated that leader development involves a person's career throughout his or her lifetime and is often

confused with leader education, a short-term developmental event. Leader development literature, often embedded in both psychology and management, focuses on general approaches to leadership through traits, behaviors, situations, power-influence, and transformational (or charismatic) theories (Northouse, 2013). Managerial leader development literature also includes research related to early childhood and adolescent development, formal education, on-the job experiences, and specialized leadership education (Lynham, 2000). Leader development, according to Conger (1992), may be grouped into four categories: leader training through personal growth; leader development through conceptual understanding; leader development through feedback; and leader development through skill building that focuses on key leadership competencies that can be taught.

Many researchers agree that leadership is one of the most important predictors of whether groups and organizations are able to effectively adapt to and perform in dynamic environments (Mintzberg & Waters, 1982; Peterson, Smith, Martorana, & Owens, 2003; Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2001). Consequently, organizations are designating leadership as a top strategic priority and a potential source of competitive advantage and are investing in its development accordingly (Day & Harrison, 2007). For example, in 2009, almost a quarter of the $50 billion that U.S. organizations spent on learning and development was targeted at leadership development (O'Leonard, 2010).

Despite the fact that organizations are increasing their investments in leader development, there is an emerging consensus that the supply of leadership talent is insufficient to meet the leadership needs of contemporary organizations. According to a survey of 1,100 U.S.-based organizations, 56% of employers reported a dearth of

leadership talent, 31% of organizations expected to have a shortage of leaders that would impede performance in the next 4 years, and 37% of respondents believed that those who held leadership positions failed to achieve their position's objectives (Adler & Mills, 2008).

Problems with the Leader Development Literature

In the past two decades, scholars have developed a wealth of ideas and theories about how leadership capacity develops in organizational settings (DeRue & Myers, 2011). In addition, they have argued that there is very little research on how leader identification, assessment, and development can be effectively aligned with the strategic priorities of organizations or what the value of that strategic alignment might be for organizations. Consistent with the focus on individuals, the existing literature generally endorses a narrow focus on the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required for effective leadership (Mumford, Campion, & Morgeson, 2007; Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman, 2000). One reason for the focus on KSAs may be that much of the existing literature on leadership development is framed within the domain of human resource management, which often focuses on the training and transfer of KSAs (Saks & Belcourt, 2006). Finally, consistent with Avolio's (2007) call for more integrative theory-building in the leadership literature, the field lacks a coherent and integrated framework for organizing the existing literature on leadership development (DeRue & Myers, 2011).

Leader Development vs. Leadership Development: Levels of Analysis

Leadership is a social and mutual influence process where multiple actors engage in leading-following interactions in service of accomplishing a collective goal (Bass & Bass, 2008; Yukl, 2012). In his oft-cited review of the leadership development literature, Day (2000) distinguished between two forms of development. First, individual leader development focuses on an individual's capacity to participate in leading-following processes and generally presumes that developing an individual's leadership KSAs will result in more effective leadership. The second form, leadership development, focuses on developing the capacity of collectives to engage in the leadership process. Whereas leader development focuses on individuals and the development of human capital, leadership development attends to the interpersonal dynamics of leadership and focuses on the development of social capital (DeRue & Myers, 2013).

By a large margin, most of the existing research on leadership development has been conducted at the individual level. More recently, however, there has been an emerging trend toward the study of collective forms of leadership development (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). In addition, leader and leadership development have historically been treated as distinct concepts (DeRue & Myers, 2013), but as Day (2000, p. 605) noted, the "preferred approach is to link leader development with leadership development such that the development of leadership transcends but does not replace the development of individual leaders." The two concepts are interdependent and likely complementary, and as the context of this study was the development of talent pools for succession management, this research benefited from both a leader and a leadership development perspective.

Leader Development Methodologies

To the degree that leaders are "made" rather than "born," the various ways in which leaders can be developed becomes a critical component of the succession management strategy (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). "The practice of leader development has a lengthy precedent, as illustrated by the historical record of the Egyptians documented more than 5,000 years ago, the historical records of Confucius, the Taoists, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Renaissance period" (Bass, 1990, p. 4). This string of activity is reflected in the multibillion-dollar effort that continues in the U.S. business arena alone (Conger & Benjamin, 1999; Fulmer & Goldsmith, 2001). Presumably, 5,000 years of leader development activity will affirm its validity and usefulness.

While the research reveals a variety of methods in which leaders may develop, four appear to be most common (Groves, 2007). These include (1) development on the job or through experiences, (2) development through mentoring and coaching, (3) development through training, and (4) development through assessment and feedback (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; DeRue & Myers, 2013).

Although many companies spend large sums of money to develop their leaders and emerging or potential leaders, some neglect to address "to what end are we developing leaders?" (Dowell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2013). In the context of succession management and developing the leader as well as leadership talent pools, leader(ship) development is best understood within a succession management model (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Therefore, the identification of leaders with potential for taking on greater levels of responsibility and complexity is paramount to gaining competitive advantage through collective leadership (Silzer & Dowell, 2010a). Further, leader

identification is the first essential component of a leadership development effort (Silzer & Church, 2013). Before moving to the construct of leader identification, a discussion of the context of leader development pools is in order.

Leader Development Pools: The Context

A leader development pool is a group of employees who are receiving accelerated development in preparation for vertical or horizontal advancement (Byham et al., 2012). Vertical advancement usually involves promotion up the organization's chain of command. Horizontal advancement usually involves enhancing individual competencies so that the leader has a broadened scope of KSAs in keeping with the organization's direction or the natural career progression of the individual's field or occupation. The use of leader development pools is one reason that succession management is different from replacement planning (Sobol, Harkins, & Conley, 2007). Instead of identifying only one or a few backups for key positions (as is common in replacement planning), the idea of leader development pools is to create an environment whereby several individuals are receiving accelerated development based on assessed potential. It is imperative to identify and create career progression models by role type and by level in order to ensure that a high-potential candidate is developing to the intended set of criteria (Byham et al., 2012). These career progression models are based on needed competencies at various leadership levels, using incumbent exemplars as the barometer by which the standards are set. The idea of accelerating one's development beyond the customary development pace is inherent in the idea of talent pools (Rothwell, 2010). Leader development pools are to leader*ship* development what an individual successor is to *leader* development, as pointed out by DeRue and Myers (2013).

39

Succession Management

The identification of talent development pools is nearly always undertaken as a part of a larger succession management strategy. Succession management is "a strategy involving planned succession as a means of identifying critical management positions, starting at the levels of project manager and supervisor and extending up to the highest position in the organization" (Rothwell, 2010, pp. 13-14). Other research has also noted that succession management includes the process of identifying, assessing, developing, and advancing leaders in the succession pipeline (American Society of Training and Development [ASTD], 2012). Additionally, "through your succession planning process, you recruit superior employees, develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and prepare them for advancement or promotion into ever more challenging roles" (Heathfield, 2009). In ASTD's (2012) study, fewer than half of respondents reported that their organizations had a formal succession management process and, among those that did not, about half said their firms had an informal process.

Practitioner interest in succession management has grown substantially (Silzer & Dowell, 2010b). A continued interest has been more recently attributed to the threat of business failure due to a lack of executive leader succession plans (Kaplan-Leiserson, 2005; Naveen, 2006). Moreover, the failure of a large organization due to the lack of executive leader succession planning often has an impact on stock prices, resulting in loss of shareholder wealth for at least a time (Friedman & Singh, 1989; Wells, 2009).

Developing a succession management strategy that addresses the need for homegrown talent is a difficult challenge for all organizations (Silzer & Dowell, 2010a). It is necessary to develop talent to mitigate (1) the high price of new talent acquisition,

(2) the difficulty in finding the distinct competencies needed for specific organizational strategies and cultural fit, and (3) the hard feelings that develop when internal candidates are consistently passed over for promotion (Rothwell, 2010). These factors provide the rationale for developing talent from within as an important internal responsibility (Wells, 2009). Add to that the lack of research into issues such as selection criteria and justification of selection choices, and the challenge is further intensified (Silzer & Church, 2013).

According to Rothwell (2010), there are a number of drivers and trends in succession management. These include the need for speed, a buyer's market for skills, and reduced loyalty among employers and employees as employees can no longer trust their employers to make good on promises of future advancement, and employers can no longer count on high-potential individuals patiently performing before receiving advancement and development. Another driver cited by Rothwell (2010) involves the importance of intellectual capital and knowledge management. Intellectual capital can be understood as the collective economic value of an organization's workforce. Succession planning and management is a means to an end in that it becomes a tool of knowledge management in ensuring that intellectual capital is properly serviced, retained, cultivated, and protected.

In summary, the 21st century has seen the development of leader development pools that focus on creating depth in organizational talent in contrast to traditional replacement planning focused on chief executive officer succession (Dowell, 2010, Lewis, 2007). This paradigm shift, led by both academics and practitioners, provides hope for organizations as they wage the war for talent as a key competitive differentiator.

In addition, the direction toward processes that address leader development at all levels of leadership within an organization is important in the competition for talent (Berger & Berger, 2011). The creation of leader development pools has become increasingly necessary as organizations seek to balance the need for both leader and leader*ship* development in pursuit of sustainable leadership succession (Byham et al., 2012).

Leader Identification

Leader identification is a critical component of leader development and succession (Silzer & Church, 2013). As pointed out in chapter 1, the identification and development of leadership talent takes place at both the micro (leader) and macro (leadership) levels (DeRue & Myers, 2013). While there is ample research related to leader and leadership development, research on the construct of leader identification is less plentiful (Silzer & Church, 2013).

According to Byham et al. (2012), nearly every organization has some sort of leadership talent identification process. Some organizations spend weeks administering their processes, while others spend only minutes. Historically, identification processes were the most heavily emphasized element of annual replacement planning programs, and until recently many organizations tended to stop at nominating or naming successors (DeRue & Myers, 2013). They overemphasized nomination efforts under the faulty assumption that naming talent is equivalent to assessing and developing talent (Byham et al., 2012). Once an effective nomination process was installed, most organizations believed that the succession management process was complete. Nevertheless, identifying high-potential talent is the first, and arguably the most critical, step in the succession management process (Byham et al., 2012).

Today, identifying high-potential individuals is considered essential to any succession management effort (Byham et al., 2012; Silzer & Church, 2013; Sobol et al., 2007). Additionally, many organizations have created sophisticated systems and programs for identifying, assessing, and developing high-potential leadership talent (Church, 2006; Parasher & McDaniel, 2008; Silzer, 2006; Silzer & Church, 2010; Wells, 2009). Byham et al. (2012) stated:

> Identifying those individuals who are most likely to strengthen an organization's leadership bench—and thus, its future—can be compared to recruiting the best draft choices for a professional football team, building a solid foundation for a home, or choosing the right ingredients for a cake. If the selection process is not accurate, efficient, and fair, the acceleration pool system will fail. (p. 61)

One goal of identifying high-potential leaders is to find people who will yield the highest return on the company's investment in development resources (Byham et al., 2012). A sound identification process will accurately pinpoint people who have the right combination of skills, ability, and motivation to take advantage of, and benefit from, the special growth opportunities afforded to the talent acceleration pool.

Sobol et al. (2007) contended that in order to make the talent identification process work, the organization needs a uniform set of criteria against which candidates can be evaluated. Byham et al. (2012) suggested the following basic nomination criteria:

- Minimum education requirements

- Minimum years of service with the organization

- Required supervisory/management experience (within and/or outside the organization)

- A performance appraisal rating threshold (but only if performance appraisals are historically accurate)

43

- Specific training, experiences, or skills

- If applicable, international experience

- Geographic mobility

In addition, Byham et al. (2012) suggested that beyond such basics, data should be collected (as part of an identification/nomination process) about predictors of leadership success such as:

- Career track record, results, achievements—specific measures such as revenue growth, sales effectiveness, innovation, and process improvements

- Developmental orientation (i.e., being coachable, a history of learning from experiences, speed of learning new tasks in new situations, curiosity, etc.)

- Modeling of organizational values

- Evidence of strategic thinking

- Motivation to be a strategic leader/general manager

- Business acumen and entrepreneurial ability

- Identification with management

- Development of others

- Interpersonal and leadership skills (including self-awareness/emotional intelligence)

- Adaptability through assignments, locations, and people

According to Byham et al. (2012), most organizations use about six predictors of organizational success. Additionally, these researchers suggested that nomination/ identification criteria should be reconsidered as the organization evolves. Most importantly, suggested Berger and Berger (2011), nomination/identification criteria

should focus on areas that are observable in most nominees' current jobs. Otherwise the "halo effect" (a candidate receiving positive ratings among all or most criteria) or the "horns effect" (a candidate receiving negative ratings among all or most criteria) will likely manifest itself in the nominators. According to Byham et al. (2012), one of the potential downsides to nomination/identification processes is that they may unnecessarily restrict the amount and range of raw talent in the talent pool and thus reduce the likelihood that an increase in talent supply will be realized. Therefore, it is incumbent on organizational leaders to ensure that the criteria are limited to those that are less likely to be developed. Other criteria may include skills, knowledge, or behaviors that may be developed and therefore should not prohibit one from entering the high-potential acceleration pool.

Talent and Potential

In exploring the literature regarding leader identification, it may prove helpful to offer a brief discussion of the concept of talent. The term *talent* dates back to the ancient Greeks and biblical times, starting out as a measure of weight, then becoming a unit of money, and later meaning a person's value or natural abilities (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). Today, organizations are only starting to discriminate between natural abilities and learned skills and knowledge (Silzer & Church, 2013). According to Silzer and Dowell (2010b), talent in organizations can refer or apply to three distinct aspects: (1) an individual's KSAs, (2) a specific person (e.g., "she is a talent"), or (3) a group (e.g., "the level of talent in the marketing department in this organization is quite high"). For the purposes of this study, the focus was on talent in terms of an individual's KSAs and characteristics.

When identifying leaders for the purpose of establishing talent pools, there are two primary targets of the identification process (Silzer & Church, 2013). The first involves the performance level of the individual. This requires a deeper look at current performance against identified standards and a rearview look at historical performance data, usually over the past 3 years (Byham et al., 2012). The performance appraisal process is one of determining how well individuals are meeting the work requirements of their jobs (Rothwell, 2010). Just as most organizations prepare job descriptions to explain what people do, most also appraise performance to explain how people are performing (Silzer & Church, 2010). However, successful performance in a current position is no guarantee of success in a higher-level role, for the simple reason that requirements differ by level (DeRue & Myers, 2013). Despite harsh attacks from critics, performance appraisals are likely to remain a fixture of organizational life (Byham et al., 2012). One reason is that despite their flaws, written appraisals based on job-related performance criteria are superior to informal, highly subjective appraisals at a time when employees are increasingly prone to litigate (Byham et al., 2012).

In addition to identifying performance, the leader identification process calls for a simultaneous inspection of the individual's potential. Identifying potential is a forward-looking process that aims to determine one's runway or capacity for greater levels of responsibility and complexity (DeRue & Myers, 2013). This is no easy task, and there is significant pressure on organizations and their leadership teams today to ensure they have well-validated and useful measures of potential (Silzer & Church, 2013). Significant corporate resources (both time and money) are being devoted to helping people improve their current performance, identifying their broader strengths and development needs, and

developing them for the next position (Silzer & Church, 2013). Before moving into a discussion of how organizations identify potential in leaders and what potential they identify, it may be helpful to discuss what is meant by potential/high potential.

The term *potential* is familiar to most people. At one point or another during our childhood, many of us were told we were not achieving up to our potential. This was almost always based on current performance. In the workplace, *potential* is rarely used in relation to current work performance, but is typically used to suggest that an individual has the qualities (i.e., characteristics, motivation, skills, abilities, experiences, etc.) to effectively perform and contribute in broader or more complex roles in the organization at some point in the future (Silzer & Church, 2013). The term *high potential* usually refers to individuals who are assessed through an objective assessment process and deemed to have the capability to advance two or more levels over their career with the organization (Berger & Berger, 2011). Additionally, high-potential individuals are almost always exemplary performers, having solid to high performance in their current role. However, not all exemplary performers have high potential because advancement potential is based on both current performance and projected future potential against an envisioned future state (Berger & Berger, 2011).

More sophisticated companies have multiple categories of potential often labeled as talent pools (Dowell, 2010). These organizations find it critical to answer the question "*potential for what?,*" thereby driving the definition of potential in specific ways. Silzer and Church (2010) noted that some organizations define potential by role, by level, by breadth (taking on greater levels of responsibility and complexity), by strategic area or

function, or by some combination thereof. In fact, they found that 65% of companies had more than one potential category.

Leader Identification Methodologies

Organizations and their leaders attempt to identify potential in a number of ways. One common way is often referred to as global assessment (Byham et al., 2012). This involves simply asking senior executives to identify individuals whom they feel demonstrate high potential based on the definition set forth by the organization (e.g., promotability two or more levels over one's position). The net result provides little more than replacement planning in a highly subjective fashion.

Another process used to identify potential is referred to as success factor analysis (Rothwell, 2010). This involves identifying future competencies (as previously described), including skills, traits, and knowledge required for future success, and developing or utilizing some assessment tool designed to ascertain where an individual stacks up against those future criteria. A single assessment tool (usually web-enabled) or a series of tools may be used (Rothwell, 2010). Potential assessments may include cognitive assessments, trait-based assessments, and competency-based assessments. Some of the more notable organizations that offer a variety of potential assessments include Hogan (2009), Lomginger/Korn Ferry, and Kenexa (DeRue & Myers, 2013). The execution and administration of these assessments may be carried out with or without full transparency to the individual being assessed. Rothwell (2010) noted that the advantages of these web-enabled assessments include speed and breadth and depth of involvement of high-potential candidates. Notable researchers in the field (DeRue & Myers, 2013;

McCall, 2010; Rothwell, 2010) acknowledged that the main disadvantage is that these assessments can be costly.

Identification of potential through the use of multirater instruments has advantages when moving into the development phase, which follows assessment (Antonioni, 1996; Bracken, 1994; Church & Bracken, 1997). Kuchinke (2000) expressed that feedback is a key component of any learning process and claimed that while many organizations are deliberately structuring feedback processes, they are not considering the full scope of desired outcomes, nor do they build systems to support their results. His research revealed that feedback improves performance because it can result in increased self-awareness and more dialogue between leaders and subordinates.

Indeed, research confirms that the use of 360-degree feedback is an effective method to increase self-awareness of skill strengths and deficiencies in leaders (Rosti & Shipper, 1998; Shipper & Dillard, 2000). Organizations that implement 360-degree feedback processes generally link them to a specific business need, obtain senior management buy-in, and provide ongoing support and follow-up (Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; Waldman, Atwater, & Antonioni, 1998). According to McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott, and Morrow (1994), "By making managers aware of knowledge and skill areas where they are deficient or of potentials that they are not fully utilizing, feedback can motivate them to want to improve" (p. 222). Similarly, Shipper, Hoffman, and Rotondo (2007) stated:

> Essential to an organization's capacity for sustainable growth is the ability of its managers to learn better skills that improve performance. Millions of dollars are spent each year on development initiatives that often fail to transfer into performance gains, primarily due to insufficient support given to the learning transfer process. One initiative used by companies to develop managerial skills is the 360-degree feedback process. This process has been recognized by some for

its value because of its inherent ability to reinforce learning and create actionable knowledge. (p. 33)

London and Smither (1995) agreed, suggesting that multisource ratings can be valuable in improving self-understanding and for suggesting directions for development and performance improvement. Likewise, Mabey (2001) argued that 360-degree feedback programs offer a better diagnosis of development needs, resulting in more effective development plans for individuals and a more strategically focused investment in leader development.

Another method for identifying future potential in individuals is to conduct high-potential interviews (Rothwell, 2010). These interviews usually involve one or more of the following interviewers: (1) a human resources or organizational development representative, (2) the high-potential candidate's current supervisor, and (3) a member of senior management. The advantage to this process is even greater transparency to the high-potential candidate about the intentions of such an identification and assessment program or process. The main disadvantage is that these interviews are quite time consuming.

The use of work portfolios is yet another way to determine future potential (Rothwell, 2010). This essentially involves observing, rather than testing, one's demonstration of competencies. When competencies can be pared back to individual behaviors, this process is more feasible. The main disadvantage is that raters may not assess portfolios in the same ways without calibration training and/or agreed-upon guidelines for rating the observed work. The value of work portfolios is that they show real work results. Often, this approach is followed by interviews.

Rothwell (2010) and Berger and Berger (2011) pointed out that still another approach to determining an employee's future potential is the use of assessment centers. Assessment centers (a process and not a place) involve creating realistic simulations of the work one might perform in a desired future role. This would involve things such as in-basket exercises and specific work simulations to gauge the potential for an individual to succeed in a potential future role. Assessment centers went out of fashion for a time owing to the hard work and expense involved in setting them up. However, Rothwell (2010) asserted that they are making somewhat of a comeback as more organizations are placing greater importance on determining employees' future potential. He also suggested that one less expensive and time consuming alternative is to outsource the organization's assessment center to a consulting organization or a university. The problem here is that the competencies and actual work being assessed by the third party may be generic in nature and therefore less predictive of future success in an actual role in the organization.

In short, an effective leader identification process can provide an organization accurate diagnostic data that help it focus on the right people, target their development most effectively, and ensure that they are placed in roles that take advantage of their strengths and minimize their weaknesses (Van Velsor et al., 2010). Performance appraisals are still the most common vehicle through which performance is assessed. The wide array of tools available to the organization's executives and the human resources function to identify leadership potential include simulations, assessment centers, multirater surveys, multirater interviews, personality inventories, cognitive ability tests, behavioral observations, behavior-based interviews, and clinical inventories.

Leader Identification Roles and Responsibilities

Ever since organizations began investing in the implementation of leader development pool strategies, ownership and strategy execution have become important issues, and companies vest responsibility for leader development with executives and the human resource development (HRD) function variously (Berger & Berger, 2011). While the HRD function often takes the lead for the leader identification process, to a lesser extent organizations look to chief executive officers, boards, and other executives for program oversight (Berger & Berger, 2011). Some sources have suggested that vesting sole responsibility with the HRD function may not be the most constructive approach; others have noted that executive championship is vital to strategy success (Cheloha & Swain, 2005). To ensure a connection between the talent needs of the organization and the organizational strategy, the executive leader must agree that a need exists to form a partnership with HRD (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2004).

The argument for executive sponsorship of a leader identification process has its roots in upper echelon theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), which states that executive leaders have a substantial impact because of the decision-making authority that their position grants them within the organization. Flood et al. (2000) agreed that the executive leader has a profound impact on the direction of the organization. Upper echelon theory proposes that if the functional expertise of the leader lies in areas that are not directly involved in core activities such as law, finance, or human resources, then the more advanced the education of the executive(s), the higher the likelihood of complex administrative systems including "formal planning systems, complexity of structures and coordination devices, budgeting detail and thoroughness, and complexity of incentive-

compensation schemes" (Hambrick & Mason, 1984, p. 201). In brief, this theory indicates that the assumptions, formal education level, and functional area of expertise are important in relation to the leader's perceptions of the leader identification process.

In firms with a formal leader development pool strategy, the question of which departments or individuals take responsibility for the planning effort is not only important, but also practical and logical. A plurality (43%) of respondents to ASTD's (2012) study said they assign that responsibility to their entire executive team. The notion of involving an organization's executive team speaks to a firm's desire to lend authority and support to talent pool efforts; in addition, the act of engaging with senior executives to establish leader development goals will build support for ownership of the future development of leaders (Berger & Berger, 2011). ASTD's (2012) study also endorsed the involvement of executives, noting that the entire executive team needs to take ownership of this process in order to ensure its success, revealing that some organizations actually make executive participation mandatory.

Berger and Berger (2011) and Byham et al. (2012) suggested that all current senior leaders should be involved in submitting nominations for leader development pools. Berger and Berger (2011) argued that if an executive is not competent enough to be trusted to nominate high-potential individuals, it is all the more important for the HRD function and executives to firmly adhere to the established criteria and require behavioral evidence of potential to ensure accuracy and objectivity. In addition, Byham et al. (2012) suggested that executives who show energy for and commitment to identifying talent should be recognized and encouraged.

While the executives play the role of nominating individuals for the leader development pool, the HRD function is responsible for making sure that these executives truly understand the nomination criteria as well as constructively challenging nominations and pointing out potential disconnects between nominations and other performance or talent-related data (Byham et al., 2012). They went on to point out that the HRD function is also typically responsible for administering the nomination/ identification process, summarizing the talent data, aiding the executives in making talent pool decisions, and keeping diversity statistics so that the executives always know where the organization stands in that regard.

After the nominations have been collected and the leader development pool data have been analyzed, final decisions on identifying individuals as high-potential leaders for the talent pool are made through the talent review meeting (Byham et al., 2012). This meeting is facilitated by the HRD function with senior or executive leaders taking responsibility for evaluating nomination/application data and reviewing candidates against a set of high-potential talent criteria (DeRue & Myers, 2013). The purpose of the talent review meeting, according to Berger and Berger (2011), is to streamline and prioritize the talent pool through substantive discussion about candidate readiness. Final decisions are made by considering nomination data, available performance data, and observational data (DeRue & Myers, 2013).

Viewing the creation of leader development pools as a strategy, not as a human resources initiative, suggests that leader development is an ongoing process, not an annual event, supporting strategic objectives and embodying emotional commitment by management that is reflected in their actions and decisions (Ready & Conger, 2007).

Ready and Conger also stated that the vitality of a company's leader development pool strategy is a product of three defining characteristics among the leaders of the organization: commitment, engagement, and accountability. When exemplified by the organization's executives, these characteristics, combined with a partnership with the HRD function, can ensure greater success and penetration of the leader development pool strategy (Berger & Berger, 2011).

Stakeholder and Expectancy Theories and Leader Identification

Stakeholder Theory

The discussion of involvement in the identification of the organization's future leaders leads to the concept of stakeholder interest. In the past decade, researchers have suggested adopting a stakeholder approach to leader development (including leader identification and assessment) as a way to account for the perspectives, interests, and needs of multiple constituencies (Combs & Falletta, 2000; Dunet & Reyes, 2006; Michalski & Cousins, 2000, 2001; Nickols, 2005). This approach provides a framework that moves leader development from a strategy focused on the interests and perspectives of leader development practitioners to one that takes into account the preferences and perspectives of multiple stakeholders in the organization, providing these organizational decision-makers with the information they need to make judgments regarding the efficacy of leader assessment and development (Nickols, 2005).

Silzer and Church (2013) built on the idea of stakeholder-based leader development by exploring the desires and involvement of various stakeholders in the particular aspect of leader identification. Stakeholder-based leader identification both identifies, and is informed by, particular individuals or groups (Silzer & Church, 2013).

Stakeholders comprise different groups who have a vested interest in the results of the leader identification activity because they are directly affected by or are involved in the process or because they must make decisions about the process (Silzer & Church, 2013). In this way, stakeholder theory may be used as a framework to better understand how different groups in organizations make decisions related to leader identification within the succession management strategy.

Freeman (1984) defined an *organizational stakeholder* as "any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives" (p. 5). More recently, Nickols (2005) defined *stakeholder* as "a person or group with an interest in seeing an endeavor succeed or fail" (p. 127). In this research, the term *stakeholders* refers to the executives who fund and sponsor the identification and ensuing development, human resource professionals who are involved in the identification of leaders, and senior leaders responsible for making leader identification decisions, as identified by Silzer and Church (2013). These key constituencies (i.e., stakeholders) all have a stake in the leader identification activity; they are interested in seeing it succeed. Moreover, without buy in from these key constituencies, leader identification efforts will not likely succeed (Silzer & Church, 2013).

The stakeholder approach to leader identification and assessment proposed by Silzer and Church (2013) has theoretical roots in (1) a stakeholder theory of organizations (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984) and (2) the contributions-inducements view of organizational membership (Barnard, 1947; March & Simon, 1958). The stakeholder theory of organizations (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984) posits that all organizations both serve and depend upon multiple stakeholders. For an organization to

be successful, it needs to recognize and address these multiple constituencies (e.g., customers, employees, investors) (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). The definitive measures of an organization's success are the extent to which it serves all of its stakeholders more effectively than the competition (Nickols, 2005; Silzer & Church, 2013). Further, the idea of stakeholder management suggests that organizations must formulate and implement processes that satisfy those groups who have a stake in the business (Freeman & McVea, 2010). In the present context, stakeholder theory posits that the leader identification process both serves and depends upon multiple constituencies in the organization. That is, the stakeholders contribute to the process as well as benefit from the process.

The contributions-inducements view of organizational membership refers to members as the groups without which the organization could not operate (Barnard, 1947). In terms of contributions, the organization depends on its members to participate in making products or services. Organizations must provide the inducements necessary to obtain the members' contributions, and there is a dynamic balance between the contributions and the inducements necessary to sustain organizational equilibrium (Barnard, 1947). The gist of the contributions-inducements view is that the various stakeholders must perceive value in the exchange so that, from their perspective, what they receive is of equal or greater value than what they contribute. Therefore, maintaining the dynamic balance between the contributions and inducements of different stakeholder groups is key to an organization's success (March & Simon, 1958).

In a similar manner, the leader development function should also consider the importance of taking into account the perspectives of the multiple constituencies involved in identifying high-potential leaders (Silzer & Church, 2013). A stakeholder approach to

leader identification looks at leadership development as a function that would cease to exist if it did not have the support of its key constituencies, taking into consideration the contributions and inducements necessary to develop that support (Silzer & Church, 2013). To garner the support of key stakeholders, the leader development function must maintain the balance between the contributions (i.e., inputs) it receives from each different stakeholder group and the inducements (i.e., outputs) it provides to each of these stakeholder groups in return (i.e., the benefits the leader development function provides to the organization) (Nickols, 2005).

To meet the needs of various key constituencies, it is important to understand their contributions (i.e., inputs) and inducements (i.e., outputs) with respect to leader identification, and these vary depending upon their role within the organization (Silzer & Church, 2013). Stakeholder contributions may include time, energy, effort, attention, operational resources, or budget allocations. For example, senior leaders serving as talent reviewers may contribute in terms of effort and participation in leader identification and development activities. Executives may make contributions by helping to create and sponsor the leader identification process, by offloading work tasks or reprioritizing responsibilities to allow these current and emerging leaders to fully engage in the leader identification and development process, and by allocating funding for these efforts. Human resource professionals may invest their time and skills in leading and facilitating the identification of leadership potential.

Inducements might include a sense of accomplishment, recognition, greater mobility within the firm, and improved performance (either at the individual or organizational level) (Silzer & Church, 2013). For example, senior leaders are likely to

care about the relevance of the identification activities to their jobs and the extent to which their efforts for the development of their leadership staffs are a worthwhile investment of their time (Silzer & Church, 2013). The human resources function and the organization's executives may be interested in whether the right leaders have been identified and the validity of the identification process as a predictor of future leadership success. Silzer and Church (2013) posited that in order to assess the impact of leader identification and development efforts, one must assess the nature of the contributions-inducements relationship for each of the stakeholder groups. By understanding each group's perceived contributions and inducements, the leader development function will be better suited to assess the value judgments these multiple constituencies will make regarding leader identification and development outcomes. Perceptions of value are relative, and because contributions and inducements are differentially defined by each stakeholder group, the value of the identification process to the senior leaders making leader development pool decisions will be different from that of executives or the human resources function (Donaldson & Preston, 1995).

Expectancy Theory

The notion of contributions of and inducements to various stakeholders is related to Vroom's (1964, 1995) expectancy theory, a theory among the class of motivation theories. Vroom (1995) stated that "expectancy is an action-outcome association" (p. 18). His theory posits that motivation is a conscious process, and the premise is that people choose to put their effort into activities that they believe they are capable of doing and they believe will lead to desired outcomes. The theory is based on a combination of conditions: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Vroom's (1995) model predicts

"that given the opportunity a person will choose to work when the valence of outcomes that he expects to attain from working is more positive than the valence of outcomes that he expects to attain from not working" (p. 35). Vroom and Deci (1992) stated, "People are said to engage in behaviors because they *expect* those behaviors to lead to their goals" (p. 15).

According to Fudge and Schlacter (1999), expectancy theory has been rigorously tested and has received strong support. Smith and Rupp (2003) also indicated that "expectancy theory provides a general framework for assessing, interpreting, and evaluating employee behavior" (p. 109). Further evidence by Fudge and Schlacter (1999) suggests that "expectancy theory has also undergone extensive research in business and industry settings" (p. 201). Expectancy theory has become popular as a means of understanding motivation, and researchers have tested the theory in a variety of settings with a number of adult populations. However, Howard cautioned that there are some inconsistencies with the implementation of expectancy theory stemming from problems with the methodology, whereby researchers cannot fully explain the relationship between the expectancy process variables and other variables, such as need satisfaction or reward system.

Vroom's expectancy theory is often referred to as VIE theory, which stands for its major components of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. The theory uses extrinsic and intrinsic motivators to describe the possible causes for behaviors in the workplace. VIE theory proposes three conditions that move an individual forward based on motivation:

1. The expenditure of personal effort will result in an acceptable general outcome.

2. The achieved general outcome will bring about a specific outcome for the person.

3. The achieved outcome is personally valued.

Expectancy theory can be explained in the following formula offered by Pinder (1984):

Motivation	=	Expectancy: Belief in possibility of an outcome	X	Instrumentality: Belief in results of outcome	X	Valence: Desirable or undesirable outcome
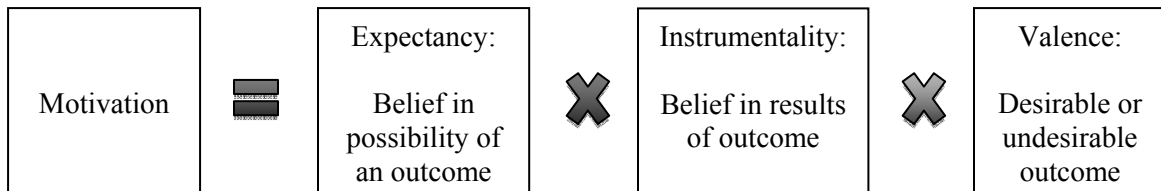
Vroom (1995) stated, "An expectancy is defined as a momentary belief concerning the likelihood that a particular act will be followed by a particular outcome" (p. 20). His theory links expectancy with strength values: the greater the strength, the more likely that the act will be followed by a certain outcome. Pinder (1984) stated that if a person judges that he can achieve an outcome, then he will be more motivated to try; the higher the expectancy, the more likely he will exert energy to accomplish the outcome. For example, a person who is not athletically fit will have a very low expectancy of being able to compete in the Olympics, while a person who has trained rigorously for years might have a high expectancy of success after being given legitimate feedback that he is Olympic material.

According to Vroom (1995), the second condition, instrumentality, is described by an outcome-outcome association. Pinder (1984) stated that instrumentality is a probability belief linking one outcome (performance level) to other outcomes. By way of example, if a person believes that a high level of performance is *instrumental* for the attainment of other outcomes (outcomes that he deems gratifying), he will work harder to

attain the highest level of performance possible; the value of this instrumentality is thus deemed positive. Zero instrumentality means that there is no relationship between task and outcome. An example of zero instrumentality is that a student may believe that no matter how much he studies for an exam, he will not be able to pass it. Negative instrumentality involves a negative outcome such as losing one's job based on one's habitual behavior of tardiness.

The third condition, valence, involves the same three ranges as instrumentality and refers to the value that an individual places on the outcome. Vroom (1995) referred to valence as "affective orientations toward particular outcomes" (p. 18). It is important to note that since valence is affective (emotional), there can be a difference between the valence of the outcome and the value of this outcome to the person. Vroom stated that there may be substantial discrepancies between the desired outcome and the actual satisfaction. For example, a person may do his job satisfactorily because such performance may lead to a promotion. The most important feature of valence concerns work-related outcomes and has to do with expectations versus actual value. This feature interjects an element of abstractness to expectancy theory. That is, a person perceives a particular task outcome to be positive, negative, or indifferent according to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction he expects to receive. However, a valence that is originally negative may later become positive. For example, a person who loses his job may find that he is healthier, happier, and wealthier with a new job.

Since all three factors are multiplied by each other, any weak factor directly impacts the other two, leading to increased or decreased expectancy success. For motivation to be established, the individual must focus on all three factors in order to

reach the desired goal. The individual can only be confident in desired outcomes if he believes that he can be successful in the process, sees the connection between the positive outcome and the activity, and values the results (Vroom, 1995). Again, another example may be helpful here. Suppose a student believes that he has the necessary tools and support to be successful in writing a dissertation (expectancy). Further, he fully understands the connection between efforts exerted to write the dissertation and receiving a degree (instrumentality), and he highly values the results of having a doctoral degree (valence).

To ensure that various stakeholder groups receive leader identification outputs they will find useful, it is necessary to know more about their expectations of these efforts, as well as what they expect to contribute to the process. Several studies have used Vroom's (1964, 1995) expectancy theory to address different concepts and relationships in various workplaces (Isaac et al., 2001; Schepman & Richmond, 2003; Smith & Rupp, 2003; Chen et al., 2006). However, there is no evidence that expectancy theory has been applied to the workplace process of leader identification. Additionally, little research exists specifically addressing the different investments, needs, and requirements of different stakeholder groups (Nickols, 2005; Preskill & Jones, 2009; Silzer & Church, 2013). Although researchers have recently begun to consider the importance of multiple constituencies in terms of leader development activities, there remains a gap in identifying in greater detail the types of inputs different constituencies invest into leader development initiatives, as well as the types of outputs they expect (Silzer & Church, 2013). If leader development professionals can identify these different inputs/outputs (i.e., contributions/inducements) and expectations and incorporate them into leader

identification and assessment efforts, data provided to multiple stakeholder groups will be more meaningful and better suited to helping these groups make judgments about the efficacy of current and future high-potential leader identification strategies.

Summary of the Literature

The present study seeks to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. Identifying the stakeholders and their expectations of, and contributions to, leader identification may lead to more robust and efficacious leader development pool strategies useful for other organizations. While the practice has become more commonplace (Berger & Berger, 2011; DeRue & Myers, 2013; Rothwell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2013), little has been done to examine the practice of identifying leaders for high potential within organizations.

This chapter has provided a context for this study by examining the various bodies of literature that frame this research. The main constructs serving as the foundation for this study are *leader identification, stakeholder theory,* and *expectancy theory*. The literature review began at the central part of the framework by reviewing the leadership literature, pointing out both seminal and more recent theories of leadership in organizations. This led to a discussion of leader(ship) development methodologies employed to close development gaps. This was followed by an exploration of the concept of leader development pools, which is the context within which most organizations seek to identify leaders for future leadership roles. Once grounded in the context, the main construct of leader identification was discussed. Next, the roles and responsibilities of the three stakeholder groups involved in identifying and assessing leaders (the organization's

executives, the HRD function, and senior leaders responsible for identifying the leader

development pool) were explored, leading to a discussion of the constructs of stakeholder

and expectancy theories, which examine the contributions, inducements, and expected

outcomes that impel each of these three stakeholder groups to play particular roles in the

identification and assessment of leaders. The next chapter outlines the research methods

that were employed in this study.

CHAPTER 3:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. The purpose served to inform the research question:

RQ: What are the perceptions of various stakeholder groups regarding the leader identification process as part of a leader development pool strategy?

It was expected that the idea of *perceptions* would entail stakeholder *expectations*, *roles*, and *contributions*, among other yet unknown concepts.

This chapter discusses the study's research design, the study site, procedures for data collection and analysis, efforts to ensure the study's trustworthiness, and the protection of human subjects.

Research Design

This research utilized an embedded, bounded, single case study approach, as described by Yin (2003). The case study was embedded, as it attempted to understand two units of analysis: the organizational unit as a whole and the subunit level of analysis, as the three different stakeholder groups represented a subunit and the data collected from each were compared and contrasted. The case study focused on all three phases of the leader identification process: early communication, pilot of the process with 77 leaders who were nominated or applied, and development and communication of planned changes to the process for future years.

Yin (2003) defined a research design as "the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions" (p. 20). Yin further described that, in this way, a research design provides a "blueprint of research, dealing with at least four problems: what questions to study, what data are relevant, what data to collect, and how to analyze the results" (p. 21). In other words, the evidence that comes forth from the research must address the initial research questions (Yin, 2003). Because the research question in this study was of an observational and investigative nature, and because it explored a phenomenon within a bounded system that requires a description of the meanings ascribed to the phenomenon by stakeholder groups, the research question best lent itself to a case study method within the naturalistic research tradition.

Naturalistic Research

Naturalistic research is *qualitative* in nature and differs in approach from *quantitative* research. Qualitative research methods are diverse and come from many different fields and intellectual traditions, but a general characterization has been offered by Denzin and Lincoln (1998) in their multivolume exposition of qualitative methods:

> Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

Often, the methods involve collecting robust amounts of interview data that are then transcribed and analyzed to identify major themes and relationships among concepts.

Qualitative research is intentionally designed as an inductive process rather than a testing process. While "many believe mistakenly that theory has no place in a qualitative

study" (Merriam, 1998, p. 45), Merriam explained that all aspects of a qualitative study are affected by its theoretical framework. These aspects include the problem statement, the purpose statement, the research questions, and data collection and analysis. In fact, according to Yin (2003), "a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the . . . study" (p. 32).

According to Merriam (1998), a theoretical framework is imperative for qualitative research. Merriam stated that "most qualitative research inherently shapes or modifies existing theory in that (1) data are analyzed and interpreted in light of the concepts of a particular theoretical orientation, and (2) a study's findings are almost always discussed in relation to existing knowledge" (p. 49). This study relied on the theoretical base of leadership and leader development (Bass, 1998; Conger & Benjamin, 1999; McCall, 1998; McCauley & Brutus, 1998; Yukl, 2012), the constructs of leader identification and leader assessment exposited by Rothwell (2010) and Silzer and Church (2010, 2013), and a stakeholder perspective, which has its roots in stakeholder theory, first described by Freeman (1984) and then connected to leader development by Nickols (2005) and leader identification and assessment by Silzer and Church (2010, 2013). In addition, this study drew its context from the concept of succession management, explicated by Lewis and Heckman (2006) and then further applied by Rothwell (2010) and Berger and Berger (2011).

Case Study Method

The case study method is one among a variety of qualitative research methods. Case studies involve the examination of an issue explored through one or more cases in a bounded system (Creswell, 2007) and can be viewed as a methodology or as a

comprehensive research strategy. Creswell (2007) defined case study research succinctly

as

> a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system *(a case)* or multiple bounded systems *(cases)* over time, through a detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g. observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes. (p. 73)

Case studies are used across a range of disciplines, which explains why there are a variety of definitions, including quantitative and mixed methods approaches (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003). Yet, most authors agree that case study is a research strategy that covers design, data collection, and analysis. Further, case studies can be embedded in the broader field of experimental design (Yin, 2003).

Yin (2003) pointed out that in a real-life case study inquiry, the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not always clear. Yin defined case study in terms of a process and asserted:

> A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. . . . The case study copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as a result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with the data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (pp. 13-14)

Therefore, I drew on multiple sources of evidence, as described later in this chapter, and triangulated the data to discover converging themes.

According to Merriam (1998), "The single most defining characteristic of case study research lies in delimiting the object of study, the case" (p. 27). Viewing the case as a bounded system, she went on to state, "If the phenomenon you are interested in

studying is not intrinsically bounded, it is not a case" (p. 27). Further, Merriam suggested

a method for determining whether or not a phenomenon constitutes a case: "If there is no

end, actually, or theoretically, to the number of people who could be interviewed or to

observations that could be conducted, then the phenomenon is not bounded enough to

qualify as a case" (Merriam, 1998, p. 28). As stated in chapter 1, I purposefully delimited

this research study by (1) focusing on only the leader identification process involved in a

leader development pool strategy, (2) remaining cognizant that moderating variables may

add noise to the data, and (3) focusing on stakeholder expectations of and contributions to

leader identification rather than attempting to assess the effectiveness of such processes.

Yin (2003) stated that there are three conditions under which a researcher should

consider case study as the qualitative method of choice. The first is when the research

question focuses on the "how" or the "why." The second involves a research question

being asked about a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. This

research study was most aligned with this second condition. The third is when the

researcher has little or no control over the events. A case study is appropriate in those

situations in which there are so many variables in a real-life situation that control is

beyond the grasp of the researcher.

Single case study approach. Single and multiple case studies are really just two

variants of case study design (Yin, 2003). "The central tendency among all types of case

study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken,

how they were implemented, and with what result" (Yin, 2003, p. 12). Both single and

multiple case studies involve empirical inquiries where the boundaries between

phenomena and context are not evident (Yin, 2003).

Just as there are conditions under which case study is the appropriate research method, there are five situations in which using a *single-case design* is the most appropriate among the case study options (Yin, 2003). The first involves testing a *critical case* in a well-formulated theory. A second situation occurs when the case is *extreme or unique* and thus warrants documentation. A third situation is one in which the case is *representative or typical;* it is assumed that by studying an everyday occurrence, something will be learned that can be applied to a larger context. A fourth situation exists when the case is *revelatory*. Here, the researcher studies something that was previously inaccessible. A final situation exists when the case is *longitudinal,* whereby the researcher may study the same single case over a period of time. This case study was deemed to be representative in that many of today's larger organizations struggle with the attempt to create leader development pools by identifying emerging and current leaders to satisfy succession needs (Berger & Berger, 2011; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Rothwell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2013). Further, it was expected that knowledge would emerge that could be applied to the larger context of leader identification and assessment in various types of organizations.

Single case studies are not devoid of challenges, however. One challenge of a single case study involves providing data that are relevant to other situations. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) explained that this challenge can be addressed by presenting a relatively complete rendering of the story within the text. "The story is intertwined with the theory to demonstrate the close connection between empirical evidence and emergent theory" (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 29). Therefore, I attempted to demonstrate the connection between the construct of leader identification and its linkage to the

stakeholder theory of the firm and expectancy theory in the application of a leader development pool strategy.

Unit of Analysis

"As a general guide, your tentative definition of the unit of analysis (and therefore of the case) is related to the way you have defined your initial research questions" (Yin, 2003, p. 23). Because the research question is aimed at an organizational process and phenomenon, the level of analysis was at the organizational level. Additionally, because the research question called out the perceptions of three stakeholder groups regarding leader identification, the level of analysis was at the subunit level. It was expected that, as data were collected, aggregate themes of leader identification would emerge. Therefore, the research design utilized an embedded (multiple units of analysis) approach within a single case study.

<p align="center">**Research Site**</p>

Site Selection

As the researcher, I had access to the largest U.S.-based, for-profit partnership corrections organization, and I obtained approval to study the company through the organization's research policy. For the purposes of this research study, the pseudonym Partnership Corrections, Inc. will be used. Founded over 30 years ago, Partnership Corrections, Inc. is the partnership corrections provider of choice for federal, state, and local agencies. Partnership Corrections, Inc. specializes in the design, construction, expansion, and management of prisons, jails, and detention facilities, as well as inmate transportation services. The organization houses more than 80,000 inmates in over 60

facilities, 44 of which are company-owned, with a total bed capacity of more than 90,000.

Partnership Corrections, Inc. currently partners with all three federal corrections

agencies: the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the U.S. Marshals Service, and Immigration and

Customs Enforcement. The organization also partners with corrections agencies in 20

states, more than a dozen local municipalities, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Partnership Corrections, Inc. employs approximately 16,000 professionals (about

4,000 of whom are in management) in security, academic and vocational education,

health services, inmate programs, facility maintenance, human resources, management,

and administration. Through its employees, the organization offers offenders a variety of

dynamic rehabilitation and education programs, including addictions treatment, GED

preparation and testing, postsecondary studies, life skills, employment training,

recreational options, and work opportunities.

Aside from researcher access, there are a few other advantages in choosing this

organization as a research site. First, the organization is large enough to wrestle with the

same challenges involved in leader identification and succession shared by other

organizations of large size. Second, this organization contains a certain degree of

complexity as evidenced by its highly distributed business model represented by multiple

locations, multiple customers, and multiple geographies. Employing leaders in multiple

disciplines adds to this complexity, which lends itself to potential generalizability. The

organization employees leaders in the areas of education, financial management, sales,

marketing, information systems, corrections, human resources, medical, legal, and a host

of other disciplines. Finally, this organization was at the precipice of embarking on a

time-bounded leader identification and assessment process at the time this research commenced.

Population and Sample

Because the unit of analysis was primarily aimed at the collective level, only those stakeholder groups who both had an enterprise perspective of the leader identification process and held enterprise or collective expectations regarding the success of the process were identified for the purposes of this study. The stakeholder groups were defined as executives, human resources leaders, and the senior leaders involved in the leader identification process. The executive group, totaling six people, consisted of the president/chief executive officer and five executive vice presidents. The human resources leadership team comprised the vice president of human resources and seven other key human resources leaders, for a total of eight. The senior leader population, which included those members responsible for making the leader identification decisions, totaled 24.

While there were other stakeholders involved in the leader identification process, it was deemed that their interests in seeing the initiative succeed were not collective in nature, and/or they were not involved in the process during all three phases of implementation. The most notable of these excluded stakeholders were the 77 leaders who were nominated for or applied to the accelerated leader development pool. The rationale for excluding them as stakeholders for the purposes of this study were twofold. First, they were involved only in Phase 1 and partially involved in Phase 3. They were not involved at all in the talent review process or the decisions that resulted. Involvement in all three phases of the process was a particular criterion for selection as a stakeholder

group. Further, it was determined that their interest would be limited to their own specific development and career, and they did not express enterprise or collective-level expectations. The same rationale was used for excluding the 19 participants who were identified to participate in the accelerated development process. While they had a little more involvement in Phase 3 than the total applicant/nominee pool, their involvement was still limited, and they were not involved at all in Phase 2.

Additionally, the 19 senior leaders identified as coaches to serve as a developmental resource for the 19 individuals in the accelerated development pool were also considered, but not selected, as stakeholders. Once again, they did not participate in all three phases, as they were only identified in Phase 3. Participation in all three phases was critical to providing a collective, enterprise perspective of the expectation perceptions of the leader identification process. Yet another stakeholder group that might have been considered was the managers of the 19 chosen for the accelerated development pool. However, few of them were involved in Phase 1, none of them were involved in Phase 2, and all of them were identified as having a role only near the end of Phase 3. Additionally, to include more than the three identified stakeholder groups would have made it very difficult to limit the bounds of this research, as this was a bounded case study.

Therefore, only the executive sponsors of the initiative, the senior leaders involved in nominating and reviewing talent, and the human resources function responsible for designing and facilitating the process met all of the criteria listed below. Further, it was determined that each of these three groups had obvious interests in seeing the initiative succeed. The executives allocated considerable fiscal resources to the

initiative and expressed a collective desire to build the leadership bench of the organization. The senior leaders contributed considerable time and energy nominating and reviewing talent. They too expressed a collective interest in building leadership capital within the enterprise. Finally, the organization development personnel within the human resources department were collectively charged with designing and facilitating a successful talent management strategy. They too expressed a collective interest in seeing the initiative succeed.

Therefore, this single, embedded case study utilized a criterion-based, purposeful sample as described by Merriam (1998). The benefit of a purposeful sample is that it brings forth an information-rich case from which the investigator can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the case study. In purposeful sampling, those involved in the sample are intentionally sought out and not left to random chance (Merriam, 1998). Additionally, the purposeful sample called for specific criteria by which those in the population were chosen to be a part of the sample. The idea behind criterion sampling is that sample participants are chosen because they meet some specific criterion or set of criteria. For this case study, four criteria were used to identify the sample:

1. Identification as an executive, human resources leader, or senior leader

2. Participation in the leader identification process during all three time phases

3. No direct reporting relationship between the individual and the researcher

4. A willingness to participate in the study

Four from the executive group, three from the human resources group, and eight from the senior leader decision-maker group met the first three criteria. Therefore, the maximum

number of interviewees was 15. Potential participants received an introduction letter (Appendix B) inviting them to participate in the study. Of the 15 who were eligible, 14 agreed to participate (i.e., all but one from the senior leader decision-maker group). As the organization is heavily populated by men, there were only three women in the study group, one in each stakeholder group. The average tenure with the organization was 14.3 years, which varied little by stakeholder group. Participants' informed consent was obtained, and they were then interviewed.

The Organization's Annual Leader Identification Process

The organization's annual leader identification process is aimed at the following roles in the field: warden, assistant warden, chief of security, and chief of unit management. Additionally, two roles at the company's headquarters were included as a part of the 2013 leader identification process: managing directors and senior directors. For the 2013 inaugural leader identification initiative that was executed in June to July 2013, a total of 77 leaders were nominated and/or applied to the organization's leader identification process. It was expected that, in future years, the scope of the process would expand to other levels of supervision within the organization. The purpose of the leader development pool strategy was to identify, assess, develop, and move (promote) high-potential leaders to solve the problem of a sparse leadership bench due to both attrition and growth.

In January to February 2013 (Phase 1), the process was outlined and communicated to the organization. Senior executives and facility executives had the opportunity to nominate individuals from the leadership pool. Data were then collected on each of the 77 nominated and/or self-nominated leaders regarding their experiences,

education, skills, knowledge, characteristics, attributes, intellect, and performance. These data were collected through various means, including assessments of leader(ship) capability and capacity for taking on greater levels of responsibility and complexity. Data were collected, organized, and evaluated through a web-enabled talent management system by the human resources personnel responsible for executing the initiative.

In June to July 2013 (Phase 2), vice presidents and some managing directors participated in talent review meetings (facilitated by the human resources development function) to discuss the talent data, assessments, and observations for these 77 leaders. By July 31, 2013, decisions were made by senior executives in human resources and operations as to which individuals had potential for higher-level roles. These decisions were codified in the talent management system and communicated to the leadership pool, applicants' supervisors, and the organization's top executives. All high-potential leaders were assigned a coach and began working collaboratively with their coach on a unique development plan based on their readiness identification. These development plans were collected and housed in the web-enabled talent management system. This research was bounded by the leadership identification phase first communicated in January and February 2013 (Phase 1) and the leader identification and high-potential selection phase piloted in June and July 2013 (Phase 2) and revised based on feedback in September to October 2013 (Phase 3).

<div align="center">**Data Collection**</div>

Data Collection Principles

The case study researcher must adhere to three principles when collecting data for maximum use (Yin, 2003). The first of these is ensuring that the data are derived from

multiple sources. Yin stated that "a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence" (p. 97). To make a more convincing argument through data convergence (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), I utilized two of the six sources of data suggested by Yin (2003): interviews and documents.

Yin's (2003) second principle involves creating a case study database, and he cautioned against assuming that the final report can serve as this case study database. "Too often, the case study data are synonymous with the narrative presented in the case study report, and a critical reader has no recourse if he or she wants to inspect the raw data that led to the case study's conclusions" (Yin, 2003, p. 101). This case study was accompanied by a case study database that included notes from the two data sources.

The third principle is to maintain a chain of evidence (Yin, 2003). This allows any external reader to trace the steps the researcher took from the initial questions through the case study protocol, the database, and the report. Yin went on to state:

> First, the report itself should have made sufficient citation to the relevant portions of the case study database. . . . Second, the database should reveal the actual evidence and also indicate the circumstances under which the evidence was collected. . . . Third, these circumstances should be consistent with the specific procedures and questions contained in the case study protocol, to show that the data collection followed the procedures stipulated by the protocol. Finally, a reading of the protocol should indicate the link between the content of the protocol and the initial study questions. (p. 105)

I established and maintained a chain of evidence as a part of this case study research. First, I created a table to manage and track the interviews, complete with interviewers roles, stakeholder affiliation, date and time of interviews, etc. This included the interview protocol used. In addition, I created a similar data collection tool to organize and categorize the document and archival data. The transcribed notes from the interviews were then correlated to the interview-tracking table. Next, the first pass of coding for the

interviews was created, followed by the second two passes of coding that incorporated the document and archival data in addition to the interview data.

Sources of Data and Collection Methods

Yin (2003) listed six common data sources for case studies—documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts—adding that documentation is relevant for every case study. For this study, documentation and interviews of participants from three stakeholder groups were used. Table 3.1 summarizes the data sources, collection methods, and analysis techniques following a model suggested by Jarzabkowski (2008) in her treatment of data collection and analysis related to strategy.

Documentation. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), documents used in qualitative studies may include participant journals, official memos, minutes, records, and any other documents accessible to the researcher that may help answer the research question. According to Merriam (2009), mining data from documents is a less intrusive data collection method than observations or interviews. I studied a set of documents for each implementation phase of this case study. As an internal organization development leader responsible for the oversight of this process, I had ready access to these documents. These documents served to corroborate the stories of the interviewees by providing additional color and context.

Table 3.1

Data Sources, Collection Methods, and Associated Data Analysis Techniques

Research question	Source of data	Collection method	Analysis technique
What are the perceptions of various stakeholder groups regarding the leader identification process as part of a leader development pool strategy? It was expected that the idea of *perceptions* would entail stakeholder *expectations*, *roles*, and *contributions*, among other yet unknown concepts.	Documentation	**Phase 1:** • Documents about the leader identification process design • Documents about the process plan • Documents pertaining to communication and education around the leader identification process **Phase 2:** • The talent management system itself (specifically the nomination screen and the high-potential leader application screen) • Performance data for the 77 applicants/ nominees • Career profile data for the 77 applicants/ nominees • High-potential assessment data for the 77 applicants/nominees • Notes that emerged from the talent reviews conducted with the key leaders for each high-potential leader under consideration • Decision documents that resulted from the talent review meetings • Documents (including communications) pertaining to the communication of leader identification decisions **Phase 3:** • Documents pertaining to the feedback received during the postmortem exercise on the process • Documents articulating the planned change based on the feedback • Documents communicating the planned change for the leader identification process	• Pattern matching • Explanation building
	Individual interviews	Semistructured, in-depth interviews with up to 15 participants from three stakeholder groups who meet four purposeful sampling criteria. An interview protocol was used, with one main question addressing participants' perceptions for each of the three phases of the process, followed by probing questions aimed at understanding participants' expectations, roles, and contributions.	• Pattern matching • Explanation building

For Phase 1, I examined (1) documents about the leader identification process design, (2) documents about the process plan, and (3) documents pertaining to communication and education around the leader identification process. For Phase 2, I examined (1) the talent management system itself (specifically the nomination screen and the high-potential leader application screen), (2) performance data for the 77 applicants/ nominees, (3) career profile data for the 77 applicants/nominees, (4) high-potential assessment data for the 77 applicants/nominees, (5) the leader identification notes that emerged from the talent reviews conducted with the key leaders for each high-potential leader under consideration, (6) leader identification decision documents that resulted from the talent review meetings, and (7) documents (including communications) pertaining to the communication of leader identification decisions. For Phase 3, I examined (1) documents pertaining to the feedback received during the postmortem exercise on the process, (2) documents articulating the planned change based on the feedback, and (3) documents communicating the planned change for the leader identification process.

Participant interviews. In addition to documentation, I conducted interviews with the sample members from each stakeholder group. According to Merriam (1998), the purpose of an interview is to obtain specific information that may only be apprehended in this fashion. The researcher wants to find out "what is in and on someone else's mind" (Merriam, 1998, p. 71). Merriam (1998) went on to point out that we interview what we cannot observe or find in documents. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, intentions, etc. In the case of this study, the research question related to perceptions, something that I could not observe or glean from documents. As

recommended by Schneider and Angelmar (1993), these interviews were conducted with individuals in each stakeholder group in order to facilitate a collective level of analysis. The interviews were open ended and in depth and were conducted according to an established case study protocol (Appendix C). The interview data served to provide meaning to, and context for, the documentation and archival systems data.

Because I was interested in stakeholders' perceptions, a highly structured interview was not advisable, according to Merriam (1998). Therefore, I utilized a semistructured interview format that allowed for a plan of specific questioning, but also allowed for flexibility to follow up. Taking into account the types of good interview questions and types of questions to stay away from (e.g., multiple questions and leading questions) (Merriam, 1998), I asked one main question for each of the three phases of the leader identification process. The main question for Phase 1 was: *Think back to January to February 2013 when the initiation of the leader identification process (or "talent management," as the organization has labeled it) was first communicated. What was your initial perception of the leader identification (talent management) process?* Participants were then asked to reflect on the other two phases of the initiative (Phases 2 and 3) and share their *perceptions* of the leader identification process in those phases as well. Merriam (1998) suggested asking probing questions, and because the idea of perceptions includes *expectations, roles*, and *contributions*, the probing questions addressed these aspects.

It is important to note here that the interviews were designed to understand stakeholder perceptions of the launch of a leader identification initiative. Moreover, the interview protocol was designed in such a way as to understand perceptions about and

expectations of the processes around the nomination/application of emerging leader talent and the decisions affecting the leader identification strategy. Because of the limited longitudinal nature of this study, leader(ship) development was outside the scope of the research and, therefore, the interview protocol.

Each interview was approximately 1 hour in length. As Creswell (2007) recommended, I recorded and transcribed each interview. The length and recording were mentioned in the letter to participants and were reiterated at the beginning of each interview. I also took notes during the interview, and per Creswell's (2007) suggestion, wrote out any closing comments by the participants.

Data Analysis

Data Triangulation

To better understand stakeholders' perceptions about a leader identification process (within the construct of leader development) in the attempted implementation of a leader development pool strategy within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization, qualitative data were triangulated. Triangulation of data follows data collection and is often used to increase the validity and support of the results (Yin, 2003). This approach provides both explanatory and exploratory views. Rossman and Wilson (1985) stated that there are three advantages to triangulating data: corroboration, elaboration, and initiation. Corroboration is the convergence of findings, elaboration provides detail and richness, and initiation explores ideas missed without looking at the various sources of data. In this way, research can be created and validated through multiple lenses. As Yin (2003) noted, triangulation is a way to discover converging themes to guide the analysis process. Triangulation also contributes to the trustworthiness of the case study results.

84

Triangulation of the data consisted of gathering the documents and archival systems data and organizing them into the three phases of implementation. After the participant interview data were collected, these data were overlaid onto the document and archive data, arranged in implementation phase order. Then I looked for corroboration of the interview data against the document and archival data. Additionally, I looked for elaboration of document and archival data with context drawn from interview data. Both corroboration and elaboration were plentiful. I also looked for divergence between the sources of data and found very few instances.

Analysis Techniques

Yin (2003) described four specific data analysis techniques that are particularly helpful for understanding single case study data. The first is *pattern matching,* in which the researcher determines whether the data support a presupposed pattern or if a new pattern emerges from the data. The second technique is *explanation building,* used to "analyze the case study data by building an explanation about the case" (p. 120). The third analysis technique, known as *time series analysis*, aids the researcher in determining if there is a logical sequence (or chronology) to the events that make up the case study. The fourth technique, *logic modeling*, combines the elements of pattern matching and time series analysis to identify cause-effect patterns over a defined period of time.

I employed two of these four data analysis techniques, as shown in Table 3.1 above. For the purposes of analyzing documentation and data from individual interviews, I relied on pattern matching and explanation building to make sense of the data. In addition, I aggregated the data from both sources of data and multiple stakeholder groups by attempting to synthesize them into one comprehendible model.

In addition to utilizing one or more of the specific single case study analysis techniques, Yin (2003) suggested that the researcher consider what general approach or strategy is to be employed in the utilization of such techniques. He proposed three such strategies. The first involves comparing the findings to the theoretical propositions that led to the research question. The second strategy allows the researcher to analyze the research findings against rival hypotheses and explanations of such hypotheses. The third analysis strategy involves developing a descriptive framework for organizing the case study results. Because this research design was not built upon presuppositions or hypotheses, nor assumed rival theories, I employed the third strategy of developing a case study description. While I explored relationships within and between stakeholder groups, my intention was not to suggest causality. Therefore, a descriptive case study seemed to be most appropriate. In summary, I analyzed the case study findings by employing the general strategy of developing a case description, which relies on explanation building and identifying patterns in the data, arranging the data by stakeholder group and by phases of the leader identification initiative.

Data Analysis Steps

Creswell (2007) suggested that data analysis involves the following steps: (1) organizing the data, (2) reading and memoing the data, (3) describing and classifying the data into codes and themes, (4) interpreting the data, and (5) representing and visualizing the data. I developed both hard and electronic copies of the data and converted the files into text units as a way of organizing the data. Memoing involves documenting thoughts about the process of analysis, possible theoretical explanations, and personal experiences related to analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As suggested by Creswell (2007), I wrote

comments in the margins of the transcribed field notes as a way to memo and read the data. These comments consisted of short phrases or key concepts to explore in the next step. In this way, categories could begin to emerge across stakeholder groups and/or across implementation phases.

Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested that there are three types of codes: (1) descriptive, (2) interpretive, and (3) patterns. I identified initial concepts emerging from the data and grouped them into categories. I utilized axial coding (higher-level themes) described by Creswell (2007) to search for relationships between and among these categories. Pattern codes can then be identified to allow for the emergence of themes within the data. These major themes were organized into aggregate dimensions, by examining the relationships among first-order and second-order themes. These steps aided in the interpretation of the data.

Data Collection and Analysis Process

The data collection and analysis process was an iterative one. First, all of the document and archival data were discovered and organized. These data were arranged in the following categories with the following quantities:

Phase 1 of the Leader Identification Initiative

- An 18-page communications document explaining the leader identification process and system.

- A 12-page white paper explaining the rationale and business case for the leader identification initiative, the nomination and application processes, the timeline, the scope, and the eligibility requirements.

- Over 90 pages of technical documents outlining the genesis and the technical specifications of the TMS.

- Over 30 nomination and application screens in the TMS.

- Over 40 pages of a webinar used multiple times to communicate to applicants, nominees, senior leaders, and executives.

Phase 2 of the Leader Identification Initiative

- Over 300 nomination and application screens in the TMS.

- Over 450 pages of candidate data, including their application, nomination, candidate profile, essays, and performance data.

- Over 1,500 pages of assessment data for each of the 77-nominees/ applicants.

Phase 3 of the Leader Identification Initiative

- Seven pages of data regarding the "postmortem" review of the leader identification process with executive and talent reviewer feedback.

- A 4-page communication document outlining the 2014 planned changes for the leader identification initiative.

In all, a total of over 2,400 pages or screens of archival and document data were reviewed as a part of this research. In addition, over 200 pages and over 4,500 lines of interview data were collected and reviewed. The data collected from interviewees as well as from documents and archival systems were analyzed through the lens of the three phases in which the leader identification initiative was implemented. A hand-coding process was utilized to make sense of all of the document, archival, and interview data.

Initially, the first pass of coding netted 629 codes. These codes were arranged by the three phases of implementation as well as by the three stakeholder groups (Appendix

D). A second pass of hand coding was applied, which returned 183 codes (Appendix E). In this second pass, the distillation of codes revealed that the data, while organized around the three phases of implementation, no longer fit neatly into one distinct phase. Therefore, the second pass of coding reflects the stakeholder groups but not the implementation phases. The third and final pass involved grouping the codes into themes. These themes represented general agreement of two or more stakeholder groups, and since there was inter-stakeholder group agreement, there was no longer a need to categorize the codes along stakeholder lines. In total, the third pass of coding netted 19 distinct, thematic codes (Appendix F). Finally, these codes were distilled into seven key findings and 19 subfindings.

Efforts to Ensure the Study's Trustworthiness

The manner in which the case study data were analyzed served to bolster the trustworthiness of the findings (Yin, 2003). The aim of trustworthiness in a case study is to support the argument that the study's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). This is quite different from the conventional experimental precedent of attempting to show validity, soundness, and significance. In any qualitative research project, the following issues of trustworthiness demand attention: credibility, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each of these is discussed in brief.

Before discussing these four elements of trustworthiness, it is necessary at this point to explain the role the researcher plays within the enterprise studied. I serve as a senior organization development leader within the organization, and have served in this capacity since August of 2012. The organization has had varying degrees of success with

organization development initiatives prior to my arrival in 2012. Additionally, many of

the decisions regarding the process and systems related to the inaugural leader

identification initiative were made prior to my arrival. I, along with other colleagues

(none of whom were direct reports to me) within organization development and human

resources, shared responsibility for the implementation of the leader identification

initiative studied.

Credibility

Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a

"credible conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data"

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296). Related to credibility is the concept of validity.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), validity allows the readers of a study to make

sense of the findings. To address credibility, I employed three techniques.

First, in designing the research procedure, I aimed (as previously stated) to collect

data from multiple sources, which allowed for triangulation of data across

implementation phases and subgroups. My intention here was to generate layers of data

from each of the three stakeholder groups and the phases of implementation. This

technique provided for a richer, multilayered, and more credible data set.

The second technique that I employed to ensure credibility involved what Lincoln

and Guba (1985) called peer debriefing. The ultimate purpose of peer debriefing,

contended Lincoln and Guba, is to enhance the credibility, or truth value, of a qualitative

study by providing "an external check on the inquiry process" (p. 301). In peer

debriefing, a researcher meets with one or more impartial colleagues to critically review

the implementation and evolution of the research methods. The role of the peer debriefer

is to facilitate the researcher's consideration of methodological activities and provide feedback concerning the accuracy and completeness of the researcher's data collection and data analysis procedures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I enlisted the help of a university professor with whom I have had a collegial relationship for some years. This professor, equipped with knowledge and practice in qualitative research, reviewed my interview protocol and my case study database to look for any inconsistencies in the research methodology, ensuring there were no visible areas of concern that might suggest a breech of credibility. None were found.

The third method I employed to bolster the credibility of the research is what Lincoln and Guba (1985) called member checks. Where peer debriefing provides for an external sort of credibility check, member checking involves the use of internal calibration, "whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314). I utilized member checks from each of the three stakeholder groups involved in this study. After reviewing the notes and other data from the study, the individuals answered several interview questions and offered comments as to whether or not they felt the data were interpreted in a manner congruent with their own experiences. All participants surveyed rated the findings of the data analysis as *moderately or strongly credible* based on reviewing the findings. In addition, participants provided comments that directly connected the findings to their own personal experiences during the research period.

Transferability

Transferability involves the degree to which the findings of this inquiry apply or transfer beyond the bounds of the study. Because case study research is context dependent, it is not altogether possible to confidently generalize the findings to a population, as might be the case with quantitative research. Yin (2003) suggested that the *case* in a case study is more akin to a single experiment in quantitative research than to a sample population. Moreover, "it is not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability; it is his or her responsibility to provide the database that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). I employed the use of a case study database to address this aspect of naturalistic research. According to Yin (2003), a case study database allows other investigators to review the raw data separately from the case study report.

Confirmability

Confirmability is a measure of how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). "Confirmability refers to an audit of the research *outcomes*—the data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 318). I employed the use of the same university professor who conducted the peer debrief to assess confirmability of the research. This research resulted in a case study database that categorized the raw data, outcomes relating to data reduction and analysis, synthesis of data, process notes, and archival data regarding the talent management initiative and system.

In addition, a researcher's reflexive journal was utilized as a "kind of diary in which the investigator, on a daily basis, or as needed, records a variety of information about *self* (hence the term 'reflexive') and *method*" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 318).

I recorded my thoughts and experiences in my journal after each of the 14 interviews. Here, I captured my thoughts about how diligently I stayed within the research protocol versus how much I allowed the interviewee to share what was on their mind regardless of whether it was on topic. While the interviewees generally stayed on track, the interview transcripts reveal that the interviewers were allowed the freedom to "hang out" on topics that were of great importance to them. I also used this journal to record some facial expressions and other body language displayed by interviewees that were not captured in the transcripts. I ensured that my own thoughts and feelings about the unspoken messages from the interviewees were not a part of the research findings, as they would only reflect assumptions and not fact as to the meaning behind the body language.

The professor involved in assessing for confirmability reviewed the three levels of codes and the research findings, and then compared them to samples of data collected from documents, archival systems data, and interview data. This confirmability auditor also reviewed the journal and noted that, upon reflection, I began to set up the questions regarding Phase 3 in a more coherent fashion after the first couple of interviews. After completing the audit, the colleague deemed the research findings to be coherent with data collected during the data collection phase.

Ethical Precautions

The study was believed to pose no major threats to participants. Potential participants were fully advised of the study's goals and expectations and were given the option of withdrawing from the study at any time. I obtained informed consent from all participants and ensured confidentiality by assigning pseudonyms. Audiotapes were destroyed after they were transcribed, and all data were kept in password-protected computer files and locked file cabinets.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the case study method to be used to answer the research question: What are the perceptions of various stakeholder groups regarding the leader identification process as part of a leader development pool strategy? These methods are summarized in Appendix A. I followed Yin's (2003) three principles for data collection: (1) multiple sources of evidence, (2) a case study database, and (3) a chain of evidence. Data gathered from two primary sources, documentation and semistructured interviews, provided a primarily qualitative perspective. Further, I employed two of Yin's data analysis techniques: pattern matching and explanation building. Aggregating data from various leader identification activities, including performance data, talent review meeting data, assessment data, leader development plans, data in the talent management system, as well as various communication efforts played a significant role in allowing triangulation of data for exploration and analysis.

Data analysis proceeded in five steps, from organizing the data and reading and memoing, to classifying the data into codes and themes, interpreting the data, and representing and visualizing the data. Efforts to ensure trustworthiness included

collection of data from multiple sources, peer debriefing by a colleague, member checks

from a participant of each of the three stakeholder groups, use of a case study database,

and follow-up questions to interview participants to confirm the findings. The next

chapter outlines the findings from this case study research.

CHAPTER 4:

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. This chapter presents the study's results in four sections. First, a contextual overview of the study organization is provided. Second, the leader identification initiative is explained. Afterwards, the seven research findings are described, entailing the stakeholder perceptions and expectations of, as well as the contributions to, the leader identification initiative. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research findings.

Organizational Context

The Organization's Mission and History

Partnership Corrections, Inc. was a pioneer in corrections, founded over 30 years ago. Partnership Corrections, Inc. designs, builds, manages, and operates prisons, jails, detention centers, and residential reentry centers on behalf of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the U.S. Marshals Service, and many state and county government agencies across the country. Partnership Corrections, Inc.'s vision involves being the best full-service adult corrections system, and its mission involves advancing corrections through innovative results that benefit and protect those in their custody. The stated values of the organizational members involve having PRIDE in all they do. This acronym stands for professionalism, respect, integrity, duty, and excellence.

The organization's founders created the vision that led to what first became known as private prisons operated by businesses, not government. Experience proved the term "private prisons" to be a bit of a misnomer. Indeed, Partnership Corrections, Inc. prisons are transparent and in many ways just like the correctional facilities of government. Partnership Corrections, Inc. facilities have been guided over the years by the tight accountability, stringent guidelines, strong oversight, and high standards of government partners, with the goal of bringing cost savings, design and technology innovations, and business agility to government (Partnership Corrections, Inc. website, 2014).

The promise of a public-private partnership in corrections was planted when Partnership Corrections, Inc. secured its first-ever contract with the U.S. Department of Justice for the development and operation of a processing center for the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Within 5 years, Partnership Corrections, Inc. was being traded on the NASDAQ stock exchange and had earned American Correctional Association accreditation for its earliest facilities. A decade after its founding, Partnership Corrections, Inc. had opened and assumed management of more facilities, including the first maximum-security facility managed by a private corrections company. By its 20th anniversary, Partnership Corrections, Inc. operated 60 facilities in 21 states and the District of Columbia, with 14,000 employees. After a quarter century, the company had been named by *Forbes* magazine as the nation's "best managed company" in the business services and supplies category and by *G.I. Jobs* magazine as a "Top 50 Military-Friendly Employer." Now entering its fourth decade, Partnership Corrections, Inc. continues to create new paths in the industry. The company still develops partnership models and new

corrections innovations that reflect a commitment to high-quality safety and security, as well as rehabilitation and reentry. Today, the company employs approximately 15,000 employees in about 60 facilities.

The organization is comprised of diverse roles, employing correctional officers, educators, inmate wellness professionals, spiritual leaders, food service employees, medical professionals, legal professionals, and general business professionals and leaders. The federal, state, and municipality contracts can be at once demanding and complex. The organization is under tremendous pressure to serve as a prudent steward of the tax dollars allocated to the inmates under its control.

Leadership in the Organization

About five years ago, a new president and chief executive officer (CEO) was named who started with the company as a correctional officer. This CEO led a restructuring of the organization during its 30th anniversary, converting the enterprise to a real estate investment trust. Under his leadership, the organization has continued its relentless pursuit of leadership succession and has begun to ensure that formal and emerging leaders are intentionally developed at all levels within the enterprise.

One example of the investment made in Partnership Corrections, Inc.'s leaders is the establishment of Partnership Corrections University in 2013. Partnership Corrections University currently consists of the College of Leadership, designed to equip leaders at management levels within the organization with the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully lead the business, their teams, and themselves. In addition, a College of Operations is currently being formed. The enterprise's commitment to leadership development is demonstrated by the involvement of various leaders in many

aspects of governance of the corporate university. The executive committee, made up of the CEO and executive vice presidents, serves as the strategic governing body for the university by providing strategic oversight for the vision, mission, and architecture of the university structure. In addition, college advisory councils, made up of other key executives (consisting of vice presidents and managing directors), provide strategic and tactical oversight for their respective colleges. The organization also employs a leader-teacher model whereby Partnership Corrections, Inc. executives and other formal leaders (such as wardens) serve as faculty in the corporate university. Finally, other formal leaders at various levels of management are engaged as design team members and subject matter experts to ensure that program content is both relevant and meets stated learning objectives. In all, approximately 120 formal leaders at various management levels from across the enterprise participate in the governance of Partnership Corrections University.

Partnership Corrections University, and in particular the College of Leadership, was envisioned as one of the key vehicles through which leaders would be developed. This development solution was generated as an outgrowth of a larger talent management initiative that began in 2012. This talent management initiative was developed as a strategic process whereby current and emerging leaders were identified, assessed, developed, moved, and engaged within and throughout the enterprise. The next section discusses this talent management model, and particularly the leader identification portion, in more detail.

Leader Identification Initiative Context

Objective and Scope

For the purposes of the initial rollout of Partnership Corrections, Inc.'s 2013

inaugural talent management/leader identification process, the definition of talent

management from the organization's Talent Management White Paper (2012) will be

used. Here, *talent management* is defined as:

> a strategic process of identifying, assessing, and developing high performing and
> high potential current and emerging leaders to meet the leadership needs facing
> the organization. In this process, senior leaders are engaged in the practice of
> assessing both the *performance* and *potential* of leaders in our facilities and at the
> Facility Support Center. (p.2).

The objective of the talent management process at Partnership Corrections, Inc. was to

identify, assess, and develop a pipeline of leadership talent from which the next

generation of leaders will be identified.

In addition, the enterprise identified a number of reasons why successful

organizations engage in a talent management process. The following reasons were

articulated in the Talent Management White Paper (2012, p.3).

- To fill gaps in the leadership pipeline based on objective criteria, relying less on
  "gut feel"

- To grow leaders more quickly

- To help to promote a performance-driven culture

- To reduce talent skills gaps

- To meet leadership demand based on potential future growth

- To prepare for retirements due to a potentially aging workforce

- To increase business flexibility through transparent talent mobility

The scope for Partnership Corrections Inc.'s talent management process in 2013 involved administrative duty officer (ADO) staff at facilities, including the positions of warden, assistant warden, chief of security, and chief of unit management, and various leaders at the Facility Support Center (FSC), including the positions of vice president, managing director, and senior director. The intent was that in later years, the scope of Partnership Corrections Inc.'s talent management/leader identification process would be expanded to include other levels of formal management.

Potential and Performance: The Key Ingredients

Partnership Corrections Inc.'s leader identification process was designed to allow those leaders defined in the scope of the initiative to submit an application in order to be considered for Partnership Corrections Inc.'s pool of high-potential leaders (HIPOs). The review panel of senior leaders essentially looked at two key ingredients when determining whether or not particular leaders would be considered HIPOs. These two ingredients were *performance* and *potential* (Talent Management White Paper, 2012).

Typically, performance is measured in reference to an individual's current job—defined as "what is required for success" in one's current role. Performance at Partnership Corrections Inc. is measured through the organization's Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). Using this performance appraisal system, Partnership Corrections Inc.'s employees are assessed by their direct manager, often with input from others with whom the employee has worked. Potential is an intelligent estimate of an individual's future capability, commitment, and alignment based on the required competencies for success in higher-level positions (Church and

101

Rotolo, 2013). There is a saying that the best predictor of future performance is past performance (Hersen, 2004). In absolute terms, the statement is not quite true. It is equally important to understand the capability or runway that a leadership candidate possesses when determining courses of action for development (Church and Rotolo, 2013).

While Partnership Corrections Inc. already had the PMDS as a tool to measure performance, document review revealed that it introduced a new set of assessment tools to be used in conjunction with a participant's application in the leader identification process to measure a leader's future potential. These predictive assessments measured leaders' enduring traits, values, and goals; the manner and approach they used to achieve their goals; and the potential "red flag" traits they exhibited under pressure—all of which are very important measures that help accurately estimate a leader's potential. Combined, these assessments aimed to help the review panels see how potential future key leaders act and respond to the tougher situations and challenges that come with larger roles before being identified for, developed for, and eventually placed in a larger role.

Nomination and Application for the Accelerated Development Pool

The nomination and application process contained certain parameters. Table 4.1 indicates the various roles eligible to nominate others for the process, which roles could be nominated, which roles would make up the review panels, and which roles might participate in a selected HIPO's development by serving as a coach. Both nominators and coaches were required to be at least one level higher than those whom they nominated and coached (Talent Management White Paper, 2012).

Table 4.1
Positions That Can Serve as Nominator, Nominee, Panel Member, and Coach in the Application Process for the Accelerated Development Pool

Position	Nominator	Nominee	Panel member	Coach
Facilities				
Warden and facility administrator	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Assistant warden and assistant facility administrator	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Chief of security and chief of unit management	No	Yes	No	No
Facility Support Center				
Chief executive officer	Yes	No	Yes	No
Executive vice president	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Vice president	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Managing director	Yes	Yes	Only Ops	Yes
Senior director	No	Yes	No	Yes

As evidenced in the organization's Talent Management White Paper (2012) an applicant could be considered for admission into the pool of HIPOs in two ways. First, a senior leader sponsor could *nominate* a leader who held one of the positions outlined in the scope. Second, the organization development function could invite other leaders (defined within the scope) to *apply* directly based upon a predetermined minimum PMDS score (set at 80 out of a possible 100) from their most recent performance evaluation. No minimum PMDS score was used as a criterion for the sponsored nomination/application. Whether sponsored by a senior leader or invited by the organization development leader, all eligible participants were required to submit a formal application utilizing the web-based Talent Management System (TMS) located on Partnership Corrections Inc.'s intranet site. This system was only visible by and available to eligible leader identification participants. The combination of the nomination and application processes is illustrated in Figure 4.1 (Talent Management White Paper, 2012).
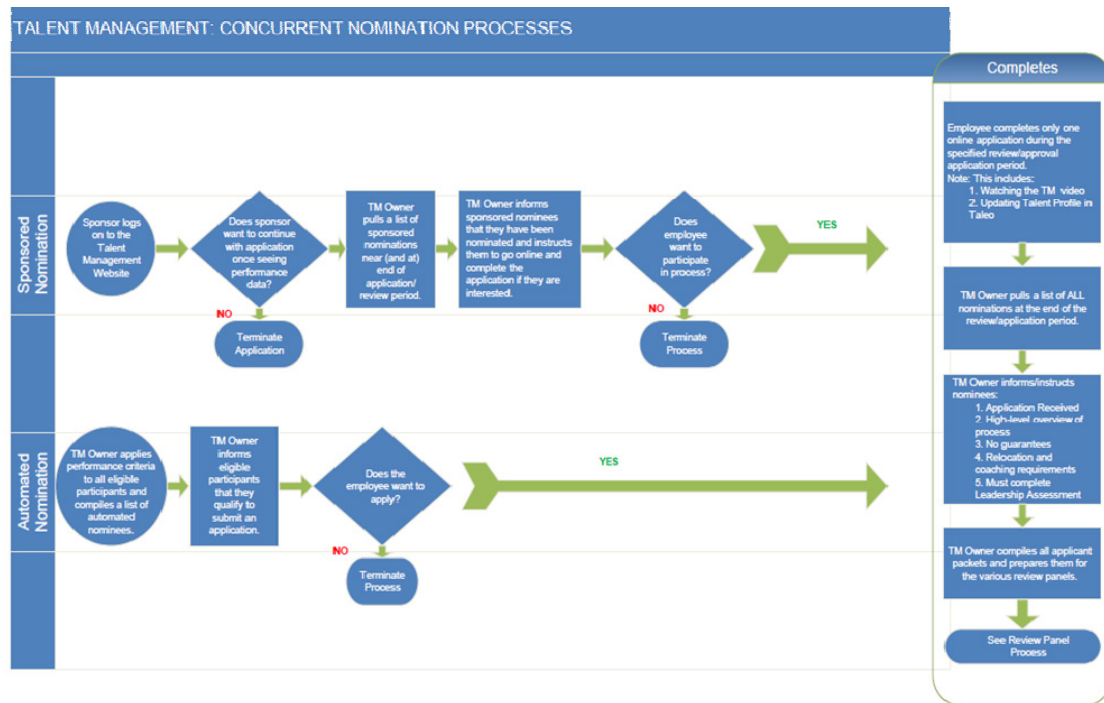
Figure 4.1. Talent management: Concurrent nomination processes.

The organization's talent management intranet site (2013) reveals that the

nominee's application involved a number of elements and steps:

- Answering demographic questions in the web-enabled TMS.

- Answering questions of qualifications in the TMS.

- Reviewing a talent management video showing executive support for Partnership

  Corrections Inc.'s leader identification process.

- Updating one's candidate profile in the Taleo applicant tracking system,

  Partnership Corrections Inc.'s web-enabled position applicant system used by both

  internal and external applicants for open Partnership Corrections Inc. positions.

  The applicant tracking system contains a profile on each employee that essentially

  serves as a resume, complete with experience, education, and certifications.

- Completing the "potential assessments" previously discussed.

- Committing to any necessary future relocation that may result from the leader's career path movement.

All of these elements of the application, combined with performance scores and other anecdotal evidence of both performance and potential, were used in determining leaders' inclusion into Partnership Corrections Inc.'s pool of HIPOs. These factors combined to ensure a more fair and impartial process of identifying leaders for both development and career movement purposes.

The Process Timeline

Based upon the timeline agreed upon by the executives and found in the organization's Talent Management White Paper (2012), the organization intended to identify, assess, and develop leadership talent on an annual basis. The timing of this talent management/leader identification process would follow the same pattern each year, with the nomination/application process taking place in the February-April timeframe (allowing decision makers to utilize most recent performance data) and culminating in specific accelerated leader development plans created and executed during the latter half of the year (Figure 4.2).
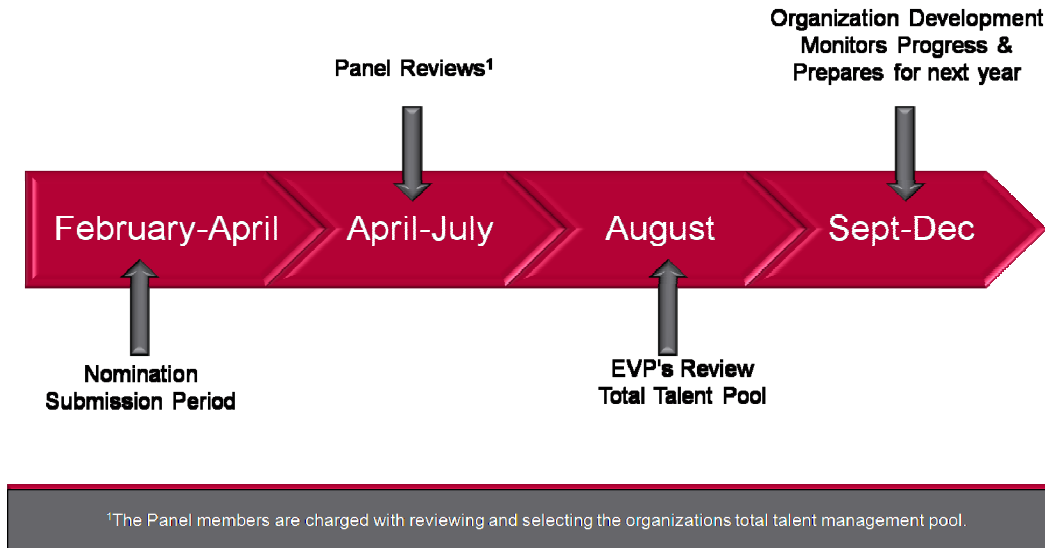
Figure 4.2. Timeline of activities for the annual talent management/leader identification process. EVP indicates executive vice presidents.

Leader Identification Review Panels

As evidenced in the Talent Management White Paper (2012), three leader identification review panels were established to review all of the applications and make recommendations or decisions on the status of applicants and their disposition into the high-potential pool of leaders. Table 4.2 describes the three panels. The panel decisions were determined by particular actions taken by the decision makers in the talent review meetings. During the talent review meetings, the decision makers:

- Considered all aspects of the application

- Considered the *performance* history of all nominees, including their most recent performance scores

- Considered the *potential* of all nominees based on the results of their behavioral assessments

106

Table 4.2
Review Panels and Their Characteristics

Panel	Members	Duties	Review Process
Facility Review Panel	All operations VPs and managing directors	Review all nominees for ADO staff and make recommendations for approval	Blind at first; identities revealed after review so members could add anecdotal and historical experience data
FSC Review Panel	All enterprise VPs	Approve or deny all recommendations made by the Facility Review Panel for the ADO staff	Blind at first; identities revealed after review so members could add anecdotal and historical experience data
		Review FSC nominees (managing directors and senior directors) for approval by the EVP Leadership Committee	
EVP Leadership Committee	The CEO and all EVPs	Is informed of HIPO lists for the facilities (ADO staff), with no approval authority	Not blind; candidates' names known
		Approve or deny all recommendations made by the FSC Review Panel for the FSC senior directors and managing directors	
		Review all VPs (not nominated but automatically discussed as a part of the leader identification process)	

*Blind indicates that the panel members reviewed only the content and character of the applications, without knowing the name of the applicant or the facility in which he or she was located.
Note. ADO indicates administrative duty officer; EVP, executive vice president; FSC, Facility Support Center; HIPO, high-potential leader; VP, vice president.
Source: Talent Management White Paper (2012)

Accelerated Development

While outside the scope of this study due to time constraints, the plan for the

development of identified HIPOs is described here as contextual information. All HIPOs

collaboratively created, with their assigned coach, an individual development plan in the

TMS that was expected to be updated periodically. These individual development plans

were reviewed periodically by the organization development function and by the HIPO's

career coach to determine the readiness level of the HIPO for potential, future career movement (Talent Management Intranet Site, 2013).

In addition, development guides were created and provided to HIPOs to be used in guiding the creation of their individual development plan. These guides included suggestions on which activities the HIPO might engage in, including in-place assignments, recommended readings, projects and cross-functional team assignments, and training sponsored by Partnership Corrections, Inc. These development guides, and the individual development plans that were created from them, were based on the latest research regarding how leaders develop (McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004). The 70/20/10 model shown in Figure 4.3 highlights the fact that most of a leader's development comes through experiences and assignments. Additionally, about 20% of a leader's development should come from a coaching or mentoring relationship, while only 10% or so of a leader's development should come from formal training.
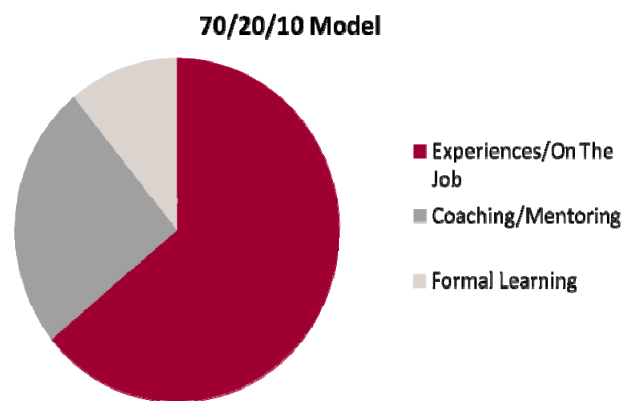

Figure 4.3. 70/20/10 model.

The career coaches were assigned to each selected HIPO for a one-to-one coaching-protégé relationship. The organization development function worked to identify

and match career coaches to assist with the development of HIPOs. Each HIPO had a career coach assigned to him or her who was in a position at least one level higher than the HIPO. The career coach assisted the HIPO in ensuring that he or she made progress on the individual development plan through a collaborative process of feedback, accountability, and support. Coaches were selected through a formal process based on specific criteria, including the competency strengths the coaches possessed and where the coachee needed development. In addition, the selected coaches received a specialized, 2-day training program facilitated by two master coaches. The progress of the HIPOs and their continued development was regularly tracked by the organization development function as well as the coaches (Talent Management Intranet Site, 2013).

Research Findings

Before moving to the findings, the reader is to be reminded that the timeframe allotted for this research did not allow for a longitudinal discovery of a stakeholder view of *leader development*. As stated in chapters 1 and 3, a better understanding of a stakeholder view of leader identification, assessment, and development remains fertile ground for research. As a way to bound this study, only the process by which leaders were identified for the purpose of assembling a pool of succession talent was addressed. Elements of leader assessment were uncovered only in a tertiary manner. Further, only Finding 7 deals with leader development, as only the line of questioning regarding implementation Phase 3 lent itself to the development period—and even the development planning period at that. The seven findings and 19 subfindings are detailed here.

The main research question asked: *What are the perceptions of various stakeholder groups regarding the leader identification process as part of a leader development pool strategy?* It was expected that the idea of *perceptions* would entail stakeholder *expectations*, *roles*, and *contributions*. The findings naturally flow out of this research question and the specific, supporting interview questions asked of each study participant.

Participants belonged to three stakeholder groups: (1) *executive stakeholders,* study participants from among the CEO and seven executive vice presidents who sponsored and funded the leader identification initiative (N = 4); (2) *talent reviewer stakeholders,* study participants who represented the managing directors and vice presidents (senior leaders) involved in the formal talent review meetings (N = 7); and (3) *human resources stakeholders,* study participants within the human resources function who participated in the development, execution, and evaluation of the organization's leader identification initiative (N = 3). Many of the findings are supported by the feedback shared by the three stakeholder groups, augmented by archival data and information system analyses. As the findings are explicated and discussed, there is continual and consistent reference to which of the three stakeholder groups provided the data.

The study and its research questions were organized around the three distinct phases of leader identification implementation involving stakeholder perceptions during the phases related to communication and launch, talent review and leader identification, and leadership selection and development planning. In Phase 1 the leader identification process was communicated, and senior leaders and potential leader applicants were

informed of the application and nomination processes and parameters. This phase occurred from January 2013 to February 2013. Phase 2 included the period in which senior leaders and executives participated in the formal talent review discussions of the applicants and nominees, bounded by the date range of June 2013 through July 2013. In Phase 3 leader identification decisions were communicated and development planning was conducted. This phase occurred from September 2013 through October 2013.

As stated in Chapter 3, the data were organized and analyzed along both the three implementation phases and the three stakeholder groups. However, while it was originally anticipated that the results of the study would lend themselves to representation by implementation phase, the interview participants did not provide their data in such neat compartments. That is, while the interview protocol called for questions around each implementation phase, the participant discussions were more holistic. Therefore, the findings are displayed around major themes, irrespective of implementation phase. There were a few instances, however, in which the findings were limited to only one or two implementation phases. These cases are called out as such.

Finding 1: Systems Perspective

The document and interview data represented all three stakeholder groups and revealed a clear focus on the systems aspect of the organization's approach to leader identification. This systems perspective is best understood through the four subfindings that follow. First, one system captured past and present performance. Second, another system allowed senior leaders to nominate leader candidates and for leader candidates to apply to the leader identification initiative. Third, a system existed for the storage and

retrieval of leader candidate data used in making leader identification decisions. Finally, there was a system for creating and tracking development planning.

Finding 1a. A system existed for performance management. According to archival documentation and information systems review, the organization internally developed a web-enabled PMDS in 2010 as a tool to aid in the annual evaluation of the performance of its entire 15,000-plus employees. This system served the second purpose of talent management-related systems (assessing performance) described by Rothwell (2010). Data collected from all three stakeholder groups suggested that the performance management system represented a marked improvement over the previous generation of manual performance reviews. However, it is clear from the stakeholder interviews that the web-enabled PMDS still had some opportunities for improvement. One such opportunity involved data mining and reporting. Another shortcoming of this system reported by all three stakeholder groups was that the individual development plan portion of the evaluation tool was static and did not allow for updates or changes throughout the performance year. Finally, the system did not allow for an aggregation of development needs and competency gap improvement in a way that could facilitate leader identification and leader development. Regarding the PMDS system used for evaluation, one human resources stakeholder commented, "A better system will increase OD's [organizational development's] stock value even more."

1b. A system existed for nomination and application. Documentation revealed that when the initial talent management/leader identification process and methodology was conceived in 2012, a TMS was internally developed and built by the end of that same year. With performance assessment being accomplished by the organization's PMDS, the

112

TMS was designed to accommodate the nomination and application process, so that senior leaders could nominate individuals and the members of the target audience could submit their application credentials. The nominees' system-related application allowed them to (1) answer demographic questions in the web-enabled TMS; (2) answer questions about qualifications in the TMS; (3) review a talent management video showing executive support for Partnership Corrections, Inc.'s leader identification process; and (4) update their candidate profile, which included their resume, complete with experience, education, and certifications.

According to testimony by all three stakeholder groups, this nomination and application process was fraught with pitfalls. First, because the system addressed both nominations and applications, it was confusing to the users. One executive stakeholder stated that he was "confused a bit as to how the system worked. I was not sure where in the system I was supposed to nominate someone from my team." Another executive stated, "The system provided some challenges for users. It was a confusing, hard-to-understand system." Talent reviewers agreed. One pointed out, "There was some initial confusion over nomination processes, so we had to issue several communications to our people to overcome some of the confusion over the system." Another talent reviewer remarked, "As a nominator, when I went into the system, it wasn't clear or intuitive how to use it. I know I've talked to other leaders about this, and they were frustrated over the system as well." Those in the human resources stakeholder group were even more frustrated with the TMS, as they were the ones responsible for training nominators and nominees/applicants in the use of the system. One in the human resources stakeholder group grumbled, "The automated auto- and-self-nomination processes were complicated

and cumbersome." Another in this stakeholder group complained, "I had to do a lot of work explaining the system to nominators and nominees. It wasn't user-friendly."

While a latter finding will reveal the perception of all stakeholders that there was robust and frequent communication about both the nomination and application processes, a number of eligible nominators did not nominate anyone, and a number of eligible applicants did not apply. Further, an information systems review revealed that the system was executed in such a way that a potential applicant was notified as to whether or not he or she had been nominated. Interview data from all three stakeholder groups revealed that a statistically significant number of potential applicants refrained from applying because they felt that if their manager did not see fit to nominate them, then they did not feel as though they should apply. As discovered in a later finding, this phenomenon led to the 2014 process enhancement of doing away with the nomination process and reviewing all potential future leaders within the scope of this process. This leader identification process change is discussed under Finding 6.

Further, interview data from all three stakeholder groups revealed that the internally built, web-enabled TMS was poorly conceived in that the information technology and human resources information systems personnel involved in its development failed to consider the lack of technical and systems competence by both the senior leaders eligible to nominate and the potential future leaders eligible to apply. In fact, interviews with human resources personnel revealed that a number of potential applicants did not apply because, as stated by one human resources stakeholder participant, "they were intimidated by the system." In addition, interviews with human resources stakeholders also revealed that at least a few senior leaders refrained from

nominating for the same reasons. For example, one human resources stakeholder commented, "I think there's a disconnect between the process and the system, 'cause we're not much of a system environment anyway." There was general agreement between all three stakeholder groups that the nomination and application system contained many shortcomings.

1c. A system existed for data storage and retrieval. The third purpose served by talent and performance-related systems as related to leader identification was data storage and retrieval regarding the inventory of leader talent. An analysis of the system demonstrates that the performance data from the PMDS were, in fact, automatically integrated into the TMS according to the design. Further, the candidate profile data, if properly input by the potential leader candidates, was stored and retrieved properly. In addition, archival systems analysis revealed that a few main reports could be generated for the potential leader applicants. While the executive stakeholders did not come in contact with this part of the TMS, interviews with the human resources and talent reviewer stakeholder groups revealed three clear shortcomings related to this third purpose of the TMS.

First, when users retrieved the applicant and nomination data, the display of data was not intuitive, and the system did not allow the organization development function to arrange the data in a way that would allow the talent reviewers (decision makers) to make clear and initial sense of the data. The talent reviewer and human resources participant interviews also revealed that the system was developed with the absence of organization development talent on board, and the lack of organization development and talent management expertise most likely contributed to these system shortcomings.

Second, the data in the TMS were not printable, based on the edict of the outgoing chief human resources officer (CHRO). According to interviews with both the human resources and talent reviewers stakeholder groups, this feature presented a problem only because, since the data were not intuitively arranged and displayed, the organization development personnel within human resources had to manually arrange the data in a more intuitive, chronological, and narrative fashion and then print copious amounts of data to reduce the onerous work that would have been required of very busy talent reviewers. One human resources stakeholder pointed out, "We had to spend many hours, even hiring a temp, to cut-and-paste data so that we could display and print the candidates' data in a way that those helping with the talent reviews could actually read the data." Another human resources stakeholder stated, "the system provided some challenge. It was a confusing, hard-to-understand system".

The third shortcoming of the system as it related to data storage and retrieval (as reported by the human resources stakeholder group) was the fact that the few reports designed into the system were not the sort of reports important to the CEO and executive committee. For example, one report produced organization charts of leader talent. Yet, the enterprise did not have organizational hierarchy/reporting relationships built into its foundational human resources information system (which underpins the TMS), so that report was useless. In addition, the other reports displayed data in word and number format, but did not allow for graphical or chart data to be displayed. This feature was problematic because the CEO and executives who would most likely make critical business decisions based on these data did not have the time to pour through word and number data to make these decisions. It is clear that graphical and chart displays would

116

have benefited executive decision-makers. One human resources stakeholder responsible for managing these data and reports lamented, "We had to convert the raw data into reports that we could use for the executive briefings. That was a big undertaking."

1d. A system existed for individual development plans. Analysis of the TMS revealed that the fourth and final main purpose of the organization's TMS was to chronicle an individual development plan that was an accelerated version of the development plan embedded within the PMDS. However, this TMS development plan was designed only for those who were identified as HIPOs through the various talent reviews and related protocols. Both the analysis of the TMS and interview data from both human resources and talent reviewer stakeholders revealed that the development plan contained in the TMS was superior to the individual development plan in the PMDS in that the TMS version was more dynamic, allowing for updates to the plan. However, interview data suggested that the development plan portion of the TMS was not intuitive and was clumsy to use. One talent reviewer, for example, commented, "We really need to fix the system and process issues with the IDP [individual development plan]. The IDP is broken." A human resources stakeholder agreed, pointing out, "The individual development plan in the system doesn't really function as good as it could. That's because the system was developed before the process."

In addition, talent reviewers and human resources stakeholders alike reported that only the HIPO's coach could create and update the TMS development plan, presenting two additional problems. First, the coaches were senior leaders and retired executives who were not technologically savvy. Therefore, mistakes were made in the establishment and updating of the HIPOs' development plans in the TMS. Organization development

117

personnel were forced to amend TMS development plans and fix mistakes so that the

development plans reflected reality and could be utilized for present and future

development. Second, because the TMS development plan could only be created and

updated by the HIPO's coach, the cultural message that was communicated was that a

HIPO was not responsible for nor in control of his or her own development. Interview

data with all three stakeholder groups suggested that this was contrary to the message that

the organization wished to send to all employees, let alone HIPOs. One participant in the

executive stakeholder group offered, "I've heard from some of the coaches that they are

frustrated with the system as it involves their role in the IDP [individual development

plan]. One human resources stakeholder added, "We tried with the coaches to train them

on the system and to force fit everything that they're doing into this broken system.

Therefore, the coaches are challenged with the system."

Interview data from the human resources stakeholder group also revealed that the

"process was system-driven," and "the system did not match the process," as summed up

by two study participants. Further, one interviewee stated that the "nomination and

application processes were complicated and cumbersome." Still another interviewee

retorted, "The original process and system were poorly conceived." Yet another

interviewee in the talent reviewer stakeholder group suggested, "I thought we'd never

have enough candidates due to a clunky system and a bad process." In short, there was

general consensus from all three stakeholder groups that the TMS got in the way of the

process, confusing both applicants and nominators, tainting their view of the leader

identification process in Phase 1.

In summary, this systems-related finding revealed that all three stakeholder groups viewed the process of identifying potential future leaders primarily through the lens of the TMS designed to support the process. This perspective is summed up in the following quote by one of the talent reviewers:

> To force us to start a system and using it when our company wasn't even familiar with what talent management means and what it's going to do for our future, I think that just . . . caused more confusion in the beginning than it needed to. If we'd started off with just identifying the talent and talking about how this is going to function best, and the calibration training and everything else that was done, I think the system would have been done totally differently and would have been much more measureable.

Interview and archival data also revealed that a large sum of money was spent in the development and deployment of the TMS. Further, document analysis and feedback from all three stakeholder groups revealed that many meetings and countless discussions centered on the TMS as the single most important factor in identifying potential future leaders. The importance of the TMS was further increased by the fact that the formal process of leader identification was unprecedented in the enterprise.

Finding 2: Collaboration, Communication, and Commitment

This finding can best be described by three subfindings, all of which speak to a different aspect of the overall finding. First, collaboration was minimal among all stakeholders and actors in the leader identification process. Second, the leader identification process, while comprehensive in approach, was only well communicated by the organization development staff within human resources during Phase 1 and less so in Phase 2 and Phase 3. Finally, variable commitment was demonstrated by the executive

sponsors of the process, senior leaders involved in the talent reviews, and the accelerated development pool (ADP) itself.

Finding 2a. Collaboration was minimal among all process stakeholders and actors in the leader identification process. The perception by the executive sponsors, the talent reviewers, and even the human resources stakeholder group was that the human resources function positioned itself at odds with other stakeholders. One of the ways in which this manifested itself was in the language used by the ex-CHRO prior to and during Phase 1. That executive was initially insistent that the initiative be referred to as succession planning. Some were comfortable with that terminology and even felt it was a better descriptor of the process. However, some key leaders in the operations function (arguably the largest customer and recipient of the process), along with other key leaders, took issue with the lexicon of succession planning. The primary rationale for this resistance to the term was that the organization was not yet ready to address the "demand" side of the succession planning process, which calls for identifying critical roles, conducting an inventory of where there may be retirements due to an aging workforce, examining other possibilities for turnover in key leadership roles, and the like. While the ex-CHRO was insistent on the terminology of succession planning even during Phase 1, by the end of this phase he relented and the lexicon and supporting documents were changed, referring to the initiative as talent management. This is evidenced by both stakeholder interview data as well as document review data.

There was confusion during Phase 1, and to a lesser degree during Phase 2, about just what was meant by the term "talent management." The documentation findings of the process steps, the web-enabled nomination and application processes, and other

communication revealed that this term was used to denote the process of identifying and inventorying a potential leader talent pool for accelerated development. The idea was that this effort might one day transform itself into a succession planning process. In short, by the end of Phase 1, the documents and communication were aimed at solving the "supply" side of succession planning without yet addressing the "demand" side. As one interviewee in the human resources stakeholder group pointed out,

> It was titled, I mean even into the system, succession planning. It was a disagreement, a conversation that even took place in an open meeting between the HR [human resources] executive and the operations executive, and the operations executive didn't like the name. The HR executive, he then decided to change the name but keep doing the process as he had planned it, dreamt it . . . and we changed the name, not much else.

Documents suggested that the process did change, but not until the end of Phase 1. During Phase 2, the ex-CHRO who had been so insistent on the term "succession planning" left the organization. Based on feedback from members of all three stakeholder groups, the new CHRO embraced the concept of addressing the "supply" side and the use of the term "talent management" for the time being.

Still, during Phase 1, a majority of stakeholders in all stakeholder groups perceived that the human resources function was dictating the process as a strict recipe to be followed, rather than a menu of choices that demonstrated flexibility and nimbleness in identifying potential future leaders. In an effort to ensure objectivity in the leader identification and selection process, those in the human resources function responsible for designing the elements that would make up the two axial components of performance and potential did so in a way that dictated that the talent reviewers would be forced to rely more on the leader identification application packet rather than what was actually known and experienced by those talent reviewers making the decisions. Therefore, the talent

reviewers felt somewhat hamstrung by the overly prescribed methodology. Nearly every person in the talent reviewer stakeholder group shared this concern. This phenomenon is explored in more detail in Finding 5.

This perception of constraint was especially expressed by the talent reviewer stakeholder group during Phase 2 when the talent reviews took place. One study participant in the talent reviewer stakeholder group expressed this viewpoint by stating the following:

> We got into this very protracted and very disappointing conversation about the quality of the nominee's submission. . . . It took the flavor of what I suspect a college admissions committee looks like, that begins dismissing people because they didn't think their essay was fleshed out enough. The committee ended up grading papers, and people actually said, "I don't know this person, but they didn't provide as much detail as this other person, so I'm voting against them."

Ultimately, a number of the talent reviewers and some executives felt that the human resources function held too high a stake in the design and execution of the leader identification process, engineering it in a way so as to meet the needs of the human resources function rather than the needs of the enterprise. While the human resources study participants were less vocal about suggested opportunities for process improvements, there was agreement among all stakeholder groups that the process design and execution were over-engineered. Therefore, inter-stakeholder agreement was evident in this portion of the finding.

Finding 2b. The leader identification process, while comprehensive in approach, was only well communicated by the organization development staff in Phase 1 and less so in Phase 2 and Phase 3. Among the executive sponsors and talent reviewers, there was general consensus that the leader identification process was comprehensive in approach and generally well communicated and coordinated by the

organization development staff, particularly during prelaunch and the period leading up to the talent review phase. Further, executives in particular expressed that the need for leader development, the definition of the roles involved in the process, the process timeline, and expected outcomes were all well communicated. In addition, the talent reviewers and executive sponsors alike agreed that the organization development staff coordinated the implementation and the efforts of all stakeholders quite successfully. Document review also suggests that there were multiple communications to stakeholders prior to and during Phase 1.

As discussed above, the prescriptive nature of the process led to a formality that was not welcomed by most. However, the comprehensive nature of the design of the process and the communication surrounding it (especially during Phase 1) were appreciated by most. Study participants in all three stakeholder groups noted that the communication was quite thorough. Executives in particular acknowledged that the organization development staff did a fine job of facilitating the process. Additionally, talent reviewer stakeholders expressed that the organization development staff did a commendable job of facilitating the conflict that occurred between human resources and the other stakeholders regarding both the system flaws and orientation as well as the misgivings over the lexicon of succession planning versus talent management. One study participant in the talent reviewer stakeholder group pointed out:

> I've been fairly open in the past about challenges about organizational development, and in this process, organizational development was seen as the quarterback of moving this forward in that it had been the healthiest thing that OD had ever done in this company, . . . watching the reaction and helping those [key leaders and executives] fully understand the power of the process and how they continued to be in charge, although OD facilitated it and educated them through the process.

Another study participant in the executive sponsor stakeholder group commented, "I thought the way it [the process] was communicated was good, and . . . I feel like the process was good and fair." Still another executive sponsor stated that he[1] was pleasantly surprised at how comprehensive the approach was and how well it was communicated. One executive sponsor even noted that he was impressed with the transparency that the organization development function brought to the process and the introspection involved in ensuring that the process and the communication thereof could be continuously improved during the transitions from Phase 1 to Phase 2 and from Phase 2 to Phase 3.

Still, some executive and talent reviewer stakeholders pointed out that there were opportunities for improvement regarding the communication and coordination efforts by the organization development staff during Phases 2 and 3. For example, one of the executive sponsors participating in the study suggested that the organization development staff should have communicated ground rules for the talent review meetings so that there would be no confusion as to the role played by the various participants in the meetings, including the organization development staff themselves. One example that was articulated involved how impasses should be resolved when talent reviewers could not agree on the eventual status of a potential leader candidate. One study participant in the talent reviewer stakeholder group stated that the organization development staff broke out of their role at times, weighing in on impressions and assessments of potential leader candidates instead of remaining completely impartial as facilitators of the process. As comprehensive as the process was, there were a few details, like these, that were overlooked.

---

[1] All participants are referred to with masculine pronouns to protect anonymity.

Most noteworthy among the shortcomings in the area of communication was the perception among the talent reviewer stakeholder group that the organization development staff communicated more often and more thoroughly with the executive sponsors than with the talent reviewers, especially during Phase 2 and Phase 3. The expressed missed communication opportunity during Phase 1 was that the time commitment and general expectations of the talent reviewers weren't managed as well by the organization development staff as they could have been. This perception was shared by talent reviewer study participants primarily through the lens of their own admission in not having experienced this process before. Therefore, they weren't sure what to expect during the talent review meetings, and they could not conceive of what the conversation or the output from the conversation would look like. The talent reviewers felt that, because the organization development staff met with the executive sponsors more frequently, the executive stakeholder group had a deeper understanding of what to expect and where the initiative was headed.

In addition, the talent reviewer stakeholder group held the perception that the organization development staff could have communicated better about the progress and outcomes during Phase 3. This perception took shape in two forms. First, a few of the talent reviewers expressed that the organization development staff vetted the planned changes for the 2014 process with the executive sponsors exclusive of other leader involvement, like talent reviewers. One talent reviewer study participant expressed disappointment about this:

> I think that we were, at our level, totally divorced of the changes that were made. We heard them for the first time pretty much when the wardens did or slightly before. So, I felt we didn't have any say in the revisions that came about and weren't part of the discussion maybe on some of the challenges maybe people

125

thought existed in the organization surrounding it, and I would have liked to have been part of that.

Second, all talent reviewers and some executive sponsors involved in the study expressed the perception that there was a missed opportunity for the organization development function to communicate the accelerated development progression of those in the ADP and next steps to (1) the talent reviewers involved in placing them in the pool, (2) the leaders to whom those potential leaders reported, and (3) the coaches involved in helping those potential leaders accelerate their development. As one talent reviewer noted,

> I'm hoping to get some feedback on the people that are in the pool and how they're doing and what level of engagement they're having and making sure that we picked the right [ones]. I'm hoping to be able to get some feedback from both the participants, the coaches, and obviously understanding that there's confidential things in the coaching process . . . , but definitely wanting to hear from them: Is it working?

Another talent reviewer expressed concern that he was unaware of what was happening to those he was involved in selecting for the accelerated development process, stating, "You know, what was the next step? I mean, what do we do with those? We've identified them. . . . Are we putting them on a special development program?" The fact that the executive sponsors did not express this concern or perception may confirm the prior perception expressed by the talent reviewers that the organization development staff communicated more often and thoroughly with the executive sponsors, involving them in such decisions around accelerated development and next steps for those in the ADP. Further, the human resources study participants agreed that the organization development staff communicated well in Phase 1. However, the human resources study participants generally felt that communication was thorough and voluminous during Phase 2 and

Phase 3 as well. One human resources stakeholder stated "we communicated just as much during the talent review process and during the development planning timeframe; they (executives and talent reviewers) just weren't receiving or acknowledging the communication".

Finding 2c. Variable commitment was demonstrated by the executive sponsors of the process, senior leaders involved in the talent reviews, and the ADP itself. While the data collected from each of the three stakeholder groups suggested variable commitment from all involved, this variable commitment was perceived and communicated primarily by the talent reviewer and human resources stakeholder groups. The executive group's perception was that there role was to be "a cheerleader" and "supporters" of the initiative. In addition, the variable commitment was expressed in terms of lack of or minimal involvement by (1) some executive sponsors, (2) some eligible talent reviewers, and (3) some potential leader applicants.

First, the talent reviewers acknowledged that some took their roles as both nominators and talent reviewers more seriously than others. For example, only some of the talent reviewers nominated potential leader candidates. Others acknowledged that they felt it was more important for potential leader candidates to self-apply rather than be nominated so as to demonstrate initiative and worthiness for consideration. Still other talent reviewers made assumptions that potential leader candidates in their downline would self-apply and, therefore, there was no need to nominate. For example, one of the talent reviewers (all of whom were also eligible to nominate, along with all leaders above a certain level) stated:

> If there was one thing I was disappointed about, [it] was I felt like there were
> some people that we were leaving behind. And again, taking the initiative is part

of being a leader, to fill out your packet, but I think that some of those people who didn't fill out a packet maybe even had better skill sets than the people that did. And I don't know that filling out a packet should have been the difference between you being selected and not.

Yet, a review of the TMS suggests that this leader, like so many other eligible to nominate, neglected to nominate other leaders.

As evidenced by some talent reviewer feedback, the lack of participation by the eligible nominating leaders also points to the fact that the process design contributed to the variable commitment on the part of both eligible nominators and potential leader candidates. One talent reviewer put it this way:

I think you go to all the prospective nominators and say: If you don't nominate the person, they're going to be in the B-line when we get into the program. I know I would have had more submissions if my people had been told that directly. There were very few people who were nominated by their supervisors who I think should have been, and in my own department I know there was confusion. I know that I had directors, managing directors who intentionally nominated people. I had other managing directors who said, "Well, they're going to . . . get in anyway, so I don't need to nominate them," and that ended up being a handicap for the person. And then the people who self-nominated, we would get into these protracted discussions about, you know, they are delusional because they think they're ready to move on but their boss doesn't.

Another senior leader was disappointed with the individuals his eligible nominators submitted for discussion, stating, "They were just trying to do a nice thing for somebody who was a direct report of theirs, but not necessarily being true to the company." Additionally, another talent reviewer pointed out, "I was surprised by the candidate pool and that there were folks in other parts in the organization where there was either an absence of applications (either self-nominated or leader-nominated) where I would have expected some level of participation."

Again, while some felt that the process design and communication from the organization development staff might have contributed to the variable commitment and participation, at least one talent reviewer acknowledged that this was not a communication issue or design flaw. This talent reviewer was convinced that other leaders, including those eligible to nominate and those eligible to apply, just didn't take the process seriously enough:

> I don't perceive that [lack of participation] to be a function of communication because there were multiple communications received by me. I understood those, I personalized them and took responsibility for them. For whatever reason, other folks may not have prioritized those in the same way and encouraged their folks to participate in that same way. And so in my mind it created an even expectation in terms of how one should participate. . . . I heard after the fact that some folks said, "Well, I thought my superior had to nominate me." Well, that wasn't what was described in any of the communications, so it's obvious you could self-nominate or you could have somebody nominate you. . . . I attribute it more to ownership, and it's folks, you know, being willing to invest the time and effort and energy to identifying the talented folks that are in the organization and invest in them.

This view of adequate communication was corroborated by other study participants in the talent reviewer and the executive sponsor stakeholder groups through their acknowledgment that their roles consisted of attending communication meetings and communication webinars, sharing information with their downline leaders, and holding informational meetings of their own. For example, one executive sponsor shared that "from the launching of it I thought that the information was comprehensive. I thought the number of opportunities for people to be trained and familiarized with the process was more than adequate." Documentation review also supports many communications from the organization development staff regarding the nomination and application procedures.

In addition to minimal or no participation in the nomination and application processes on the parts of both eligible nominators and eligible leadership pool applicants,

commitment was variable in the form of participation in the talent review meetings themselves. Per the process design, all vice presidents and executives were invited and encouraged to attend the talent review meetings where the managing director nominees/applicants would be discussed. Managing directors were invited and encouraged to attend the talent review meetings where the senior directors, wardens, assistant wardens, and chief nominees/applicants would be discussed. While the executive sponsor stakeholder group did not communicate a concern over the lack of attendance by eligible leaders at the talent review meetings, the study participants in the talent reviewer and human resources group did.

One talent reviewer put it this way, stating that when he arrived at the talent review meetings:

> My heart sunk a little bit because it started to confirm my concern that the organization didn't take this seriously. I couldn't imagine as a department head who had people that I wanted to be moved to the next step not showing up. And I also was scared to death . . . that you didn't have representation at all from some very important functions. So my immediate reaction was this is not going to have the legitimacy that it could because we didn't get the people to show up.

The human resources participants were equally disappointed by the lack of attendance in the talent review meetings. One human resources study participant felt the lack of talent reviewer participation was due to the conflict the ex-CHRO had engendered with other stakeholders during Phase 1 of the process, stating, "Some of the people who needed to be at the table ignored the appointments for whatever reason, and I think it is reflective of the fact of the struggles earlier this year." Still another human resources study participant felt that the organization development staff were diligent in engaging the other stakeholders even during Phase 1. He explained,

One of the biggest learnings was that we need to have the right people in the room, and I think that's both from an operations perspective as well as from the corporate perspective. From this building and corporate perspective, we had minimal involvement by the VPs [vice presidents] despite the fact that we tried very hard. So, I think we need more buy-in here and more understanding of why it's important, because a lot of the individuals that were in the room were not familiar with the staff at all, so it truly was just an application review.

The lower-than-expected level of commitment and participation on the part of the potential leader applicants was not limited to those potential leaders failing to apply, but also extended to those leaders who did apply for consideration but did so in an incomplete fashion. Among the human resources study group participants, there was agreement that the applicants failed to put in enough effort either by not applying at all (and instead waiting for their manager to nominate them) or by submitting incomplete application packets where the necessary discussions about the nexus between performance and potential were made quite difficult. For example, one human resources study participant revealed:

They really didn't take it [the process] seriously or know the true impact it could have on their careers. They'd start giving me excuses and then say, "Yeah, I should have taken it more seriously." So, I think next time it will be a lesson learned for them personally, but it should also help us communicate as well.

Talent reviewers and executive sponsors also agreed that the potential leader applicants did not take the process seriously. All three stakeholder groups agreed that, once involved in the talent review discussions, everyone was painfully aware of two important facts regarding the potential leader pool. First, the discussions involved a review of some who shouldn't be considered for upward mobility, and the discussions were void of a review of others who should clearly be a part of an accelerated

development process. This revelation led to one of the planned changes for the future

process that is discussed under Finding 6.

Representing this sentiment of incomplete participation by potential leader

candidates, one executive sponsor shared:

> Once we got into the conversations, we learned that what we might have done a
> little bit differently was telling the candidates, the applicants, how important them
> being pretty comprehensive in the description of their goals, aspirations, and
> responsibilities was . . . because I think we found some people were a bit more
> superficial in their description and others were very comprehensive, and so that
> made for a little bit more difficult conversations when we doing the evaluation.

Once again, those in the human resources stakeholder group did not agree,

suggesting that they had communicated clearly and comprehensively with everyone

involved. Confirming the perception by all stakeholder groups of the lack of commitment

on the part of some in the leader applicant pool, the TMS system review uncovered a

large disparity among leader applicants in the volume and quality of their application

data.

In summary, for the subfinding related to variable commitment, there were

variable perceptions of the degree or severity of this lack of commitment, as well as who

was responsible for it. First, all three stakeholder groups agreed that potential leader

candidates should have taken the initiative to not only apply for consideration, but also to

spend considerable time and effort doing so. Again, the TMS review supports this

stakeholder view. Second, some in the talent reviewer stakeholder group felt that the

organization development staff could have communicated more often and more

thoroughly to all stakeholder groups. However, the executive sponsors and human

resources stakeholder groups believed that the organization development staff did not

contribute to any absence or minimization of commitment and participation. Finally,

while less observed by the executive stakeholder group, the talent reviewers and human resources study participants alike agreed that some executives and eligible talent reviewers failed to take their responsibility as talent reviewers seriously by not showing up to the talent review meetings.

Finding 3: Stakeholder Expectations of Holistic Succession Planning

There are three main subthemes or findings within Finding 3. First, by the accounts of all three stakeholder groups, there was an expressed perceived need for an intentional leader identification process during Phase 1. Second, by the end of Phase 2, it became clear to all three stakeholder groups that there was a need to review all current and emerging leaders, not just those who were nominated or who applied. Third, the differences between identifying leader talent for the purposes of accelerated development versus true succession planning became clearer as each implementation phase progressed, and was made most evident in Phase 3.

Finding 3a. There was a perceived need for leader identification. The data collected from all three stakeholder groups revealed that during Phase 1 there was agreement that (1) the organization had not attempted such an enterprise-wide approach to intentionally identify future leaders, and (2) there was a great need to do so. A number of reasons were cited as to the need for such a coordinated effort. Some executive and talent reviewer participants acknowledged that continued high rates of turnover, even among leaders, served as impetus for such an effort. Others in these two groups speculated that potential organizational growth would also highlight the need to identify future leaders. There was agreement among all study participants during Phase 1 that the organization needed a stronger, deeper leadership bench. By Phase 1, there was

agreement across stakeholder groups that this process should, in fact, net a deeper

leadership bench for the organization.

The organization's approach to handling leader promotions prior to Phase 1 also

served as fodder for the positive expectations of a leader identification initiative. One

executive pointed out that the organization had historically relied on fairly subjective

criteria upon which to base promotions. He stated:

> It was definitely something we needed to do because, you know, I did not think
> we had done a very good job in the past. . . . If you go back, way back, and look at
> how we promoted staff and so forth, you know we didn't take a lot of criteria; it
> was more, you know, if somebody seemed to be doing a good job, they were
> ready for promotion. . . . People [were promoted] that were just loyal, you know,
> to their boss or supervisor, or loyal to the company, but really lacked a lot of the
> true competencies that we needed.

Others in the executive and talent reviewer groups agreed that the former

promotional selection criteria wouldn't work going forward. Historically the only

objective criteria mentioned were years of service and time in a leadership role, and those

who mentioned these criteria acknowledged that they were not nearly as predictive of

future success as the nexus between past performance and estimable future potential.

Additionally, one talent reviewer pointed out that "we all have biases, and checks and

balances in this process will be helpful for objectivity." One executive reported, "This is

the first real legitimate attempt to identify our leadership bench." Other executives

expressed the expectation that this deeper leadership bench would also be a more

prepared bench. Two other executives pointed out that their expectation was that this

process would net even an executive leadership pool or bench.

All study participants in each stakeholder group agreed that this process would

result in a much deeper and more robust leader bench for the field or facilities than for

the FSC—which was expected since the field represented the largest portion of the enterprise. Further, study participants within the FSC pointed out that the leader positions within the FSC were more specialized and therefore may not always lend themselves to the internal development of future leaders for some of those positions.

This idea of buying versus building talent was expressed by a number of study participants in each of the three stakeholder groups. One of the human resources study participants shared the perspective that the organization had, in the past, bought leaders who were unsuccessful in the culture versus building leaders known to be successful. This participant went on to say:

> I've seen in the past where we've grown too quickly and had a lot of failures as a result, . . . where we've hired externally and had issues because they not only didn't understand the culture of our company, but they were accustomed to working in a much more laid-back environment. So, for example, years ago we were hiring several federal employees. . . . Those facilities were having a lot of quality assurance audits and not passing. . . . It was because they were used to just working from a desk, and our company doesn't function that way. The walking and talking, the employee engagement, . . . those things weren't occurring. So, I've always felt like it was important that we grew from within.

Other study participants in all three stakeholder groups communicated a concern about not only buying too much leadership talent, but also relying too much on the Federal Bureau of Prisons for that leadership talent. Like the study participant quoted above, they expressed a concern that leaders from the Federal Bureau of Prisons took far too long to assimilate into the culture of the organization. As the organization under study is a nongovernmental, publicly traded corrections company, the study participants who voiced this concern identified business acumen as an onboarding issue as much as other cultural components.

Another aspect of the need for an intentional leader identification process was borne out of the experiences of study participants in the talent review meetings during Phase 2, which highlighted the need for, and benefit of, cross-functional talent movement. One executive suggested that the scope of the process was important in that it allowed for the talent reviewers to discuss the "chiefs of security" and "chiefs of unit management" positions, arguably the future leaders in all areas of the organization. Another executive suggested that the objective identification process allowed the organization to uncover hidden talent that may otherwise not be discussed or considered for roles outside their vertical hierarchy. As one talent reviewer stated:

> Managers and individual departments have a perception of who might be the best fit for advancement within their own department. One of the things that we haven't done a tremendously good job of historically is cross-pollinating other departments, or giving folks an opportunity to grow outside of their own department. . . . We haven't done a great job of preparing people for moves outside of their own vertical, as an organization. I think that has contributed a bit to siloing that has occurred within our organization.

Other study participants in all three stakeholder groups agreed that one of the greatest benefits of an enterprise-wide coordinated effort was cross-fertilization of talent. One talent reviewer stated, "I have leaders who could be good in other areas of the organization who wouldn't get visibility without this process." Another talent reviewer pointed out that the vertical hierarchy may not change, but this process would encourage the organization to allow facility leaders working under one type of contract for a particular customer to move into a similar role within a different type of contract for a different customer. Other human resources study participants suggested that many executives do not really know the leadership talent outside their vertical downline. In

addition, each executive involved in the study shared the expectation that this process would drive cross-functional talent movement.

In summary, all three stakeholder groups agreed that there was a need to intentionally and objectively identify potential future leaders for a variety of reasons. In fact, all three groups agreed during Phase 3 that the executed leader identification process proved that this enterprise could and did, in fact, demonstrate objectivity in its leader identification process. Further, cross-functional talent movement could be a positive outcome from this process through increased knowledge of talent outside of traditional hierarchies.

Finding 3b. There was a need to assess all leader talent. The second subfinding within Finding 3 is that by the end of Phase 2, it became clear to all three stakeholder groups that there was a need to review all current and emerging leaders, not just those who were nominated or who applied. Rothwell (2010) pointed out that many companies assume that leader identification and succession planning efforts should be aimed at the highest level of leaders. He posited that, in many cases, organizations would be better served by identifying leader talent at the lower or lowest levels of the management hierarchy, because that's where leaders need to be cultivated and groomed to take on higher levels of responsibility. Rothwell also argued that sometimes it makes more sense to focus leader identification efforts on the most critical or hard-to-fill leader roles. Additionally, while very little is found in the literature regarding nomination processes for leader identification efforts, Silzer and Church (2013) suggested that the only form of "nomination" that might be found in such a process is verification or input from one's

current leader through interviews or some sort of assessment to ensure that the leader candidate should be seriously considered.

As previously stated, the decision to build a web-enabled nomination and application "system" drove the "process" of limiting talent review discussions to only those who were nominated by a senior leader or who met the minimum criteria and applied. Also, as previously established, because the process did not account for the "demand" side of leader talent, there was no need to parse which leader roles the talent reviews should focus on. Therefore, the talent review discussion centered on the 77 leaders (including those from the field and those from the FSC) who were nominated or applied. The findings from all three stakeholder groups revealed that there was a desire to review all leaders who currently occupied the roles defined within the scope of this initiative. This total leader population equaled about 375 leaders. Therefore, only about 20% of the total available pool was discussed and considered. Of those 77 leaders who were discussed and considered, 19 were identified as candidates for an accelerated development process (Talent Management Intranet Site, 2013).

The idea that the total available pool of 77 leaders and the final ADP of 19 leaders were both smaller than expected is linked to the previously discussed finding that (1) some senior leaders either did not take the time to nominate leaders for consideration or were confused as to whether they should do so, and (2) many potential leader applicants did not feel it necessary to apply or felt that their senior leaders should have encouraged them to do so. The need to assess all available leader talent was expressed variously by each of the three stakeholder groups.

The executive stakeholder group expressed their expectation that this process would net a deeper, stronger leadership bench in the form of future sustainability for the enterprise. One executive, for example, stated that the organization's leader identification process "should benefit in the long run the company's longevity, and more importantly . . . sustainability." That same executive went on to point out that we need to "build a better bench, so we see where we're strong and where we are not strong, . . . giving us the opportunity to cultivate that talent within our company." Another executive expressed the expectation of a deeper, stronger bench to address the concerns of the company's various stakeholders, including the board of directors and other stockholders, because they expect a deep leadership bench for long-term viability. Still another executive argued that this process should net "the next one, two, or even three generations of leaders internally." This executive went on to point out that the available pool did not allow the organization to net the type of ADP necessary for generational succession.

Furthermore, the executives expressed concern over executive succession. One executive stakeholder stated,

> I think all of the other executives would agree with me that if we could have the next generation of VPs and executives come from within, that would be wonderful. . . . There's always the obvious benefits that they know the organization, they know the culture, they're a known quantity within the organization, they've established rapport, etc. I see this as not only impacting . . . all of the management levels within the organization, but especially all the way to the top.

One executive even shared his desire to see such a large ADP that the enterprise might be known for identifying and developing leader talent to the point where the organization might be an exporter of talent, much like General Electric and others have been viewed in the past.

Another executive shared that this process should be more inclusive to "allow the process to determine what path or direction a future leader might take." This executive went on to point out that "I was a little concerned about the nomination process. I was fearful that only people who liked other people would nominate them, . . . that it was going to be more of a personality thing rather than based on skills and performance." He further stated,

> I wanted to get as many people into the pool as we could, and if through the course of their assessment we determine that it's going to be a stretch to ever get them to the senior levels, you come to that determination based on a better assessment of their knowledge, their skills, and their abilities, and not judge that in advance.

As previously established, the talent reviewer stakeholder group was surprised that few were nominated and that even fewer potential future leaders took the initiative to apply. In addition, they expressed concern over some who were nominated or applied as well as who was not nominated or who did not apply. For example, one stated, "I was unhappy with certain supervisors of these folks who nominated them and weren't true to the process . . . because they were just trying to do a nice thing for somebody who was a direct report of theirs." Another senior leader in the talent reviewer stakeholder group shared, "I was a little bit shocked . . . that those people made it through to the talent review, knowing some things that I knew about them from my 20-plus years with the company." Another talent reviewer pointed out that this process did not allow for turning over every stone, in that "we were leaving behind those who had better skill sets than people who did fill out the application packet." In short, the talent reviewer stakeholder group was disappointed in the small size of both the talent pool and the final ADP.

The human resources stakeholder group also expressed concern over the size of both the talent pool and the ADP. One in this group suggested that technology might have played a part, stating,

> I was concerned that we wouldn't get a lot of nominations or applications because it was new, it was foreign to the company, we were using the system that was developed, which was clunky. And so I thought maybe that those factors all would give us this very small pool.

Another human resources stakeholder was also disappointed that "we were left to rely on nominators and those who self-applied." In summary, all three stakeholder groups expected both a larger candidate pool and a larger final ADP.

Finding 3c. Talent management differed from succession planning. The third and final subfinding within Finding 3 is that the differences between identifying leader talent for the purposes of accelerated development versus succession planning became clearer to all stakeholders as each implementation period progressed. While the organization is not itself a government agency, its customers are and the organization is classified as a government contractor. This, combined with the fact that document review revealed that some of the key executives involved in shaping the initial strategy for this leader identification initiative came from government agencies, contributed to the enterprise behaving like a government agency. Establishing this nuance is important because as Rothwell (2010) stated, succession planning in its purest form is prohibited in some government agencies. The laws to which he refers do not apply to this for-profit enterprise, but according to both talent reviewer and human resources stakeholders, some leader behavior and expectations did not always reflect this.

The difference between a government contractor and a for-profit business shaped the approach taken, whereby only the supply side of the equation (leader identification

for ADPs), and not the demand side of the equation (identifying and matching leader candidates to specific roles), was the main theme of the process (Talent Management White Paper, 2012). Despite the talent pool approach taken in this leader identification initiative, there were still some participants in each of the three stakeholder groups who expected something in the form of a succession planning outcome, with specific leader candidates identified for specific leader roles.

Before exploring participant data regarding the expectation of succession planning, it may prove helpful to point out that the leader identification methodology undertaken involved establishing particular measures of potential that were assumed to be universal for all leader roles at certain levels regardless of functional discipline (Talent Management White Paper, 2012). Silzer and Church (2013) pointed out possible flaws in the talent pool approach, suggesting that this talent review process falls short of answering the question "potential for what?"

Some participants in the executive and talent reviewer stakeholder groups in the study had expected that the talent review process would answer the question "potential for what?" by discussing and codifying needs for specific positions and the readiness of potential leader candidates for specific
positions.

While the human resources study participants acknowledged that this leader identification process ultimately needed to be married to the organization's selection processes, there were no expectations that this marriage would take place in the 2013 version of the process (Talent Management White Paper, 2012). While the executive study group participants also knew going into this process that true succession planning

was not an expected outcome in the first year, they also expressed the desire to marry the two processes. The talent reviewer study group participants expressed the most disappointment over the fact that this leader identification process did not answer the question "potential for what?" by decking leader candidates against leadership roles.

Beginning with the executives, as previously described, one of them expressed a desire that this process would net the next two or three generations of leaders from internal sources. One executive in particular related that identifying potential leader candidates meant nothing unless the organization was getting them ready for a specific role:

> Just having somebody identified as high potential is not really all that significant to me, if you're going to do anything to get ready, because HIPO doesn't mean they're ready to step into the position. . . . You have to get them ready for what they're going to undertake in the new [specific] position. . . . They'll have no clue at all what the [specific position] has to do if you're not intentionally identifying that person for that role and getting the person ready to make those kinds of business decisions and everything else.

Each of the executives agreed that identifying specific executive successors for specific executive roles was a desire in future iterations of this leader identification process.

Once again, the talent reviewer study group participants were the most vocal about the need for true succession planning. One participant recalled:

> The initiative had initially been given the moniker "succession planning" rather than "talent management," and I supported it because succession planning is critical to the organization. So, when they changed the name to talent management, . . . I was disappointed because succession planning should be an important initiative in our organization.

Other talent reviewer participants acknowledged that the term was changed because there was some concern among one or two executives who took the governmental approach

143

that leader selection processes should be fair and competitive, and thus accomplished outside the context of succession planning.

Another talent reviewer articulated mixed feelings about the success of leader identification and the disconnect between leader identification and leader selection:

> I was glad that we were finally getting people on the bench. In my mind, these people are now going to be the people that we have a good pool to select from, when we know we have promotional opportunities in an area that would still fit their skill set. So, I guess I was encouraged about that. I may have had perceptions of how it was going to work that, you know, did not come to fruition, because again maybe in my mind I was thinking that we have now identified the people that we want to make available for promotional opportunities. How are we going to get them into these jobs?

Many in the talent reviewer stakeholder group suggested that one of the most obvious leader selection processes to which the leader identification process might be tied is the organization's facility management selection process. This is a structured interview and selection process designed to fill the top four roles in a facility: chief of security, chief of unit management, assistant warden, and warden. Those in the talent reviewer participant study group suggested that the facility management selection process should now be a simpler, faster process with the outcomes of the leader identification and development process serving as inputs to the facility management selection process. Expressing concern that the leader identification process might not inform the facility management selection process, one talent reviewer lamented:

> I think one of my major concerns is what are we doing with them now that we've identified them? We've got to make these the first ones that we go to, to say: Okay, now we have a vacancy. Let's look at our high potentials, the ones we've selected. You know, are they ready to move into the slot? Now I know we're handcuffed [referring to the government mentality] a lot of times with the interview process and so forth. I wish there was a way around that. I mean, I wish there was a way that we could go through this process and identify those people

that are ready to move into a leadership role with promotional opportunities and to be able to select from that group when we have an opening.

Another talent reviewer shared this sentiment but suggested a solution:

Let's say we're promoting for a warden and we want to interview for the position, and you're going to set up a panel. . . . Are those people on the panel going to know during the interview process that this is someone that has been identified and advanced in the HIPO process?

Another talent reviewer shared the seemingly logical connection between the two processes, stating, "Hopefully those on the interview panel would say, 'Wait a minute, we had two of our accelerated development folks in this [job application] group and they didn't even make it to a recommendation? What happened?'"

In summary, there are three aspects of the study results that point to the unfulfilled expectation that the leader identification process would result in a more robust and targeted leadership bench through holistic succession planning. First, there was an expressed perceived need for an intentional leader identification process. Second, over time it became clear to all three stakeholder groups that there was a need to review all current and emerging leaders. Third, some were concerned that the leader identification process fell short of needed succession planning (as evidenced in data collected regarding Phase 3), and little effort would be required to marry this process to established selection processes.

Finding 4: Perceived Benefits

The results of this study revealed that the organization's leader identification process had begun to integrate the enterprise through healthy talent conversations,

chipping away at existing silos and unifying the organization. These two aspects of this finding, mostly expressed as taking place during Phase 2, are now discussed in order.

Finding 4a. Leader identification as a talent management process resulted in healthy talent conversations. Because silos are often generated from the top (Rothwell, 2010), the perspective from the executives and senior leaders is likely of greatest importance. One of the executives expressed original reservations about the efficacy of the process, but reported, "I found the discussions very favorable. . . . There was little in the way of targeted talent identification and development before. I felt as though it was one of the weaker aspects of our HR [human resources] organization, quite honestly, and so I was pleased that we were having these [talent] discussions." Another executive with similar experience in another organization pointed out that these talent discussions, while more formal, were more fair and objective than his prior experiences. Another executive reported, "These conversations are starting to build a common language that will benefit in the long run the company's longevity, and more importantly, sustainability." In fact, all executive study participants reported that the talent review meetings, and the conversations held therein, were healthier and better than any they had experienced before, within either this organization or others.

These executives also identified specific benefits of the newly experienced, healthy talent conversations. For example, one executive shared that leaders and emerging leaders will now receive better feedback from their leaders as a result of healthy, transparent talent reviews. This executive went on to point out that leaders will likely receive even more robust feedback in other venues as well, such as during performance reviews. Multiple executives reported that another result of healthy,

146

transparent talent review discussions is that emerging and current leaders in the leader identification process have a better sense of their strengths, development needs, and potential career roadmap. One of the most commonly reported benefits among the executives was that these healthy talent review discussions highlighted the skill gaps among leader groups and within specific leaders. As one executive reported, "I now feel better equipped to have career discussions with my people." Still other executives anticipated increased levels of engagement among the corporation's leaders as well as future higher rates of leader retention as other benefits of the healthy and transparent talent conversations during Phase 2.

While those in the human resources stakeholder group were intimately involved in designing the talent review process as one that would net healthy, candid conversations about organizational leader talent, even they were pleasantly surprised by the positive results. For example, one human resources stakeholder group participant stated that during Phase 1, "I hoped that we would, for the first time in this company, have sustained conversations about talent and development of people." This anticipated benefit stood in contradistinction to the doubt expressed by this study participant that the leader identification would deliver such positive results. Another stakeholder in the human resources study group shared that he was pleasantly surprised that the talent conversations were healthy and objective. This participant expected that the "good ol' boy network" would prevail in these discussions. Not surprisingly, as a human resources respondent, this person claimed that the design of the process and the talent review meetings were responsible for the talent reviewer objectivity. Relatedly, another in this study group admitted being "fearful of senior leaders pushing for their candidates," but

those concerns weren't realized, as evidenced by a final ADP that represented the targeted amount of about 20% of the total available pool of leader candidates.

One human resources stakeholder commented on the talent review meetings, saying, "I think they [the senior leader talent reviewers] did a good job, and the conversation was especially rich when they knew the employee well." Another human resources stakeholder posited,

> All of these things that we're doing [in] . . . talent management, . . . as imperfect as they are, are helping us to become a learning organization, or an organization that can be reflective of itself in terms of talent, which we've never been before. This is not the way we've behaved in our 30-year history.

As an example of this movement to a reflective organization, another human resources stakeholder commented on how objective the talent reviewers were in their conversations, also pointing out that this was unprecedented in the organization.

As did the executive stakeholder group, the human resources stakeholders identified the specific benefits of healthy, transparent talent discussions on certain other stakeholder groups. Various human resources stakeholders, for example, reported that they now know what senior leaders believe about current and emerging leader performance and potential. They also reported that the enterprise now has a better idea of which leaders to invest in, a direct result of objective talent discussions. Further, they reported that because of these talent discussions, senior leaders are now better equipped to have talent discussions with their own leaders, whether they are a part of this process or not.

Because the senior leader stakeholder group participants were intimately involved in these talent review discussions during Phase 2, they had much to say about its benefits. First, as with the other two stakeholder groups, the talent reviewer stakeholder group

conveyed that these talent discussions were both unprecedented and extremely healthy. One participant, for example, stated that this process

> was very favorable to me because we had not previously had an opportunity as a leadership group to sit and talk about the individuals we believe that we perceive as high performers, . . . having an open dialogue with our peers around what may be our perception of those individuals . . . to allow them to fully develop into their next role.

Another talent reviewer submitted that before, the organization had not gained consensus about the type of leader that was most successful for the organization as a whole or in particular leader roles. This participant went on to point out that this caused the collective talent review conversations to be cautious and difficult during the first portion of the talent review meetings. This participant described it this way:

> Once we stormed, we had the opportunity to have bold-faced, honest conversations about these people that were far more forthright than I thought they would be. I found people commenting on strengths that I had planned to comment on, and commenting on weaknesses that I was afraid I was going to be alone in commenting on, and have to be the lone voice in the wilderness. There were several applicants who had, in my mind, weakness that had to be addressed. I don't think I had to be the one to bring up any of those. So, when we got to the people who did take the process seriously, we did have substantive discussions that made me proud of the process, and proud to be a part of the process.

Another talent reviewer agreed, stating that his perception changed for the better from Phase 1 to Phase 2, and even from the first day of the talent review meetings in which he was involved to the third and final day of that talent review discussion. This participant described the experience in the following way:

> It was really a healthy process just identifying and studying and learning the various people in our organization. . . . It was also helpful to hear other people's perceptions of people that I've known for a long time, people that might have even worked for me that ended up being a high-performing nominee. I say all that to say even if we didn't do the next steps, that process alone I think is healthy for our organization, . . . to talk about people who we think are the next leaders of our company.

Again, all talent reviewers agreed that these talent review discussions, both for the field

leader applicants and the FSC leader applicants, were the most healthy talent

conversations ever held in the organization's 30-year history. Also, as with other

stakeholder groups, talent reviewers identified specific benefits resulting from

transparent, healthy talent conversations. Chief among them was the benefit of the talent

reviewers identifying the disconnect between what senior leaders expected of current and

emerging leaders and what the leader applicants expected of themselves. In short, the

standard was quite higher, on average, among the senior leaders represented in the talent

review meetings than the bar set by or expected of the potential leader applicants.

Finding 4b. Leader identification as a talent management process resulted in

the dissolution of functional silos. These talent conversations were not only reported to

be healthy and unprecedented, but also served to be a central force in starting to chip

away at functional, organizational silos that were often acknowledged but rarely

challenged. One talent reviewer put it this way:

> The number one benefit I saw in this process was transparency—transparency to
> force [various] camps together into a joint decision-making process. You also
> break down those barriers so that transparency diminishes the ability of people to
> run fiefdoms based on their cultural roots. . . . In the insular arrangements, people
> were never asked or consulted on leader hire [or placement] in another functional
> area. . . . When I've provided input before, I'm not sure how seriously it was
> taken or if it was just window dressing. So, it [this process] opened this up.

One of the anticipated future benefits of breaking down silos was hope of cross-

functional and cross-business unit talent movement. One talent reviewer posited:

> Every business unit probably has the people that they see as their future leaders.
> But, you know, we need to get out of looking at our future leaders in a silo. We
> need to look at the diversity of our leadership talent pools to say a warden is a
> warden is a warden. If you can be a warden at Facility A, you should be able to be
> a warden at Facility C. I think it's good that we're having these conversations on a

broader scale, . . . because the most important decisions we're going to make is who do we put in those jobs?

Other talent reviewers also expressed hope for cross-fertilization of talent. One, however, while hopeful, remained skeptical. This study participant noted that they

> have leaders who could be good in other areas of the organization who wouldn't get visibility without this process. That being said, I don't see other functional areas looking to my superstars as being potentials in their area, at least not in the foreseen future. . . . I think the best outcome was that it gave us a forum to say, "Your golden boy is not as golden as you think he is." . . . So I think it was more valuable in rightsizing some people's impressions of their own staff, or confirming the suspicions that they had.

Some in the executive stakeholder group also expressed anticipated benefits in the dissolution of silos and cross-fertilization of leader talent. One executive shared:

> I think the conversations were helpful, giving me perspectives about people I didn't know well based on the conversations we had. There were individuals whose work experience was deeper than I thought, whose reputation in other parts of the company was far more positive than I anticipated.

Another executive articulated this anticipated benefit in terms of observable outcomes that would have meaning for current and rising leaders:

> You're going to see activity and actions related to this program. . . . In the past, you may be someone in this organization where you didn't see cross-functional promotions, or hear of it. You may have seen a couple of success stories where people promoted up, but very few outside their functional area. . . . With this process, people will think, "I do have a path forward for me to grow in this organization." I think that's a great benefit that will hopefully have a positive impact for those individuals who would be a part of the process.

In summary, as previously demonstrated, leader identification and associated processes have the potential to take on a defensive, territorial, or protectionist approach. The results of this study revealed that all the stakeholders interviewed shared a common concern during Phase 1 and the beginning of Phase 2 that the talent review discussions

would, in fact, realize this deleterious potential. However, the general consensus was that the organization's leader identification process, especially as experienced in Phase 2, had begun to integrate the enterprise through healthy talent conversations, chipping away at existing silos and unifying the organization.

Finding 5: Process Implementation Tensions

Document review showed that the various data points used in determining and assessing future leader potential in this case study included biographical data in the form of a candidate profile, a career reflection and aspirations essay, performance review data, two assessments designed to measure potential and motivation/career ambition, and a commitment to any necessary relocation that might be involved in upward mobility. Based on human resources participant interview data, it was supposed that these factors combined to ensure a more fair and impartial process for identifying leaders for both development and career movement purposes. All of these sources combined to create a profile or a picture of the potential leader applicants, to be reviewed and studied by the talent reviewers (senior leaders) before the talent review meetings. A scoring system was included in the leader applicant packets so that the talent reviewers could come to the meeting prepared with their ratings and justification of ratings for each leader applicant.

It was reported by human resources stakeholders that while this methodology was never designed to exclude anecdotal data that senior leader talent reviewers had about leader applicants due to their history and working relationships with the leader applicants, because the discipline of reviewing talent was new to this organization, the talent reviewers struggled with how to balance the "objective" data from the sources listed above with their own anecdotal data they held about each leader candidate. During Phase

2, this led to a natural tension between the objective and the subjective that sometimes turned into frustration for the talent reviewer stakeholder group. Because the executive stakeholder group participated in "approval" talent review meetings, they experienced this phenomenon to a lesser degree than did the talent reviewer group. Therefore, while some executive group data are reported here, the interview data supporting this finding largely came from the talent reviewer stakeholder group, with some commentary by the human resources stakeholder group based on their observation of this natural tension. Further, this finding relates exclusively to Phase 2, when the talent review discussions took place.

This finding can best be described within the context of three primary subfindings: (a) gaps in talent reviewer knowledge of potential leader applicants, (b) insufficiency of the objective data collected for leader identification decision-making, and (c) differences in agreement over the weighting of objective versus subjective data used for leader identification decisions.

5a. Gaps existed in talent reviewer knowledge. As mentioned in previous findings, all three stakeholder groups agreed that there was unexpected "opting out" of the talent review meetings by some senior leaders in the talent reviewer group. For example, one human resources stakeholder shared:

> We had minimal involvement by the VPs despite the fact that we tried very hard. I think we need more buy-in here and more understanding of why it's important, because . . . some individuals that were in the room were not familiar with the staff. So, it truly is just an application review.

All talent reviewer stakeholders agreed that not all the needed reviewers were in the room. One participant communicated disappointment, as the lack of attendance demonstrated lack of support for the process. Another participant in this group suggested

that the lack of talent reviewer participation diminished the legitimacy of the effort. This person stated, "It erodes the legitimacy when that many people can say after the fact, 'Well, I wasn't even there.' That concerned me." Another talent reviewer pointed out that some of the potential leader candidates may not have made it into the ADP had the right talent reviewers been in the room. Conversely, some who did not make it into the pool might have made it had those leaders who knew them best been present to vouch for them.

In addition to the need for having the individual senior leaders (who were knowledgeable about the performance and potential of those nominees discussed) present at the talent review meetings, there was an expressed concern over the fact that the right levels of leaders were not involved. This was most clearly expressed over the fact that field-level managing directors were the senior leaders most involved in reviewing the chiefs of security and chiefs of unit management. Yet, the chief roles are three levels below the managing directors. Therefore, all of the field managing directors involved reported their hope that the wardens would be involved in future iterations of this process, as they were closer to the anecdotal and historical data regarding the chief positions. However, one human resources participant observed that the lack of warden participation "forced the managing directors to rely on objective application data," suggesting that this might have been a good thing so as not to allow the "good ol' boy" syndrome to surface.

The final lament made by leader identification stakeholders regarding gaps in talent reviewer knowledge revolved around the idea that the executives were only involved in "approval" talent review meetings, thus not providing their commentary and

input before leader applicants were recommended for the ADP. While the executives were empowered with the "veto" of senior leader recommendations, some senior leader talent reviewers wanted to have executive input earlier in the process for better efficiency. This concern was also expressed by a couple of the executives involved in the study. Despite the opportunities for improving the knowledge gap of talent reviewers, many stakeholders involved in the talent review meetings offered that they felt that the talent review process was well calibrated and represented unprecedented, healthy talent conversations, as previously established. This was despite the fact that by self-report, a number of them were not looking forward to the lengthy talent review discussions.

Finding 5b. Objective data were insufficient. Another factor contributing to the tension between objective and subjective leader applicant data was the perception of the insufficiency of the objective data used in leader identification decisions. Because the executives did not review all the data submitted, but rather relied on executive summaries and recommendations by senior leaders, this concern was expressed only by the other two stakeholder groups: talent reviewers and human resources participants. The three objective data sets under question were (1) the performance review data, (2) the "potential" assessment data, and (3) self-identified geographical talent mobility.

Document review revealed that about the time that the leader identification process was communicated and begun, the organization development function had introduced to the enterprise the business case and a process for calibrating performance ratings. Performance calibration involves two key ingredients. First, the performance reviewers are trained in the standards of performance set by the organization and the anchors involved in establishing various levels of performance for each standard. Second,

155

managers are trained to ensure that they are "calibrated" with each other as to what successful performance looks like for specific competencies (standards) shared by multiple job families. Heretofore, it had generally been accepted that performance ratings were not very scientific and left to the subjective perspective of the reviewing manager. By the time the talent review meetings had been completed at the end of Phase 2, only a small fraction of the organization's leaders had been through performance calibration training, while most had only heard about it. Therefore, those involved in the talent review meetings as well as the human resources stakeholders shared concerns that the 3 years of historical performance review data could be unreliable due to inconsistency of methodology.

For example, one human resources stakeholder commented that the PMDS scores "were unreliable because of the variance of the raters." One talent reviewer offered more detail, stating:

> One of my frustrations, not just with this organization but with others I served in, is when you're doing performance measurement with your employees, typically everyone scores people differently. It really became apparent during our [talent] screening process that our lack, as an organization, of having the newly coined term "calibrated evaluations" really impacted us. One of the tools you brought for us to look at was evaluation scores. So, mine might be 95, yours might be 75, but in the real world we're equals. The only difference is who filled out the form. So I think that all of us . . . were frustrated by the realization that the performance appraisal process was hindering what we were trying to do because it was skewing the results, even though you helped us calibrate within that selection process.

Based on document review, another intended objective data point used in leader identification decisions was the assessment results from the two potential-related assessments. Because the human resources stakeholder group was closest to identifying and administering these assessments, they were the recipients of feedback from talent

reviewers regarding the fact that the assessment results did not appear to have face validity for some of the leader applicants based on what the senior leader knew about the applicant's potential. Therefore, the human resource study participants agreed that they expected more validity from these assessments. One study participant pointed out:

> We were going to rely on the assessment instruments that we had chosen. . . . When it came back, we were disappointed because we didn't quite trust the results. There was a rather large hole from thinking that was going to be one of the objective pieces.

The third and final objective data point under question was the self-identified degree to which the leader applicants were mobile. Some talent reviewers expressed concern over this, questioning the stated mobility of some leader applicants and discouraged over the immobility of others. One talent reviewer commented, "This process showed us how immobile our leader pool is. Many don't want to move. We need to address this."

Despite less-than-expected reliable and valid objective data, many involved in the talent reviews remarked that the talent review meetings were successful. As evidence of this, some in the human resources participant group were pleased that the talent reviewers expressed confidence in the talent slate that they were recommending to the executives for approval.

Finding 5c. Different views existed on the weighting of data. The third and most visible aspect of the natural tension between the use of objective versus subjective data manifested itself in the form of verbal disagreements over how to treat the data, and specifically how much weight each should receive. This tension was visible in all three talent review settings: the facility talent reviews, the FSC talent reviews, and the executive-level approval reviews. Starting with the first-level talent reviews with senior

leaders pouring through data, discussing candidates, and making recommendations, some

pointed comments were made.

One senior leader, who clearly made it known that historical anecdotal data was

more critical than objective data, stated that the process

> almost took the flavor of what I suspect a college admissions committee looks
> like, that begins dismissing people because they didn't think their essay was good
> enough. Well, we're not admitting people to college, and we're not grading
> papers. I use that catchphrase because I hope that it makes it into this dissertation.
> People actually said, "I don't know this person, but they didn't provide as much
> detail as this other person, so I'm voting against them."

This senior leader balanced this input by offering, "Once we stormed, we had the

opportunity to have bold-faced, honest conversations about these people that were far

more forthright than I thought they would be."

Another senior leader had much to say about this finding, stating:

> I think there were some folks that were uncomfortable with the process because
> we don't have a rigorous cross-department talent evaluation at the officer level
> and so it's very rare that the group comes together to talk about the performance
> of subordinates of other officers the way that we did in that meeting. I think that is
> uncomfortable for some folks. . . . I look at it in the context of it being more than
> evaluation of people, and talented people can sit in a lot of different seats in the
> organization, and so we need to identify those and invest in them. . . . I am
> comfortable and had candid conversations about folks. I get the sense that
> everybody is not, and I think that may have affected some of the participation
> levels.

That senior leader went on to point out that some talent reviewers wanted to base

decisions on application quality and others wanted to base them on what they knew of the

applicant. This leader went on to state,

> We had pretty robust conversations about individuals, and I got some perspectives
> [about my people] that were new to me, . . . which I'm comfortable with, but I
> view as very helpful because . . . I can change the way that I help them [my leader
> candidates] develop to avoid the pitfalls that they might encounter left to their
> own devices.

Several executives experienced this same tension in their talent discussions as well. One in particular held a different view from many of the senior leader talent reviewers, owing in part to the executive's experience as a federal government employee and the aforementioned mindset that comes with that experience. This executive participant commented on how the objective data and quality of the application packet should receive the most weight. The following narrative by the executive represents quite well the other half of the natural tension experienced by some.

> I thought the review of the applications was going to be the driving force; we would look at what was presented. We would make decisions based on that, with perhaps familiarity coming into it a little. But, it appeared during the conversations that who you knew was more important than what the application process itself said. I was very surprised about how willing people were to simply go based on what they knew about the individual, and that was restricted based on working relationships and not a deep dive into the application process itself. Initially, I thought this was going to be very objective . . . and it would mitigate the subjectivity. In fact, there was a struggle between the objective view of the application and the overreliance on subjective knowledge of the individual. It actually caused a bit of dissension, some of which is still to be discussed. . . . The juxtaposition of subjective versus objective application . . . caused people to become a little timid about speaking their version of the truth because they didn't want somebody to be mad at them or they didn't want to get backlash from how somebody else viewed the individual.

Again, this perspective sums up the perspectives of those (including the human resources study group) who wanted more weight on the objective application data.

In summary, the tension between the objective data (including sources of data) and the subjective experiences and historical relationships held between the talent reviewers and the potential leader applicants is best described by the three subfindings of (a) gaps in talent reviewer knowledge of potential leader applicants, (b) insufficiency of the objective data collected for leader identification decision-making, and (c) differences in agreement over the weighting of objective versus subjective data used for leader

identification decisions. Despite the attempts by the organization development function

and the initial design of the talent review process (identified through document discovery

as a part of Phase 1) to define and control the data points available to talent reviewers,

these three factors contributed to talent conversations that were a surprise and even

tenuous to most, but still viewed as healthy and productive by all.

Finding 6: Planned Systems Change

The events and outcomes of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 led to welcome feedback

from all three stakeholder groups to the organization development function (a function

within the human resources department) regarding opportunities for improvement in how

the enterprise identified leader talent. Document review suggested that the organization

development function codified nine planned changes that were then communicated in

Phase 3 to all three stakeholder groups as well as all future potential leaders.

Additionally, these planned changes were chronicled as part of the research study

interviews with all study group participants in all stakeholder groups as a lead-in to the

questions regarding their perceptions and expectations of the initiative in Phase 3. The

nine planned changes, broken down into activities occurring before, during, and after the

2014 talent review process, are listed in Table 4.3.

Interview data from the human resources participants pointed to the fact that

during both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the first-generation leader identification process, the

organization development function listened for and asked for feedback regarding

potential improvement opportunities. Through a process of open dialogue, primarily with

executives, themes began to emerge, finally being formed into the nine planned changes

for the second generation of this process. As in Finding 5, the data supporting this finding

are limited to the responses to the inquiries regarding one implementation phase, Phase 3.

When these planned changes were recalled in the study participant interviews, two main

themes emerged. First, with only two exceptions, all planned changes were well received

and even anticipated by the study group participants in all three stakeholder groups.

Second, because of the scope of the planned changes, they might be difficult to fully

execute.

Table 4.3

Planned Changes to Take Place Before, During, and After the 2014 Talent Review Process

Time period	Changes
Before	1. Identify more reliable and valid assessments of leader "potential."
	2. Complete performance calibration training with all people leaders within the enterprise.
	3. Communicate and implement a "no-nomination" process whereby all emerging and current leaders within the defined scope of the process are invited to apply. Reviewing all leaders demonstrates sound stewardship of talent (Berger & Berger, 2011).
During	4. Introduce more transparency and intentionality about the importance of both objective and subjective familiarity data sources for talent decisions through the introduction of a new tool to aggregate both sources of data.
	5. Involve wardens in the talent review decisions of assistant wardens and the two chief roles.
	6. Involve executives in the talent review meetings where recommendations are made and all data are reviewed.
	7. Conduct talent reviews at the functional level by executive vice president, followed by an enterprise-wide calibrated talent review meeting in which all vice presidents and executive vice presidents are involved.
After	8. Remove the high-potential label by simply identifying those who will go through an accelerated development process.
	9. Have the executives communicate accelerated development plan status to the potential leader applicants in their area, rather than having human resources leaders communicate status.

Finding 6a. Planned changes were well received and welcome. Every single

study participant conveyed that, in general, the planned changes were right on target and

would alleviate many of the concerns that were identified and uncovered in Phase 1 and

Phase 2. One talent reviewer communicated, "The planned changes for 2014 give me

161

hope." Others shared that the planned changes were "the right ones" and "excellent." Others even used the term "excited" when reacting to planned changes. One executive went so far as to share appreciation for the organization development function leading the way regarding the planned changes, saying,

> The people that are in charge and leading the execution and vision of the program are open to feedback. . . . They are also honest and kind of doing a self-evaluation on the program. . . . I thought the discussion we had on that late last year was very good and very, very thoughtful.

Another executive expressed confirmation of the change process as well as the changes themselves, saying, "I'm very happy with the direction we've gone. I think it's good for the company, and I think it's going to be very good for our employees. I'm very pleased with the process." One talent reviewer agreed, saying, "People will review 2014 more positively."

At the same time, two study participants offered some caveats to the praise for the planned changes. First, a talent reviewer questioned the communication of the planned changes, arguing that the organization development function gathered more input from, and shared more insight to, the executive group regarding the planned changes compared to other stakeholders. This interviewee also indicated that the communication of the second-generation process to all stakeholders was critical. This study participant did, however, express approval for all planned changes and suggested that the first-generation process was too "secretive" and the 2014 process was shaping up to be more "inclusive."

The caveat offered by a second talent reviewer represented quite a different view. He communicated that the organization development function was doing everything right in 2013, and that all that was broken with the first-generation process was that key leaders were "opting out" of the process. This study participant conveyed that the

concerns over the 2013 process were unfairly aimed at the organization development function and that the organization should stick with the first-generation process and augment it only by requiring more talent reviewer participation. This study participant did, however, express approval for most of the planned changes once they were described in the research study interview, stating, "I see more clearly how 2014 will work, and I like it." Finally, the human resources study participants agreed that the operations leaders were especially on board with the planned changes for 2014.

While the interview data from all three stakeholder groups suggested that there was general agreement about the first two planned changes of (1) better assessments of "potential" and (2) more penetration of the performance calibration training with managers, there were a few specific comments. One talent reviewer weighed in, commenting that the "performance calibration training will help the process" and that the "refreshed competency models" will help to ensure better assessments of potential. The human resources stakeholders agreed that addressing both of these planned changes before the initiation of the second-generation process would result in more "valid and reliable" leader identification decisions and outcomes.

With one exception, all stakeholders in all three groups agreed that the third planned change of reviewing all emerging and current leaders (dispensing with the nomination and self-application processes) within the identified roles in scope was a positive move. The human resources stakeholders commented that this would allow the process to be more fair and consistent across the enterprise. The executives offered the most specific rationale as to why they believed this change to be a welcome one. One

163

executive pointed out that reviewing all would ensure that the organization uncovered

hidden talent:

> The fact that talent assessments will be done companywide is absolutely the right thing to do because that will help us determine what resources we need . . . for investment . . . and then it will tell us where some of our vulnerabilities are, especially if it's in a particular division or a particular job class.

Another executive expressed that this change would also eliminate the need for self-

promotion, since every leader was expected to submit data for review. Still another

executive articulated how reviewing and assessing all leaders was linked to leader

engagement by pointing out that this change would eliminate the perception of the "good

ol' boy syndrome."

The lone dissenter was a senior leader talent reviewer who pointed out that while

he generally agreed with reviewing all leaders, doing so might cause senior leaders and

executives to spend too much time discussing "those who will never be HIPOs." This

senior leader did relent after further explanation about the change but still warned that

discussing everyone "shouldn't detract from identifying top talent."

Finally, one human resources stakeholder cautioned that the organization

development function should manage all applicants' expectations by communicating to

them that the review of all current and emerging leaders was not correlated in any way to

the number of applicants who may be identified as participants in an ADP. In other

words, the supply side of leader talent may far outweigh the demand side of leader talent.

This stakeholder expressed mild concern that the number of ADP leader finalists being

larger than the number of landing spots could discourage some leader applicants.

While there were few specific comments related to the fourth planned change,

which called for transparency and intentionality in relying on both objective data sources

as well as subjective familiarity between the leader applicant and the talent reviewer(s), the comments around Planned Changes 5 and 6 (which called for involvement of wardens and C-suite executives, respectively, in talent review meetings) did support the embrace of this intentionality and transparency. There were a number of comments by all three stakeholder groups regarding the welcome change of having wardens involved in talent reviews, as wardens knew the chief and assistant warden applicants better than anyone, and this subjective familiarity would be more reliable in the second generation of the leader identification process. One talent reviewer, for example, suggested:

> If we're looking at an AW [assistant warden], you know, you need to have the warden and managing director . . . sitting there critiquing. You know, if you're dealing with these people every day, you're more well rounded in your feedback.

Additionally, executive study group participants related that warden involvement would go a long way to improving engagement for the wardens and the facilities they led.

Other senior leader talent reviewers agreed, pointing out that getting more leaders involved in talent reviews was critical. One talent reviewer even suggested that the facility talent review meetings should include the human resources directors responsible for those facilities, because they knew the leader talent as well as anyone. Still other talent reviewers suggested that the talent reviews needed to have the executives in the talent review meetings with senior leaders even during recommendation discussions so that accelerated development status might be identified in real time, without an approval process. Executive study group participants agreed, pointing out that they themselves knew some of these candidates as well as anyone. These suggestions by executives and talent reviewers collectively supported Planned Change 6.

The human resources study participants all agreed that involving talent reviewers who knew the candidates best would make for "a better process and outcomes." Human resources stakeholders also stated the need to better educate all talent reviewers for their role in the second-generation process. They went on to point out that better-prepared talent reviewers would result in increased validity of leader selections for accelerated development. Both human resources and talent reviewer stakeholders admonished the organization development function to do all they could to ensure that the talent reviewers took the process and their role more seriously in 2014. Finally, one human resources participant pondered whether there was a way to get every manager of emerging and current leaders involved in talent review discussions. Document review revealed that this magnitude of involvement by every leader in assessments of their emerging leader applicants was not part of the second-generation change process.

Planned Change 7, having multiple talent review meetings starting with functional reviews and culminating in an enterprise-wide calibrated review, was supported by all three stakeholder groups, in that this approach forced more involvement by all senior leaders and executives. One talent reviewer commented that he "like[d] the idea of having departmental talent reviews and then cross-functional talent reviews." Another talent reviewer remarked that this planned change allowed for the expected integration of accelerated development decisions as well as the development of individual development plans for selected leaders at the same time. Additionally, one of the executive study participants expressed agreement with Planned Change 7 by commenting on how having multiple levels of talent reviews would drive senior leader ownership and allow candidates to be better represented. Finally, the human resources study group agreed that

166

a multi-tiered talent review approach would force more participation, and those who might otherwise opt out wouldn't do so when they were to lead their own functional reviews and then represent their function in calibrated talent reviews.

Planned Change 8 (removing the HIPO label in favor of an ADP) and planned Change 9 (executives communicating accelerated development status versus human resources owning that task) were both generally well received and often discussed together. The human resources study participants agreed that executive involvement in leader candidate status communication would drive more ownership. Additionally, they agreed that, while there was some concern over whether or not executives were equipped and suited to communicating status, receiving a status communication from a human resources leader sent the wrong message that leader identification was strictly a human resources initiative and not the enterprise initiative it should be. These human resources study participants went on to caution that the executives needed to be well equipped and prepared for this task in 2014 so that there was consistency of language and intent.

All but two study participants (both in the talent reviewer stakeholder group) agreed that the HIPO label needed to go away because it reinforced a "haves and have-nots" approach. The two dissenting talent reviewers disagreed, arguing that replacing the HIPO label with a message of who was and was not in the ADP was purely semantics, as the organization still needed to identify and distinguish top talent. The argument was that the executives still needed to know whom to hitch the organization's wagons to and whom to invest in more heavily and more rapidly. One of the talent reviewers put it this way:

> I believe that employees are able to tell whether the organization is investing in their development and moving them into an opportunity, moving them into a

position where they can advance. I think you understand that intuitively as an employee. . . . I think it's important for them to understand when I tell them, "I don't have the ability to promote you today, but you are on a path toward future promotion." For that to be supplemented with investment in them extends beyond the conversation I'm having with them. . . . For lack of a better way to describe it, I'd like to avoid having turnover of those folks that I do believe have opportunity for advancement.

This talent reviewer also pointed out that those who receive the message that they are not going to be in the ADP this year should be motivated to improve as emerging or current leaders. To this talent reviewer, distinguishing between the HIPO/ADP and those not in the pool was important for the engagement of those onto whom the organization wanted to bet its future. One human resources study participant, while pleased that the HIPO label was going away, shared the opposite view of engagement, pointing out that it was demoralizing and demotivating for the "nonchosen" to hear they were not in the ADP. This concern was raised despite the fact that those in human resources were especially close to the plan of ensuring that not being in the ADP "this year" did not mean that a leader applicant would not be in the pool "next year." The research study interview process was an opportunity to remind this participant of this fact and human resources' role in helping to drive that message.

Finally, two stakeholders (one executive and one talent reviewer) commented that because the organization would be reviewing all emerging and current leaders, there might not be a need to formally communicate any status. Those who began to receive more and accelerated development opportunities would just figure it out, along with those who didn't. One of these two stakeholders put it this way: "Going into this year's process, we're going to review them, we're going to study them, and we get to know them. They hadn't asked for it, nobody's nominated them, do we even tell them?"

Despite this sentiment, document review suggested that the organization intended to continue sharing talent status through executives and that scripted messages would include the temporal nature of the ADP decision. That is, the decision was only a point-in-time decision. All stakeholders agreed that if candidate talent status was communicated, the executive over the area where the candidate resided was in the best position to send the message.

Finding 6b. Because of the scope of the planned changes, they might be difficult to fully execute. The second subfinding involved the feedback that, due to the expanded scope and greater involvement from various stakeholder groups, the human resources and executive stakeholder groups may not have the capacity to deliver, and the functional and facility leaders may not have the capacity to consume, all that would be involved in the planned changes. As might be expected, one study participant from the human resources stakeholder group expressed the organization development function's bandwidth concerns, saying, "I think it's going to be challenging to have the bandwidth to do everything we want to do, but I think it's important, so we're going to have to get a lot of support." This participant also commented on the challenge of human resource's role in developing a purportedly larger ADP due to reviewing all emerging and current leaders. One executive shared similar bandwidth concerns saying,

> I'm very excited about the [2014] process. I'm not looking forward to it because as much as I wasn't for the handful of people that we had [in 2013], a companywide leadership talent assessment is a huge undertaking that's going to take a tremendous amount of time and investment on behalf of those senior leaders. . . . But absolutely I agree we're headed in the right direction.

One talent reviewer, along with others, echoed the bandwidth concerns for the senior leader talent reviewers that were also expressed by executives and human

resources study participants. This point was primarily expressed in terms of the time commitment needed for the senior leaders involved in the various talent review meetings.

As big as the lift might be in reviewing 400 leaders in 2014 versus 77 leaders in 2013, the idea of limited leader development resources was expressed even more by all stakeholder groups. One executive put it this way, "The development resources don't match the identification resources." Another executive discussed the fact that the business outlook would not support the needed development costs for a much larger ADP. Another executive, for example, shared: "I'm pleased with the [2014] process. I'm still a little concerned about whether we're willing to invest the amount of financial resources it's going to require." The executive did offer an alternative, however, saying,

> We'll cross that bridge when we get to it, because as you and I have discussed, if anything, we might just have to stretch it out a little bit. It might take a little longer to get Applicant A through the process than Applicant B. But, again, we'll cross that bridge when we get there.

Yet another executive suggested that the organization move more slowly to defray costs and map out all the costs and resources needed in the second-generation process.

One of the talent reviewers made the assumption that it would take longer to review all 400 or so leaders and expressed that "this is a concern." He went on to say that he was concerned "we won't have enough resources for the development of a larger pool." Another talent reviewer stated the concerns in the following words: "I don't think you should dilute the investment such that you can't make meaningful investments in whatever you would call the categories of HIPOs. And we know that investment dollars will be limited."

Finally, some in the human resources study group expressed the concern over the larger scope in an additional way, pointing out that besides the limited development

resources, having a larger applicant pool would inevitably lead to a larger ADP. The concern from this stakeholder group was that this would, in turn, raise the expectations of those in the ADP that a promotion was within the visible horizon. Human resources participants also expressed concern over too few landing spots (the demand side of leader identification) even for the 19 leader applicants who made it into the pool in 2013. As previously mentioned, they expressed even greater concern over reviewing 400 leader candidates in 2014 where there were expected to be few, if any more, landing spots. One example cited was that reviewing all wardens meant reviewing 60 in that leader pool. In the natural career progression, there were currently six managing directors of operations to whom the 60 wardens reported. Once again, document review revealed that the organization's targeted ADP was 15% to 20% of the total emerging and current leader pool of about 400 in scope, or about 60 to 80 of the total available pool of 400.

In summary, the planned changes for the second-generation leader identification process generated much input from all stakeholders. With few exceptions, all planned changes were well received and even anticipated by the study group participants during Phase 3 based on the input of all three stakeholder groups in Phase 1 and Phase 2. The expressed concerns regarding these planned changes related to the ability of the organization development function to deliver on the expanded leader identification process, the increased time and involvement required for the process, the large number of individuals who may be identified for an ADP, and the costs and personal expectations related to the ADP process. These concerns were tempered by most study participants in all stakeholder groups with the endorsement that reviewing all emerging and current leaders amounted to proper talent stewardship for a variety of reasons.

Finding 7: Development Planning Versus Development

While the time-series scope of this study did not encompass the longitudinal nature of the development phase that followed leader identification and assessment, development planning was, in fact, within the scope of this study and fell within Phase 3. Based on document review, a three-stage development plan process was built into the identification-assessment-development process within this organization. These stages included (1) general and broad-sweeping leader development programs aimed at large pools of leaders for accelerated development, meeting the needs of many; (2) tailored, specific developmental programs and processes to meet the competency gaps of individuals or small groups of HIPOs; and (3) specific assignments, temporary roles, etc. for experiential development at the individual level.

Additionally, while the demand side of leader identification was not thoroughly addressed by the organization under study, documentation revealed that leader development pools were assembled in such a way so that development planning might be completed for "levels" of leader pools and "job families." For example, document review suggested that the leader identification-assessment-development process created in this organization called for the development of wardens in the ADP against the requirements for an operations managing director role, though not one particular role.

The data gathered from all three stakeholder groups through the interview questions contained within the scope of Phase 3 revealed real interest in, and in some cases concerns about, the development planning process as a part of the leader identification initiative. Three general themes emerged in the data, two of which are discussed in detail here. The third theme involved the previously documented concern by

all three stakeholder groups regarding the potential mismatch between the size of the ADP and the potentially limited development budget. The executive stakeholder group, in particular, mostly discussed this resource constraint within the context of this finding. Therefore, only two subfindings are explicated here, largely supported by data from the talent reviewer and human resources stakeholder groups. The first is that development should be composed of experience, exposure, and education, all of which were critical to the success of the leader identification-assessment-development process. The second is that there seems to be little accountability for the development planning or the ensuing development related to specific stakeholders and other environments (such as the performance management system) where development plans occur.

Finding 7a. Experience, exposure, and education were all critical. Document review revealed a number of aspects related to the organization's plans to develop leaders. First, the organization espoused a broad perspective of development while still focusing primarily on formal learning, as this was a legacy practice that had only recently been challenged. A corporate university had been formed at the same time the leader identification process was implemented, and the first element of the corporate university was the College of Leadership, designed to develop leaders as they make natural career transitions, such as from front-line leader to mid-level manager. As previously established in this study, the organization espoused the idea that organization development activities sought to develop all organizational employees (including leaders), while talent management (leader identification) activities sought to identify, assess, and develop a select few more deeply and more rapidly.

Some in the talent reviewer and executive stakeholder groups communicated delight that the organization development leader brought the credibility that the leader identification process needed by matching identification to this development model. One suggested that the leadership of the organization development function took this initiative from what would have been "a flavor-of-the-month process to one embedded in culture."

With the formal learning as a part of the organization's development model and the organization's plans as context, members of all three stakeholder groups expressed their expectation that the organization's corporate university and the College of Leadership would serve as the primary development solution for the education of the leaders identified for the ADP. In addition, the stakeholders expressed the desire to see the leaders selected for accelerated development prioritized for attendance at corporate university programs. One of the human resources stakeholders suggested that the corporate university would be instrumental in helping to instill expectations of a learning organization, and that over time, it may be the key vehicle through which the organization actually transforms into a learning organization.

Stakeholders' comments also related to the "exposure" element of the development model. One human resources stakeholder, for example, indicated that the coaching process was the exposure solution and described how it was implemented in the organization. Coaches were identified for each of the 19 leader applicants slated for the ADP. Document review suggested that some coaches were identified from among current senior leaders within the organization, and others were identified from among retired senior leaders in the organization who knew both the organization's culture and those to whom they would be providing coaching. The coaches and ADP leaders were matched

based on the strengths of the coach and the needs of the ADP leader. Some among the human resources stakeholder group were responsible for designing and delivering the 2-day coaching program to the coaches. Document review showed that the coaching program involved substantial investment of both time and money. Coaches were then certified to follow the organization's established coaching methodology. All of the comments regarding the implementation of the coaching program were corroborated by the documentation regarding the organization's coaching process/program.

It was also reported that, through the monitored coaching/coachee relationships, the organization selected the right coaches. One talent review stakeholder reported that "the coaches are doing a great job." However, a human resources stakeholder commented that "the coaches hate the system." That same human resources stakeholder went on to convey that the coaches had learned a lot and were receiving development themselves. That stakeholder also reported that he was growing in his own role as a developer of the coaches, as he was meeting challenges not undertaken before, stating, "I'm growing as the coaches coach."

The major concern expressed was once again around the resources, or perceived lack thereof, for the second-generation process. One human resources stakeholder lamented that "the identification, training and equipping, and monitoring of coaches will be a much heavier lift in 2014." This concern was expressed given the anticipated larger ADP in 2014 as well as the assumption that the coach/coachee ratio would continue to be one-to-one.

Finally, one other benefit of the exposure method of coaching was communicated by some in the talent reviewer stakeholder group. They reported that when an ADP leader

received a coach, it helped to avert potential turnover of ADP leaders. This was discussed within the context that, during the talent review meetings, flight risk levels (ranging from low to high) of ADP leaders were discussed and codified. Records showed that a number of those selected for the ADP process were deemed to have a high flight risk status. Therefore, it was reported that being matched to a coach would be perceived as a positive gesture and therefore served as a retention tool.

The experience portion of the organization's development model received the most comments, particularly from the talent reviewer stakeholder group. Some talent reviewer stakeholders shared their thoughts on the need for developmental experiences in terms of their role in ensuring that the ADP leaders availed themselves of these experiences. One talent reviewer/senior leader shared,

> I know I look for [developmental] opportunities for my folks in the program. I know when I'm in strategy sessions . . . I'm usually one of the first to raise my hand saying, "Hey, that would be a good thing for our talent management folks to jump in on." But I don't know how many others in the organization are thinking like that, and I definitely think more people need to think of that.

This interviewee went on to share the concern that "we need a central person that's really invested in each one of those 19 people to ensure they get development experiences."

Another talent reviewer/senior leader related that the senior leaders and executives should collaborate more to ensure that all ADP leaders have experiential assignments as a part of their development plans, and that the organization shouldn't keep going to the same well to offer stretch assignments to the same few people. Others in this stakeholder group also communicated that it was their role to make sure that their ADP leaders availed themselves of experiential development opportunities. Another suggested that he needed to make sure his ADP leaders received the "first shot at assignments." Still

another communicated that he needed to ensure his ADP leaders got the "right experiences" to help them achieve even greater potential for higher levels of complexity and responsibility, and not just "any experiences."

All of the talent reviewers suggested that promotional opportunities or temporary assignments accounted for some of the best experiences. One in this stakeholder group even suggested,

> It's critical for early success of the program to show that some of these people were offered opportunities. . . . That's what we're trying to do. But, I think there's going to be a limited opportunity to take these individuals once they go through the program and automatically connect the completion of the program with a change in assignment or promotion because of other issues we have to deal with.

The interviewee was referring to the government mentality that all roles must be posted and interviewed for, even temporary assignments. Again, document review revealed that, while this was common practice in the organization, it was not legally or contractually required in all customer contracts.

The immobility issue was raised once again by some talent reviewers, in that they believed (from experience) that despite what the ADP leaders said in their applications about their own mobility, many of them might not be willing to avail themselves of the assignments that the senior leaders and executives thought would accelerate their development and their careers.

There was also general consensus among both the executives and the talent reviewers/senior leaders that the message should also be sent to those not chosen for accelerated development that they would not be shut out of any promotional opportunities simply because they weren't chosen for the accelerated development process. This was expressed within the context of ensuring that those who were considered valuable

contributors (but not HIPOs) would not become flight risks either. This led to more feedback that not being selected could be demotivating to the same extent that being selected could be motivating. As one talent reviewer put it, "We need to continue to communicate that there's no club."

In fact, one participant in the human resources stakeholder group suggested that some who were not selected were overlooked because they suffered from the "horns" effect: the notion that they had done or had not done something once upon a time that forever marked them as not having high potential. It was further communicated that the organization needed to allow them to recover from this "horns effect" and that some of these people needed development just as much as those identified as HIPOs, but perhaps for different reasons. Another in the human resources group remarked that some who did not get chosen for the ADP process in the first generation took the feedback to heart and would likely prove themselves worthy for the second-generation process. This comment corroborates the documentation that ADP decisions only stood for 1 year.

Finding 7b. There was limited accountability in development planning. One concern over development planning and development progress accountability was that a majority of senior leader talent reviewers believed that leaders identified in their own downlines had not informed them of their development plan or progress toward it. For example, one talent reviewer stated,

> The thing that frustrated me somewhat in the past couple of months, . . . I have one who's participating who I would really like to get some information to and from the coach of some things that I'm seeing with this person that this person needs help with. . . . I'm trying to work on it, but if that coach doesn't know what I know, and vice versa, then we're not making the most of the program, and it's a real concern for me.

Every talent reviewer/senior leader indicated that they would have liked to hear about the progress of those ADP participants in their downline.

The talent reviewers believed that the direct managers (in addition to the senior leaders) of those in the ADP should get and give information to and from the coach of the ADP leader. For example, one commented:

> I definitely need the coach to be having contact with the direct manager of that person so that the coach can be telling the manager, "Here are things that you can give them opportunities on, or here are things where they're wanting opportunities." . . . They're not communicating directly, and not because there's any issue between them and the manager. It's just come out of the coaching process that there's opportunity for that. Definitely, there's got to be some solid linkage between the participant, the coach, and the direct manager.

Again, this sentiment represented consensus among all senior leader/talent reviewers. Some even suggested that the communication linkages should include four stakeholders in every participant's case: the ADP participant, along with his or her manager, senior leader, and coach. The admonition is that human resources should shepherd communication between and among all these stakeholders.

Some talent reviewers/senior leaders even went on to point out that the senior leaders themselves should have a stake in the development plan by providing input to it because they have the advantage of the bigger picture. These senior leaders argued that it was their responsibility to ensure that those ADP participants in their downline had a robust development plan with development actions driven by the senior leaders' input. One senior leader commented:

> I know when they are ready to move now [into a different role] or we have to give them a little bit more time, and if we have to give them more time, what do we have to be working on to get them ready? Is it just a matter of time, or is it certain skills that they've not acquired that they need in order to move on to the next responsibility?

Other senior leaders argued that it was their responsibility to ensure that the ADP leaders were satisfied with their development plan progress, pointing once again to the need for retention of leaders with high potential.

Another manner in which the development planning and development progress were not accountable, according to the talent reviewer/senior leaders, was that the development plans in the TMS were not linked to the development plans in the performance management system (PMDS). In addition, the document and system artifact review confirmed not only this lack of linkage, but also that the ADP development plan was only accessible and editable by the ADP participant and his or her coach. The manager had no access or input to this development plan. The manager of the ADP participant did, however, have access to and input on the ADP participant's performance management system development plan, but the two plans were not connected. Once again, this relates to the aforementioned finding that the system served as a proxy for process, in that those developing the system did not envision this potential disconnect. This disconnect was even lamented by those in the human resources stakeholder group, who acknowledged that they were not in control of the system limitations. One senior leader summed up the sentiments of his peers by stating, "When I get ready to do her [the ADP's] performance measurement and development review and develop an individual development plan [in the PMDS system] in a few weeks, they are completely isolated."

As a different perspective to the senior leaders' view of the lack of managers' involvement with their ADP participant's development plan, one human resources stakeholder conveyed that one of his roles during Phase 3 was to communicate with each manager of the ADP participants what the competencies and development needs were for

their respective ADP participant. By the respondent's own admission, this did not include

the development plan itself, just the development needs. The human resources participant

went on to share his perspective:

> In many cases the supervisors don't know how to help them [the ADPs]. So, we
> were able to help them [those in the ADP pool]. We gave them development
> activities and things that they could do. So we didn't just leave them out there
> hanging, and that was the first time in this company that we've done that. I just
> think that's the most phenomenal part of the process we could do. But, in saying
> all of that, there were several [applicants] that were just so excited about the
> development opportunities that I really pray they get in next time.

So, while one human resources stakeholder argued that the senior leads/talent

reviewers and the managers of the ADPs did, in fact, have a voice in the development

planning and development progress of their respective ADPs, others disagreed. Other

human resources stakeholders and all talent review stakeholders suggested that human

resources needed to take a more active role in facilitating the communication and

ownership between and among all stakeholders involved in leader identification and the

ensuing development planning.

In summary, this portion of the interview protocol revealed stakeholder interest

in, and in some cases concerns about, the development planning process as a part of the

leader identification initiative. There were reiterations of previously expressed concerns

by all three stakeholder groups regarding the potential mismatch between the size of the

ADP and the potentially limited development budget. The organization's espoused leader

development model, which involved experience, exposure, and education, was discussed

as a critical component in the success of the leader identification-assessment-

development process. Second, the concerns over limited accountability for the

development planning and ensuing development progress were laid out. Taken as a

whole, the data contained within this finding suggest that development planning did not

equate to development progress, especially without accountability.

Summary of the Research Findings

This research study netted seven findings, as summarized in Table 4.4. The first

finding involved a *systems perspective* and represented consensus among all three

stakeholder groups. Four subfindings were contained within this first finding. These

included the acknowledgment of the various systems that existed, each for a specific

purpose related to leader identification during specific implementation phases of the

initiative. The second finding, which again came from all three stakeholder groups,

involved *collaboration, commitment, and communication*. The expressed opportunity for

more collaboration, communication, and commitment were identified for all three phases

of the initiative. The third finding from this research study involved *stakeholder*

expectations (during Phase 1) of holistic succession planning (during Phase 3). Once

again, there was general consensus among the three stakeholder groups regarding this

finding.

The fourth finding generated by this study described the *perceived benefits*

expressed by all three stakeholder groups that were realized primarily during Phase 2 and

Phase 3. The fifth finding involved *process implementation tensions* experienced by all

three stakeholder groups (especially talent reviewers) during Phase 2 of the leader

identification initiative. The sixth finding generated from this research involved the

planned systems change for the 2014 leader identification process that grew out of the

expectations of all three stakeholder groups during Phase 1 of the initiative. The planned

changes for the second generation of the process were communicated by the organization

Table 4.4

Summary of Findings

Finding	Subfindings
1. Systems perspective	1a. A system existed for performance management. 1b. A system existed for nomination and application. 1c. A system existed for data storage and retrieval. 1d. A system existed for individual development plans.
2. Collaboration, communication, and commitment	2a. Collaboration was minimal among all process stakeholders and actors in the leader identification process. 2b. The leader identification process, while comprehensive in approach, was only well communicated by the organization development staff in Phase 1 and less so in Phase 2 and Phase 3. 2c. Variable commitment was demonstrated by the executive sponsors of the process, senior leaders involved in the talent reviews, and the ADP itself.
3. Stakeholder expectations of holistic succession planning	3a. There was a perceived need for leader identification. 3b. There was a need to assess all leader talent. 3c. Talent management differed from succession planning.
4. Perceived benefits	4a. Leader identification as a talent management process resulted in healthy talent conversations. 4b. Leader identification as a talent management process resulted in the dissolution of functional silos.
5. Process implementation tensions	5a. Gaps existed in talent reviewer knowledge. 5b. Objective data were insufficient. 5c. Different views existed on the weighting of data.
6. Planned systems change	6a. Planned changes were well received and welcome. 6b. Because of the scope of the planned changes, they might be difficult to fully execute.
7. Development planning versus development	7a. 70/20/10: Experience, exposure, and education were all critical. 7b. There was limited accountability in development planning.

development staff to all three stakeholder groups during Phase 3 of the initiative. The

seventh and final finding produced by the research involved stakeholder notions of

development versus development planning, as evidenced by data collected from the

events regarding Phase 3. The conclusions and implications of these findings are

discussed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5:

INTERPRETATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Organizations today are increasingly focused on talent as a strategic investment and a competitive advantage for achieving business success. As a result, most major enterprises have recognized the need for and established a process to identify, assess, and develop high-potential leadership talent (Silzer & Church, 2013). Additionally, given the increasing emphasis on the changing nature of the workforce and on the already retiring baby boomers, as discussed in the literature (Dychtwald, Erickson, & Morison, 2006; Hankin, 2005; Stack, Baier, & Fahlander, 2008), there is significant pressure on organizations to ensure they have comprehensive processes in place for successful leadership succession.

Further, research indicates that half of all external leadership hires in corporations fail within the first 18 months, and the costs are staggering (Bauer, 2011). Given the potential negative impact of poor talent acquisition and succession planning processes, CEOs and their boards of directors are becoming increasingly concerned with corporate talent management practices as well as seemingly weak indicators of leadership pipeline strength. Increasingly, CEOs and boards of directors are asking the chief human resources officer (CHRO) and the organization development function: Can we effectively identify and assess leadership potential, and if so, how? Those with an organization development mindset are likely to provide a different response to this question than those with a talent management mindset (Church, 2013). A traditional organization development response would be that everyone has potential and that all employees deserve and need development. A talent management response, in contrast, suggests that

some possess more potential than others and that those with higher leadership potential should be identified, assessed, and given significantly greater development opportunities in order to build the succession pipeline and leadership bench for the future of the business.

Partnership Corrections, Inc. is the largest private corrections organization in the United States. Partnership Corrections, Inc. designs, builds, manages, and operates prisons, jails, detention centers, and residential reentry centers on behalf of federal, state, and local government entities. Today, the company employs approximately 15,000 employees in about 60 facilities. The federal, state, and municipality contracts can be at once demanding and complex, placing the organization under tremendous pressure to serve as a prudent steward of the tax dollars allocated to the inmates under its control.

Under the current executive leadership, the organization has continued its relentless pursuit of leadership succession and has begun to ensure that leaders are intentionally developed at all levels within the enterprise. One example of the investment made in Partnership Corrections, Inc.'s leaders is the establishment of Partnership Corrections, Inc. University in 2013 and use of the leader-as-teacher model to develop current and emerging leaders. The enterprise also began a talent management initiative in 2012 as a strategic process whereby leaders are identified, assessed, developed, and moved within and throughout the organization. The impetus for this talent management initiative involved the factors and pressures cited in the aforementioned research (Bauer, 2011; Dychtwald et al., 2006; Hankin, 2005; Stack et al., 2008). These reasons ranged from the need to grow leaders more quickly, to meeting leadership demand based on potential future growth, to preparing for retirements due to a potentially aging workforce.

The purpose of this study was to understand stakeholders' perceptions of the leader identification process within Partnership Corrections, Inc. This chapter provides an overview of the study's findings and, guided by pragmatic interpretivism, presents conclusions within the context of existing literature and the study's conceptual framework. Implications for theory and practice are explored, followed by a brief discussion of recommendations for future research and concluding remarks.

Review of the Findings and Conclusions

This single, bounded study was designed around gaining stakeholder perceptions (including expectations, roles, and contributions) of a leader identification initiative regarding three phases of implementation: Phase 1, when the leader identification process was communicated and during which the nomination and application processes were executed; Phase 2, when the senior leaders and executives engaged in formal talent review discussions; and Phase 3, when leader identification decisions were communicated and development planning was conducted. The study's seven findings and 19 subfindings led to four conclusions.

It was expected that the participant interview data, along with document and systems review data, would align neatly along the three phases of the initiative's implementation. While the study results, as laid out, do generally run along the three implementation phases, both participant interview data and document and system review data were not extracted in such compartmentalized fashion. That is, the data collected were more fluid than anticipated. It was also expected that there would be general agreement regarding the perspectives of the leader identification process within stakeholder groups and that there would be some differences in perspectives across

stakeholder groups. With few exceptions, the first part of this expectation was fulfilled, in that stakeholder participants were generally in agreement with one another within their group. The second aspect of this expectation did not fully come to fruition, however. There was surprising agreement between stakeholder groups on many findings. The fact that the human resources group had more invested in the design and communication of the leader identification process led to the expectation that this stakeholder group might have different perspectives than other stakeholders. While this was true in a few cases, the human resources study participants shared many perspectives with other stakeholders.

While the findings generally emerged chronologically along the three implementation phases within this time-series case study, the ensuing conclusions are more thematic and generally transcend implementation phases. Therefore, the findings aligned to each conclusion are not necessarily in the order of their appearance in the discussion of the findings contained in chapter 4. The relationship between the findings, subfindings, and conclusions is represented in Table 5.1.

Conclusion 1

Clearly defined leader identification roles and responsibilities are critical to building the leadership bench.

The first conclusion serves to address the portions of the overriding research question regarding roles in and contributions to the leader identification initiative. This conclusion is derived from the research data gleaned from the second finding and expressed by all three stakeholder groups: collaboration, communication, and commitment were critical to leader identification success.

Table 5.1
Summary of Conclusions and Findings

Conclusion	Finding	Subfindings
1. Clearly defined leader identification roles and responsibilities are critical to building the leadership bench.	2. Collaboration, communication, and commitment	2a. Collaboration was minimal among all process stakeholders and actors in the leader identification process. 2b. The leader identification process, while comprehensive in approach, was only well communicated by the organization development staff in Phase 1 and less so in Phase 2 and Phase 3. 2c. Variable commitment was demonstrated by the executive sponsors of the process, senior leaders involved in the talent reviews, and the ADP itself.
2. A climate of open and honest talent conversations in the talent review meetings trumps a system designed to serve as a proxy for process.	1. Systems perspective	1a. A system existed for performance management. 1b. A system existed for nomination and application. 1c. A system existed for data storage and retrieval. 1d. A system existed for individual development plans.
	4. Perceived benefits	4a. Leader identification as a talent management process resulted in healthy talent conversations. 4b. Leader identification as a talent management process resulted in the dissolution of functional silos.
	5. Process implementation tensions	5a. Gaps existed in talent reviewer knowledge. 5b. Objective data were insufficient. 5c. Different views existed on the weighting of data.
3. A "talent pool" approach to leader identification undermines true succession planning, where targeted development occurs.	3. Stakeholder expectations of holistic succession planning	3a. There was a perceived need for leader identification. 3b. There was a need to assess all leader talent. 3c. Talent management differed from succession planning.
	7. Development planning versus development	7a. 70/20/10: Experience, exposure, and education were all critical. 7b. There was limited accountability in development planning.
4. Stakeholder expectations and involvement drive the need for planned changes in leader identification methodology.	6. Planned systems change	6a. Planned changes were well received and welcome. 6b. Because of the scope of the planned changes, they might be difficult to fully execute.

This finding, spanning all three implementation phases, highlighted the evidence that collaboration was minimal between all stakeholders and other actors (such as the accelerated development pool [ADP] applicants) in the leader identification process. Oakes and Galagan (2011) suggested that although many companies know that leadership talent matters for growth as well as survival, managing it as a coherent strategy is still quite rare. Through their study of talent management and leader identification practices in many firms, they found that many companies' practices in this area continue to be stuck in silos. That is, the various stakeholders and actors involved all have their own agendas, act in competition with one another (rather than collaboration), and work against each other to gain political power. The research findings from this study largely support their claims, especially during Phase 1.

This conclusion also expresses the subfinding that the leader identification process, while comprehensive in approach, was only well communicated by the organization development staff during Phase 1 and less so during Phase 2 and Phase 3. While the communication of talent status to those selected for the ADP process is discussed under a different conclusion, this aspect of the emerging communication conclusion has more to do with communicating both the strategy and the action plan to the executives and to those managers and senior leaders involved in nominating leader candidates and assessing those candidates in the talent review meetings. The data collected within the second finding, particularly the interview data from the senior leader talent reviewers, suggested that the organization development function missed an opportunity to step up communications to senior leaders during Phase 2 and Phase 3. The executives were less concerned and less vocal about communication needs. The data

revealed that this was due in large part to the fact that the executives were involved in the strategy and action planning discussions with the organization development function.

Rothwell (2010) argued that executives and the organization development function should pay careful attention to how talent management initiatives are described to middle managers and other key leaders. He went on to point out, "If they do not give special attention to the communication strategy, so as to make the business goals and the policies and procedures clear, they risk broad scale failure" (p. 91). He also suggested that the organization development function work with the CEO and other executives to craft a communication strategy that explains how the succession and leader identification process works and why it exists. Again, both document review and interview data suggested that at Partnership Corrections, Inc., this communication was thorough during Phase 1 and was executed during Phase 2 and Phase 3 quite well with the executives. The problem was that the same level of thoroughness was not extended to the senior leader talent reviewers during Phase 2 and Phase 3.

The human resources department, and specifically the organization development function, often works cooperatively with the C-suite to steward the organization's leader identification, assessment, and development initiatives (Rothwell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2010). Additionally, those involved from the organization development function must have credibility with the organization's leaders to implement the leader identification initiative. Feedback from some suggested that the reputation of the organization development function increased during this process, suggesting that, at one time, credibility was in question. The talent reviewers felt as though they were included in the strategy and action plan during Phase 1, and then felt as though their role was reduced to

one of execution with less involvement in strategy starting at Phase 2. Research has shown that leaders involved in the talent review process need to understand strategy and context even after the initiative has begun (Berger & Berger, 2011; Rothwell, 2010).

This finding also revealed variable commitment on the part of the executive sponsors, the senior leader talent reviewers, and the ADP applicants/nominees. According to Silzer and Church (2010), the senior leader's primary focus is executing the business strategy and meeting the needs of the organization, its shareholders, its customers, its consumers, and its employees. They went on to point out that from a talent management perspective, the ability to identify potential serves as a proxy measure for the overall health of the enterprise and its future viability and sustainability. Some leaders may view a limited potential among the rising leader base as an indictment of their own leadership cultivation abilities. Therefore, leader identification and associated processes have the potential to take on a defensive, territorial, or protectionist approach. This protectionist approach might take the form of ensuring that leader candidates who lack high potential within one's own downline emerge from the leader identification process as an ADP participant.

While the human resources stakeholder participants expected such a protectionist approach to emerge during the talent review meetings, the data did not support this expectation. This may be due to the guideline set forth in the leader identification strategy communicated during the beginning of Phase 1 that no more than 20% of all those reviewed should be included in the ADP group. A total of 19 ADP participants were identified from among 77 leader nominees/applicants, representing a rate of 24%, not far

from the 20% guideline. In contrast, the U.S. average range is 15% to 25% (Church, 2014). Only 3% of organizations have a target that is greater than 25%.

All three stakeholder groups agreed that the ADP applicants/nominees should have taken more initiative in the application process. Because most organizations do not have an application process, there is currently no literature to which to compare or contrast the lackluster initiative taken by some leader candidates who were nominated by their senior leaders. No case studies or examples could be found supporting a pure nomination or application process when identifying leader talent. Again, this lack of initiative was evidenced by little to no effort in their application packet, including responding to essay questions, completing the assessments, and completing the relocation/mobility question. Vroom's (1995) expectancy theory proves helpful in explaining why some emerging leaders may have lacked the motivation to put the required effort into an application process. While the ADP applicants were not interviewed as a part of this study, it is possible that they might have not perceived the benefit (or lack thereof) to be of sufficient value so as to motivate their action to a worth application effort.

Finally, the talent reviewers and human resources stakeholders shared a common perspective that some executives and eligible talent reviewers failed to take their responsibilities as talent reviewers seriously. Rothwell (2010) suggested that for a talent management strategy to be effective, top management participation and support must be strongly evident. He pointed out that senior leader involvement should motivate participants and ensure that other members of the management team devote time and effort to building the leadership pipeline. It is possible that some potential participants

refrained from putting their best foot forward because they did not witness strong enough commitment from the top.

Rothwell's (2010) idea of commitment from the top has its roots in organizational culture theory explicated by Schein (1985). Schein (1985) focused on leadership as the critical component of the organization's culture because leaders can create, reinforce, or change the organization's culture. According to Schein (1985) there are five primary mechanisms that a leader can use to influence an organization's culture: attention, reaction to crises, role modeling, allocation of rewards, and criteria for selection and dismissal. Schein's assumption is that these five criteria reinforce and encourage behavioral and cultural norms within an organization.

Rothwell's (2010) work suggests that role modeling is likely most applicable in this case. Actions speak louder than words – therefore role-modeling behavior is a very powerful tool that executives have at their disposal to develop and influence corporate culture (Schein, 1985). Through role modeling, teaching, and coaching, executives reinforce the values that support the organizational culture. Employees (in this case lower level leaders and emerging leaders) often emulate executives' behavior and look to the executives for cues to appropriate behavior (Schein). Perhaps, had the executives personally shared with these leaders and emerging leaders their personal commitment to, and expectations of, the leader identification initiative, more eligible managers and emerging leaders might have taken the process more seriously.

Collaboration, communication, and commitment of all stakeholders involved in the leader identification initiative played key roles in the effectiveness of developing leadership pipelines. Therefore, clearly defined roles and responsibilities are

critical to building the leadership bench. A comprehensive strategy and action plan was well developed and communicated to all stakeholders by the organization development function during Phase 1. However, minimal collaboration and existing silos in operations, information systems, and human resources during Phase 1 contributed to perceptions of less than effective implementation. Additionally, talent reviewers felt somewhat marginalized in terms of their role in the strategy in Phase 2 and Phase 3. Variable commitment by all stakeholders, including leader nominees/applicants, also highlighted the need for more clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

This variable commitment has its roots in March's and Simon's (1958) seminal ideas about organizational commitment. They argue that individuals in organizations are essentially faced with two different decisions about the organization in which they work, each reflecting different considerations. The first is the decision to participate and the second is the decision to produce. The decision to participate is based on the concept of organization equilibrium, which refers to the balance of payments to members for their continued participation and contribution to the organization. This would suggest that there is a reciprocal, dependent relationship between the eligible candidates' participation in the leader identification initiative and the participation of the organization. In this case the organization is reflective of their direct supervisor and the executives in their part of the organization. Finally, an element of reticence was exhibited by all stakeholders due to unfamiliarity with leader identification as an organizational discipline.

In summary, variable commitment and collaboration, a lack of robust communication, and a reluctance to manage conflict all manifested themselves at various levels in each of the three phases of the leader identification process. Communication was

strong in Phase 1, but less so in Phase 2 and Phase 3. Commitment and collaboration were weak in Phase 1, but grew stronger in the latter two phases. The reluctance to manage conflict was most evident in Phase 1. All of these elements within this finding served to reinform the collective expectations of the three stakeholder groups.

Conclusion 2

A climate of open and honest talent conversations in the talent review meetings trumps a system designed to serve as a proxy for process.

The conclusion that a climate of open and honest talent conversations trumps a system designed to serve as a proxy for process serves to address the twin aspects of the research study associated with stakeholder perceptions and perceived benefits. This conclusion is informed by Finding 1, a systems perspective; Finding 5, process implementation tensions; and Finding 4, perceived benefits. Additionally, these findings, when viewed as a whole, paint a clearer picture of stakeholder perspectives during Phase 1 (systems perspective), stakeholder experiences during Phase 2 (process implementation tensions), and leader identification initiative benefits realized at the end of Phase 2 and during Phase 3 (perceived benefits).

Before moving into the findings that support this conclusion, a brief discussion of organizational climate is in order. According to Denison (1996), organizational culture is more concerned with the evolution of social systems within the enterprise over time. Organizational climate, on the other hand, is generally less concerned with evolution but more concerned with the impact that organizational systems have on groups and individuals. Additionally, Denison points out that while organizational culture theories argue for the importance of underlying assumptions, organizational climate theory places

greater emphasis on organizational members' perceptions of observable practices and procedures that are closer to the surface of organizational life. In this case, the practice of open and honest conversations about leader talent within the talent review meetings is the practice under observation here.

The first finding involved the systems perspective held by all three stakeholder groups. This finding contributes to the conclusion that the talent management system (TMS) served as a proxy for the leader identification process itself. There was consensus on this finding from all three stakeholder groups, which was most evident during Phase 1 and Phase 3. According to testimony from all three stakeholder groups, the TMS was fraught with pitfalls and limitations and created confusion among executives, talent reviewers, ADP applicants/nominees, and the coaches who worked with the ADPs on their development planning. The experience of the leader identification process through the lens of the TMS was exacerbated by the insistence of the ex-CHRO that the system itself would, in fact, be the solution to building a leadership bench for the enterprise. While there was demonstrated resistance to this approach, the fact that the leader identification process was unprecedented in the organization contributed to the stakeholders' (including the human resources function) confusion over how to address this conundrum.

According to Rothwell (2010), technology tools and web-enabled methods can be applied to nearly any area of a talent management process. These areas include (1) formulating leader identification policy, procedures, and action plans; (2) assessing past and present performance, including competency requirements; (3) determining future work or competency requirements; (4) assessing potential; (5) closing developmental

gaps; (6) maintaining talent inventories; and (7) evaluating the program and process of identifying leaders. Analysis of the organization's documents and systems revealed that the enterprise utilized systems for four main purposes relating to the identification of future leaders. These included the management and assessment of performance, the nomination and application of leader pool applicants, data storage and retrieval, and development planning. All three stakeholder groups experienced frustration with one or more uses of technology as they interacted with the TMS.

The results from this finding related to systems, when taken in the aggregate, revealed that the TMS was viewed as a proxy for the leader identification process itself. Two factors contributed to this phenomenon. First, according to a benchmarking study conducted by Church (2014), the human resources function seems to assume overall responsibility for the design of an appropriate talent management process as well as for the process of designing a talent strategy and then seeks to transfer the operation of the process to line management. This was clear in the case of Partnership Corrections, Inc.'s leader identification initiative. The human resources function may then be seen as the custodian of the process, with some responsibility for ensuring it is properly administered.

As the data collected from operations leaders in both the executive and talent reviewer stakeholder groups revealed, the outgoing CHRO missed an opportunity to engage the operations leaders (making up over 90% of the organization) in both the strategy and the implementation plan of the leader identification initiative. According to Rothwell (2010), a failure to create shared ownership of a talent management initiative can have deleterious effects during the implementation phase. Rothwell pointed out that

the quality of the identified and established leadership bench may be jeopardized. As this study was not longitudinal, it is too early to determine the consequences for the organization studied.

The second factor that contributed to the phenomenon of systems as proxy for process was the human resources function's view of the leader identification system as the single most important factor in identifying, assessing, and developing a quality leader pool. However, stakeholder feedback collected during the participant interviews, including those organization development practitioners within the human resources function responsible for deploying the leader identification initiative, suggested that the systems designed and implemented for the purposes of the initiative demonstrated shortcomings that served to frustrate the stakeholders.

This stakeholder frustration over talent management systems does not appear to be isolated to the organization studied. Church's (2014) benchmark study revealed that the inadequacy of talent management systems is an issue causing considerable concern in some other organizations, and some respondents in his study were quite passionate in their response both about the effectiveness of the systems in meeting their needs and the means for accomplishing the talent initiative's aims. Sample respondent sentiments in Church's study included (1) "The current system is awful, so it wouldn't take much to be different," (2) "We haven't done very well on our global HR systems, although we have tried to sort it out," (3) "Identification is only the beginning of the succession process, and even the relatively sophisticated current HR IT systems aren't necessarily up to the task," and (4) "Information systems to support talent management appear basic, and we need more capability than what we have."

The fifth finding was that, during the talent reviews that took place in Phase 2, there was a natural tension between objective data and subjective experiences in leader identification decisions. While the consensus from Finding 4 was that the talent conversations were honest and healthy, Finding 5 revealed that this perception came only after some disagreements in the talent reviews about which types of data would be privileged in leader identification decisions. Three factors contributed to the perceptions surrounding this finding, and these factors were experienced and expressed more by the talent reviewer and human resources stakeholder groups. First, there were perceived gaps in talent reviewer knowledge of ADP applicants. Second, there was a perceived insufficiency of the objective data (primarily performance data and potential assessment data) used in making leader identification decisions. Finally, there were differences in agreement between talent reviewers (and some executives) over the weighting of objective versus subjective data used in identifying leaders. Document review suggests that these perceptions existed in spite of attempts by the organization development function to define and control leader identification decision data points during Phase 1.

While the literature on succession planning and talent management systems and processes has begun to come into its own of late, there is still a dearth of literature regarding the factors that should be included in the talent review meetings themselves. Recently, Church and Rotolo (2013), while not fully addressing the issue of the nature of talent review discussions, did explore current and best practices in the types of measurements and data used to determine leader potential. They found that U.S. organizations use, on average, four different types from among the following types of data for leader identification decisions: (1) multisource ratings (used by 66% of U.S.

companies), (2) personality inventories (used by 66%), (3) interviews (used by 59%), (4) biographical data (used by 43%), (5) interactive simulations (used by 41%), (6) cognitive assessments (used by 39%), (7) career achievement inventories (used by 34%), (8) assessment centers (used by 30%), (9) motivational questionnaires (used by 20%), and (10) integrity tests (used by 2%).

Once again, the newness of the leader identification initiative contributed to talent reviewer confusion over whether to rely on objective data, subjective data, or both. This confusion was exacerbated by the fact that the assessment data used for the measurement of potential (one of the objective data sets) proved to lack the face validity anticipated by the organization development staff.

As chronicled in Finding 4, despite the failure of the leader identification system to live up to its purported potential during Phase 1 and the process implementation tensions experienced by talent reviewers during Phase 2, the results of this study revealed that the organization's leader identification process had begun to integrate the enterprise through healthy talent conversations, chipping away at existing silos and unifying the organization. This finding was supported by the perception of all stakeholder groups that the talent conversations during Phase 2 were much healthier and more robust than anticipated during Phase 1. There was, therefore, consensus that these unprecedented talent reviews during Phase 2 would, over time, serve as an integrating force, unifying the company in ways that other enterprise initiatives had not been able to do.

Oakes and Galagan (2011) suggested that too many companies' talent management practices continue to be stuck in silos. In today's knowledge worker era, these silos often have their own agendas, compete with each other for available budget,

and actively work against each other to gain political power. The larger the company, the more harmful a role silos play. Silos create an environment where sharing and collaborating is virtually impossible, whereby those in charge of specialized knowledge often embrace the belief that "knowledge is power" and erect silos to protect their turf. These individuals act primarily in the interest of their own silo—not the company. Oakes and Galagan (2011) went on to point out that human nature forces people to want to do the best they can within their own 'sandbox' at the expense of everybody else. Additionally, managers rationalize their lack of cooperation. Nowhere is this more real than in identifying and assessing leadership talent (Oakes & Galagan, 2011). When executives and talent reviewers discuss leader talent as if they are stewards of *all* the organization's leadership talent, the silos begin to erode.

In this case study, the organization's silos of talent hoarding, unrealistic and overinflated views of downline talent, and polite reticence to challenge these protectionist views all began to crumble during Phase 2. More importantly, the view of all three stakeholder groups that the organization's leader identification process nearly single-handedly served as an integrating force for the enterprise was solidified and heralded throughout Phase 3.

Conclusion 3

A "talent pool" approach to leader identification undermines true succession planning, where targeted development occurs.

This conclusion addresses stakeholder expectations of the leader identification initiative and offers a look into the leader development that follows identification and assessment. Further, this conclusion derives its support from Finding 3, which covers

stakeholder expectations of holistic succession planning, and Finding 7, which covers stakeholder views of development planning versus development itself.

The third finding from this research study was that all three stakeholder groups shared a common expectation during Phase 1 that the leader identification process would result in a more robust and targeted leadership bench than was realized during Phase 3. Three factors contributed to this finding. First, there was an expressed perceived need for an intentional, formal, enterprise-wide leader identification process. Second, by the end of Phase 2, it became clear to all stakeholder groups that there was a need to review all current and emerging leaders, not just those nominated or those who applied. Finally, there was some concern by representatives in all stakeholder groups that the leader identification initiative only addressed the supply side of leadership bench building and not the demand side, thus falling short of expected succession planning. The organization in this study approached leader identification by identifying *pools* of leader talent for accelerated development. The initiative did not address the landing positions these accelerated development leaders might one day fill.

Rothwell (2010) suggested that organizations may benefit from considering moving beyond identifying "pools" of talent to identifying and developing "accelerated pools" of leader talent. This view is consistent with the approach taken by the enterprise studied. During Phase 2, the organization development staff communicated to all stakeholders (including potential future leaders) that organization development is about developing the whole organization (including its members) and that talent management is about identifying and developing a smaller subset of the organization more deeply and in an accelerated fashion. Document review revealed that a general target was also

communicated to all stakeholders, which proposed that the leader identification process would net an ADP comprising about 20% of the total eligible pool of participants. Moreover, by accounts of all three stakeholder groups, previously the organization had not engaged in any purposeful process of leader identification. Document review did reveal that replacement planning, an early and ineffective form of succession planning (Rothwell, 2010), was attempted a few years before the leader identification initiative studied was undertaken.

Subfinding 3a revealed that the leader identification initiative was undertaken as a result of the expressed need by key enterprise leaders that an inventory of leader talent was necessary to begin building a leadership bench for sustained strategic advantage. The effort of building a leadership bench for strategic advantage is supported by the talent management and succession planning literature (Berger & Berger, 2011; Church, 2014; Rothwell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2010). Further, while the ex-CHRO was committed to a nomination and application process, Subfinding 3b revealed that it became clear during Phase 2 by the executive and talent reviewer stakeholder groups that a more thorough leader inventory must be conducted in the future, as there were perceived high-potential leaders (HIPOs) who neither were nominated nor applied. There were almost no examples in the literature where organizations used a nomination process for leader identification (Bersin & Associates, 2010). In fact, nearly all organizations approached leader identification from a holistic stewardship perspective, identifying and assessing all leaders at certain levels or in certain positions within the enterprise (Bersin & Associates, 2010; Church & Rotolo, 2013; Rothwell, 2010).

By the end of Phase 2 and going into Phase 3, it became clear to talent reviewers, executives, and even the managers of the ADP candidates that the leader pool approach presented challenges when determining the specific development needs of those in the ADP, as evidenced by Finding 3c. This challenge was a direct result of the organization studied focusing on the supply of leader talent without respect to the demand for leader talent. However, while the demand side of the equation was not thoroughly addressed by the organization under study, documentation revealed that leader development pools were assembled in such a way so that development planning might be completed for "levels" of leader pools and "job families." The challenge with this approach is that scarce development resources may not be appropriately allocated.

The concerns identified are consistent with the suggestion by Silzer and Church (2013) that organizations should answer the question "potential for what?" They argued that if development for a specific role is not feasible (as is the case in this study), then development toward a "family" of roles or a specific leader "level" is preferable. For example, document review suggested that the leader identification-assessment-development process created in this organization called for the development of wardens in the ADP against the requirements for an operations managing director role, though not one role in particular. Silzer and Church (2013) acknowledged this challenge in their treatise on the topic, suggesting that if specific development may not be achieved, organizations should at least aim for directional development. Silzer and Church reported:

> Some leadership experts suggest that the leadership skills needed in various corporate functions are fairly similar, except for specialized technical/functional skills and knowledge. However, others have concluded that different leadership

skills are needed for different business challenges, such as starting up a business, growing an existing business, or restructuring a declining business. (pp. 390-391)

Silzer and Church (2013) suggested that today's organizations, in their quest to identify, assess, and develop potential, struggle with the concept of potential itself. They claimed that many of today's organizations use potential as a generic concept. Silzer and Church (2013) asked the question: "Is potential made up of a standard set of components that are useful in all situations or do the components of potential vary for different long-term roles or objectives?" (p. 391). Neither Silzer and Church (2013) nor the organization studied have answered this question in full. The responses of both executive and talent reviewer stakeholders suggest, however, that the organization needs to answer this question before engaging in the second generation of the leader development process in future years. Perceptions by these two stakeholder groups held during Phase 1 reflected an expectation that succession planning, in the form of slating potential leader candidates to specific positions, would occur in Phase 3, allowing for more targeted allocation of development resources to prepare leader candidates for these specific roles. In other words, there was an expectation that both the supply side and demand side of leader identification would be addressed with this initiative, and a belief that failing to address the demand side undermined a true succession environment where targeted development occurs.

While the executive and talent reviewer stakeholder groups expected and hoped for true succession planning, some in the human resources stakeholder group cautioned that succession planning in a paragovernmental environment is potentially complicated. Human resources stakeholders warned that mating potential leader candidates to specific future leadership roles could be construed as a promise. This concern is not without merit

or foundation, as Rothwell (2010) dealt with potential challenges with succession

planning in government entities and in some government contractors. As the organization

studied is, in fact, a government contractor, Rothwell's cautions do have context.

Rothwell (2010) warned:

> Some governmental entities have civil service systems that prohibit (by law) the naming of individuals to fill positions without competitive job searches. In some jurisdictions, all jobs must be posted. That approach means, in practical terms, that a government entity can develop anyone who wishes to be developed—a method sometimes called *a talent-pool approach*. But identifying individual successors in advance may not be possible. (p. 69)

Because the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs has jurisdiction

over the organization studied, fairness must be demonstrated in filling positions within

the enterprise. In the end, it was determined that this fairness can be demonstrated as long

as no promise is conveyed and all candidates who meet the minimum qualifications may

compete for an open position regardless of their ADP status.

This conclusion that a talent pool approach fell short of stakeholder expectations

was also rooted in stakeholder ideas about how potential leader candidates would be

developed and the notion that the development planning process itself lacked the proof

stakeholders needed that development would actually occur. The seventh and final

finding produced by the research was that development "planning" does not equate to

development progress, as evidenced by data collected from the events during Phase 3. All

three stakeholder groups shared the concern that there might be a potential disconnect

between the size of the ADP and the limited development budget for the second-

generation leader identification process. This is closely tied to the aforementioned

concern that not answering the "development for what?" question was critical given the

limited development resources available.

During Phase 1, organization development staff, when communicating the entire action plan for the leader identification initiative, shared the 70/20/10 model of development (Lombardo & Eichinger, 2000). Executive and talent reviewer stakeholders bought in to this approach, conveying that this model was a critical component of development planning and development itself in Phase 3, as explained in Finding 7a. Lombardo and Eichinger presented this model of development to which many organizations aspire today. In their seminal work on career architecting, they argued that leaders develop through a combination of experiences (presumed to be 70% of one's development portfolio), exposure to mentors and coaches (20% of the development portfolio), and education through formal learning (10% of the development portfolio). Rothwell (2010) argued that, while organizations espouse this model, few enact the formulaic mix suggested by Lombardo and Eichinger (2000).

While the scope of this study did not encompass the longitudinal nature of the development phase that followed leader identification and assessment, development planning was, in fact, within the scope of this study and fell within Phase 3. One of the best practice characteristics of talent management strategies is that development necessarily follows identification and assessment (Rothwell, 2010). Additionally, based on document discovery, the three-stage development plan process described by Rothwell (2010) was built into the talent management initiative within this organization. These stages included (1) general and broad-sweeping leader development programs aimed at large pools of leaders for accelerated development, meeting the needs of many; (2) tailored, specific developmental programs and processes to meet the competency gaps of

individuals or small groups of HIPOs; and (3) specific assignments, temporary roles, etc. for experiential development at the individual level.

While this three-stage development process was espoused by all stakeholders, all stakeholders expressed concerns over limited accountability during Phase 3 (by ADP candidates, human resources personnel, leaders of ADP candidates, and coaches of the ADP participants) for the documentation and tracking of development plans and development progress, as was explicated in Finding 7b. Many organizations use IDPs as a part of their leadership development initiative, but more times than not the plans aren't used effectively and are often just cast aside (McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004). This is a tool that's ripe for improvement in most organizations, and according to feedback from all three stakeholder groups, the organization studied is no exception.

In fact, a recent study by Church (2014) found that even in high-performance organizations of 1,000+ employees, more than half admitted that not holding leaders accountable for developing their people hindered the acceleration of leadership development. This transgression was tied with shallow succession plans as the top hindrance to such development. Moreover, of 17 potential barriers studied, lack of accountability had the second highest negative correlation to market performance, suggesting that addressing this problem could give organizations a competitive advantage.

Further, in focusing on the acceleration of development in HIPOs, more than half of survey respondents said that the success of their organization's HIPO development program was significantly hindered by leaders of HIPOs who were ineffective at coaching and managing them (Church, 2014). This is precisely why the organization

studied utilized the 70/20/10 model (Lombardo & Eichinger, 2000), which included the

element of assigning to the ADP participant a coach who was someone other than the

ADP's manager. However, executive stakeholders, talent reviewers, and even human

resources stakeholders were concerned that some coaches may not have taken their role

as a coach as seriously as they could have. The practice of leaders developing leaders

provides those doing the teaching with important opportunities to hone their coaching

skills. Additionally, it adds to a coaching culture in the organization. Creating a culture of

coaching promotes an environment of leaders developing leaders. This, in turn, better

prepares the organization's future leaders and promotes a culture of leadership

development accountability (McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004). Because this study

included only the planning element of leader development, results do not allow for an

understanding of whether or not these stakeholder concerns will come to fruition.

In summary, two of the seven findings provided evidence of the conclusion that a

talent pool approach to leader identification undermines true succession planning where

targeted development occurs. Starting in Phase 1, stakeholders held expectations that the

leader identification initiative would result in the codification of a succession plan where

potential leader candidates would be slotted for possible future roles (Finding 3). By

Phase 3, all stakeholders agreed that the ADP candidates would best be prepared by

going through a holistic development process, but those involved in creating and

executing these development plans did not always demonstrate accountability (Finding

7).

Conclusion 4

Stakeholder expectations and involvement drive the need for planned changes
in leader identification methodology.

This conclusion addresses the need for planned changes to the organization's leader identification process that arose out of stakeholder expectations and involvement. Further, this conclusion derives its support from Finding 6: that the planned changes for the second generation of the leader identification process were driven by the expectations of, and involvement in, the first generation. Ultimately, there was agreement by all three stakeholder groups that planned changes were in order.

The organization development function began to identify improvement opportunities as early as Phase 1 and continuing through Phase 3. In Phase 3, these opportunities were converted into nine planned changes that were developed with input from, and then communicated to, the executive sponsors, senior leader talent reviewers, and potential future ADP applicants. These planned changes were well received by most and even anticipated by some. However, there was expressed concern regarding the planned changes with respect to the capacity for the organization development function to deliver on these changes and the enterprise leaders' capacity to consume the scope of these planned changes.

The nine planned changes were discussed in terms of where they fall along the leader identification timeline: before the talent review discussions, during the talent review discussions, and after the talent review discussions. Further, these planned changes have been, in various related language, identified as best or common practices by

leading organizations (Berger & Berger, 2011; Bersin & Associates, 2010; Church & Rotolo, 2013; Oakes & Galagan, 2011; Rothwell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2013).

Two of the three planned changes identified in the "before" phase were discussed at some length in the literature. For example, Church and Rotolo (2013) suggested that reliable and valid assessments of leader potential (Planned Change 1) are critical for leader identification and succession management success. In their leader assessment practices benchmark study, they found that assessing leaders for future potential is a common practice by over 50% of large U.S.-based organizations. Further, they found that over 70% of the organizations studied use leadership assessments for decision-making (identifying potential) and developmental purposes simultaneously. This is precisely the case with the organization studied. That is, the two assessments used (for leadership motivation and leadership capability—both of which serve as a holistic measure of future potential) were used for decision-making and developmental purposes simultaneously. All stakeholders agreed that these assessments are critical for future iterations of the leader identification process, but that assessments with higher levels of face validity are needed.

Planned Change 3 (reviewing all leaders consistently across the enterprise) is supported by the research conducted by Bersin and Associates (2010). In their study, they found that those enterprises where stakeholders report higher levels of succession management success conducted their leader identification process with all leaders at the levels to which they applied the process. In other words, selective methodologies such as nomination processes were not highly correlated with sustainable succession management in their study. Ultimately, they found that the companies with more mature

leader identification processes differentiated their methodology from those with less mature leader identification processes. As the organization studied endeavors to mature in its leader identification process, all stakeholders agreed that the practice of excluding potential leaders through nomination must be sunset in favor of a more inclusive process whereby all leaders are assessed and discussed.

The planned changes identified for the second generation of the leader identification process that take place during the talent reviews (Phase 2) primarily deal with involvement of the right reviewers and transparency in the process. Rothwell (2010) pointed out that, while all appropriate levels of leaders need to be involved in the identification and assessment of potential future leaders, the most critical differentiator between the 'best" and the "rest" of the successful practices is the level of involvement of the highest-level executives and the next-level senior executives. While the top executives were involved in this first generation of the leader identification process, they had less input on the leader identification decisions below the vice president level than on the vice presidents themselves. Planned Change 6 involves the top executives' attendance at talent review discussions for key leadership roles even below the vice president level.

In addition, Oakes and Galagan (2011) suggested that best practice talent review processes include three key attributes: process integrity, talent review attendance, and business strategy alignment. Process integrity refers to the consistency of the process and the quality and reliability of the talent data. This speaks to the planned change of introducing more transparency and intentionality about the importance of both objective and subject familiarity data sources for talent decisions (Planned Change 4). Talent review attendance refers to ensuring that the appropriate line and business leaders are

present and participate in the talent review meetings. Their research showed that only 25% of all companies report that the right attendees are present at all talent review meetings. Planned Changes 5, 6, and 7 will help to ensure the organization studied will be among that 25% of best-practice organizations.

Planned Change 8 (removing the label of high potential) and Planned Change 9 (having executives rather than human resources communicate talent status) go hand-in-hand in the literature that speaks to these changes. Berger and Berger (2011) and Silzer and Church (2013) discussed these issues in their research. They argued that the question of whether or not to tell a HIPO of his or her status is one that organizations have wrestled with for decades. In addition, there seems to be no consensus as to which decision has the best or most deleterious effects. Silzer and Church (2013) acknowledged that, not surprisingly, most HIPOs want to be told of their status and those not identified as having high potential prefer not to be told. These authors went on to point out that, if status is shared, it should be clear to both those chosen for accelerated development and those not chosen that the decision is a point-in-time one (Rothwell, 2010; Silzer & Church, 2013). That is, all participants should know that ADP membership, or lack thereof, is only for the current year and that talent reviews will occur annually.

Berger and Berger (2011) and Silzer and Church (2013) pointed to research attesting to the positive impact of the Pygmalion effect that sharing HIPO status with HIPOs has on performance. Further, they argued that those individuals who are labeled as high potentials will have higher expectations with regard to their future performance compared to those individuals not receiving such labels. They also pointed out that the opposite is true. That is, when individuals are told that they have not been deemed as

213

having high potential, the results are negative affect and dissatisfaction. They also suggested that those who receive such undesirable feedback experience a decrease in task commitment and performance satisfaction.

Silzer and Church (2013) argued that the practical implications of sharing talent status affect leader retention and leader engagement, both very important constructs in the organization studied. They suggested that sharing high potential status to HIPOs largely improves engagement and retention of high-potential future leaders. Conversely, once those who are not identified as high potential are made aware of their status (either directly or by observation of the fact that they are not participating in an accelerated development process), they are more likely to be a flight risk and have lower levels of engagement. It is important to note, however, that the increased flight risk status of non-HIPO leader candidates is mitigated to the extent that low performance limits their ability to find a suitable role elsewhere in the organization or outside the organization.

While the research is ripe with discussion regarding the efficacies and cautions of sharing HIPO status, there is no mention of human resources' role in the sharing of talent status. All of the literature seems to assume that that the appropriate line and staff leaders and executives are in the best position to share status, if any, following appropriate coaching and sometimes scripting by the appropriate organization development professionals. The second generation of the leader identification process will remove the high-potential label by simply identifying those individuals who will go through an accelerated development process (Planned Change 8). Further, this accelerated development status will be communicated by the executives within the potential leader applicant's area rather than by a human resources leader. This will allow for the

executives to hold the types of development and career discussions expected of them and for the leader applicants to ascribe more validity to the message being received than if it were communicated from human resources.

As stated at the outset of the discussion of this finding, some in the human resources stakeholder group expressed concern that the organization development function could be overtaxed by reviewing all current and emerging leaders in the second generation of the initiative. Further, a few in the talent reviewer stakeholder group had the corollary concern that the enterprise may not be able to consume the expanded version that the planned changes called for. In the end, all were in agreement that proper talent stewardship calls for reviewing all current and emerging leaders. The reminder that the organization planned to continue to hold to a 20% ADP target (Church, 2014) allayed most concerns of bandwidth.

In summary, the nine planned changes were identified as a result of the various stakeholders' involvement in and expectations of the first generation of the leader identification process. These planned changes for the second generation were organized around the leader identification timeline involving those activities that occur before, during, and after the talent review discussions themselves. The current literature speaks to and supports the nine planned changes as best practices among many of today's large enterprises engaged in the practice of leader identification as a part of a larger succession management initiative.

Implications for Theory

There is a continuing gap between the literatures regarding leader identification/ succession management and stakeholder/expectancy theory. This study contributed,

empirically, to our understanding of how organizations' efforts around the identification of leadership potential both inform and are informed by stakeholders involved in such activities within the context of leader development pool strategies.

The conceptual framework suggesting that stakeholders' perceptions and expectations both inform and are informed by the activities of leader identification, assessment, and development within a talent pool strategy proved helpful. The various constructs within this model have been discussed primarily separate and apart from one another in the literature. Silzer and Church (2010, 2013) argued that as a part of the increasing role of strategic human resources within the firm, organizations are placing greater emphasis on identifying, assessing, and developing the leader talent that is necessary to achieve critical business strategies. Identifying key talent within the firm who demonstrate the potential to be successful in roles with greater levels of complexity and responsibility has led organizations to shift from developing emerging leaders for their current role to developing them for future roles (Van Velsor et al., 2010). Silzer and Church (2013) argued that this represents a significant mind shift from short-term selection to long-term prediction.

According to Silzer and Church (2013), talent potential is associated with possibilities for the future rather than problems with current performance. Thus, talent is represented in the form of knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics possessed by both individual leaders and the collective. Rothwell (2010) and Silzer and Dowell (2010a) suggested that a collective of emerging leaders possessing future potential is considered a talent pool. This study examined the framework of identifying future

leadership potential through the practice of assessing and developing a pool of emerging leader talent.

The context of leader development pools in this study also contained the constructs of stakeholder and expectancy theory. Freeman's (1984) discussion of *who really matters* provides the necessary backdrop for identifying those groups within the organization who have the greatest stake in seeing a leader identification and succession initiative succeed within the context of leader development pools. The C-suite executives, the human resources development function responsible for executing the leader identification initiative, and the senior leaders involved in the leader talent review process were identified as the three critical stakeholder groups. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory supported this study by providing insight into the perceptions and expectations of these stakeholder groups during Phase 1 and Phase 2 that informed the confirmed and communicated planned changes in Phase 3.

Partnership Correction Inc.'s leader identification initiative called for a number of collective decisions that were both informed by and informed collective expectations. First, there were the collective decisions made about the status of each of the 77 leader nominees/applicants. Theses were carefully weighed decisions that grew out of healthy discourse and debate. Then there were the collective decisions regarding the development plans for each of the 19 identified for the accelerated development pool. These were arrived at through robust discussion as well. Finally, there were collective decisions around the nine planned changes for future iterations of the leader identification strategy. These were also discussed, but with general early agreement among executives, and then senior leaders and human resources personnel. In fact, the planned changes for future

iterations of the leader identification process grew out of a manner of collective expectations that cut across the three stakeholder groups.

This relationship between expectations and ensuing leadership decisions can be described through the lens of the contingency model of situational leadership theory by Vroom & Yetton (1973), and later expounded upon by Vroom & Jago (1988). This situational theory argues that the best style of leadership is contingent upon the situation. This model posits specific leadership styles for group decision-making, and identifies five different styles (ranging from autocratic to consultative to group-based decisions) based on the situation & level of involvement. These include: (1) Autocratic Type 1, where the leader makes his own decisions using information that is readily available to him at the time. This type is completely autocratic; (2) Autocratic Type 2, where the leader collects required information from others, then makes decisions alone. Here, others' involvement involves simply providing information; (3) Consultative Type 1, where the leader shares the problem to relevant others individually and seeks their ideas and suggestions, and then makes decisions alone. Here the leader's decisions may or may not reflect the influence of the others; (4) Consultative Type 2, where the leader shares problems with relevant others as a group and seeks their ideas and suggestions and makes decision alone. Here, others discuss and understand each other's alternatives. But again, the leader's decisions may or may not reflect the influence of others. (5) Group-based Type 2, where the leader discusses problems and situations with others as a group and seeks their ideas and suggestions through discussion and debate. The leader accepts any decision and does not try to force his idea. Decisions accepted by the group become final.

All three of the decision types (leader identification decisions, leader development decisions, and strategic planned change decisions) engaged by the stakeholders grew out of a cycle of individual expectations, individual participation, collective expectations, and collective participation. This iterative process led to collective decision making around the three critical, aforementioned types of decisions. While Vroom & Yetton (1973) and Vroom and Jago (1988) were primarily concerned with the individual level of analysis, this study may contribute to their theories by stretching them to the group level of analysis with a better understanding of the idea of collective expectancy. Collective expectancy grew out of and added to collective participation (roles and contributions) to the leader identification initiative. This study calls for a better understanding of the construct of collective expectancy.

Few empirical studies have sought to understand leadership development from a stakeholder point of view (DeRue & Myers, 2013; Silzer & Church, 2010). Moreover, Bass and Steidlmeier's (1999) suggestion that leadership should be discussed in the context of stakeholder theory serves as only a close proximity of an attempt to link leader identification and succession to stakeholder and expectancy theory. Silzer and Church (2010) asserted that without contributions and inducements to key constituencies, succession management efforts are not likely to succeed. Furthermore, there are no empirical studies linking stakeholder perceptions and expectations (either at the individual or at the collective level) to leader identification processes or outcomes within a development pool strategy.

From the findings and conclusions produced in this research emerged a conceptual framework that serves as an evolution of the one presented in chapter 1 of this

descriptive case study. This revised framework is depicted in Figure 5.1. The seven

findings and four conclusions derived from this study suggest that individual and

collective stakeholder perceptions and expectations informed a systems perspective of

leader identification. This systems perspective, in turn, informed the communication

practices, process implementation factors, and leader development planning all involved

in the leader identification initiative. Perceived benefits were then derived, which

informed the planned changes for the second generation of the leader identification

initiative. These planned changes ultimately shaped the systems perspective that will be

applied to future iterations of the leader identification initiative.

Leader Identification for Accelerated Development

Figure 5.1. Revised conceptual framework.

Leader identification for the purposes of leader development pools examined in

this research evoked both a systems perspective and activities (including development

planning) that led to perceived benefits. Stakeholder perceptions and expectations were dynamic and emergent in nature, leading to collective expectations, and these ultimately led to the need for planned changes in future leader identification and talent pool efforts. Leader identification for the purpose of development pools, viewed from this holistic perspective, contributes to the existing theories of leader identification, leader development, and stakeholder expectations. Viewed together, these constructs examined through the organization's leader identification initiative are crucial to understanding individual and collective expectations of, and influence on, the process, systems, roles, and communication activities that support a leader identification and talent pool strategy.

Implications for Practice

This case study concluded that individual and organizational perceptions and expectations both informed and were informed by the process and system of leader identification in a talent pool environment. This reciprocal relationship illuminates the interdependencies of the expectations, stakeholder actions, and perceived benefits that lead to planned changes of leader identification for development purposes. Talent management practitioners should be encouraged to keep a watchful eye toward stakeholder perceptions and expectations when identifying, assessing, and developing potential future leaders. Further, practitioners should be mindful of stakeholder activities such as communication, process implementation, and development planning, all of which lead to perceived benefits in identifying a pool of leader talent possessing substantive potential.

From a pragmatic perspective, the findings and conclusions of this study support the need for talent management practitioners to focus on creating opportunities for

stakeholders to get their fingerprints on leader identification and development initiatives early and often in the design and implementation of the strategy. Exploring stakeholder expectations and perceptions early in the design of such a strategy should result in considerable opportunities to avoid some of the systems and process misalignments that occurred in the design and implementation of the leader identification initiative described in this study.

By focusing on the stakeholder perspective of leader identification and ensuing development (DeRue & Myers, 2013; Silzer & Church, 2010), and paying careful attention to clarifying the *potential for what* (Silzer & Church, 2013), talent management practitioners can help to improve the organization's competitive advantage by establishing a leader talent pool from which the future leadership pipeline is built. This implication supports a need to focus intentional, collaborative efforts on establishing leader success criteria for specific leader roles or families of roles, and then leveraging identification, assessment, and development processes, practices, and tools to build a pipeline of leader talent more effectively and efficiently than the competition.

Organizations that seek to establish a development culture in pursuit of generational leadership succession should ensure that executives, human resources and talent management practitioners, and senior leaders responsible for leader identification all collaborate and communicate to facilitate the proper design and implementation of HIPO identification and development strategies. In the case of this particular study, while collaboration and communication among stakeholders was minimal during Phase 1 and Phase 3, this collaboration and communication was more prevalent during Phase 2. Shoring up these efforts in earlier stages (as well as continuing the collaboration and

communication in later stages) of the design and implementation of such a strategy should contribute to the organization's leadership pipeline success.

Implications for Future Research

This study offers findings and conclusions that contribute to our understanding of the reciprocal relationship between the perceptions/expectations of stakeholders and the processes, systems, and perceived benefits of the identification and ensuing development of HIPO talent. In order to extend these findings and conclusions beyond the context of this study, there are four areas that warrant future related research. Three of these areas are based on the identified and acknowledged limitations and delimitations of this study. The fourth potential future research area is based on the emerging findings and conclusions of this study.

One of the limitations of this study was its focus on stakeholder perceptions/ expectations and perceived benefits of a leader identification strategy and implementation within one large, U.S.-based adult corrections organization. It is recommended that similar case studies be conducted in other industries and in other organizations with a global rather than domestic footprint. In addition, research using a multiple case study methodology may shed even more light on the relationship between leader identification strategies and their influence on and by constituencies who have an apparent stake in the strategies' success. Using the same parameters and selection criteria as this research, an examination of this reciprocal relationship at multiple organizations could add to the transferability of this study's results.

A second recommendation is informed by one of the intentional delimitations of this research. In order to bound this research within a reasonable timeframe, this study

focused primarily on the first element of a succession management strategy: leader identification. It is recommended that future research take a more longitudinal approach, including the identification, assessment, development, and movement of HIPO talent (Saks, 2006). By taking a more holistic approach, future research should yield a greater depth of understanding of the reciprocal relationship between stakeholder expectations and all four of these critical elements of a leader succession strategy.

The delimitation of focusing on stakeholder perceptions and expectations rather than the effectiveness of a leader identification strategy informs the third recommendation for future research. It is recommended that future research explore the effectiveness of leader identification and development pool strategies discussed by Groves (2007) and Rothwell (2010). This recommendation follows comments by DeRue and Myers (2013) and Silzer and Church (2013) that few organizations empirically evaluate the effectiveness of their leader identification and development pool strategies and practices. While extending this research to leader identification and development effectiveness would necessitate a longitudinal approach, the contribution to both theory and practice should provide the empirical evidence that C-suite executives and talent management practitioners need to effectively design and implement their leader succession strategies.

The findings and conclusions of this study suggest that researching a leader identification strategy and implementation focused only on the supply side of succession contains inherent shortcomings and fails to meet stakeholder expectations of eventual leader movement and succession. Therefore, the fourth recommendation for future research calls for an examination of a leader identification and development strategy

implementation where both leader supply and demand are stressed. This could reduce, or even eliminate, stakeholder concerns around the question of "potential for what?" expressed by Silzer and Church (2013). As is the case for other recommendations for future studies, this research approach would allow for a more holistic view of a succession management strategy and should encourage executives and talent management practitioners to create and implement talent strategies that are more likely to result in greater leadership pipeline success.

Concluding Remarks

This dissertation began with the business case for today's organizations ensuring leadership succession through strategic talent management, as summed up by Rothwell (2010), who stated, "In order to implement a strategic plan, organizations require the right people in the right place at the right times" (p. 14). Further, identifying these leaders through an intentional identification and assessment process that leads to purposeful accelerated development is a strategic practice that few organizations execute successfully (Berger & Berger, 2011). Those organizations that do engage in such a process rarely do so with intentional stakeholder expectations and input in mind.

The results of this bounded, single case study support and contribute to theories of leadership identification, assessment, and development, as well as stakeholder and expectancy theories. In addition, these results contribute to the existing research in each of these constructs, adding to a much-needed connection between leadership identification and development and stakeholder expectations. Further, this research served as a response to the call for a greater understanding of leadership identification and development from a stakeholder perspective within the context of a broader talent

management strategy (DeRue & Myers, 2013; Silzer & Church, 2013). The results of this study suggest that stakeholder perceptions, expectations, and roles all play an important part in the design and implementation of a talent management strategy, including how leaders are identified for accelerated development. Further, stakeholder involvement in such a strategy led to the identification of several planned changes that will shape the future of talent management in this organization. By better understanding stakeholder expectations (individual and collective), a clearer systems perspective of talent management was gleaned, informing communication and process implementation activities, resulting in perceived stakeholder and organizational benefits.

REFERENCES

Adler, S., & Mills, A. (2008). *Controlling leadership talent risk: An enterprise imperative.* London, UK: Aon Consulting.

American Society of Training and Development. (2012). *The annual report.* Retrieved from http://www.astd.org

Antonioni, D. (1996). Designing an effective 360-degree appraisal feedback process. *Organizational Dynamics*, *25*(2), 24-38.

Avolio, B. J. (2007). Promoting more integrative strategies for leadership theory-building. *American Psychologist, 62,* 25-33.

Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2008). Developmental readiness: Accelerating leader development. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Research and Practice, 60,* 331-347.

Barnard, C. A. (1947). *The functions of the executive.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Bass, B. M. (1990). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. *Organizational Dynamics*, *18*(3), 19-31.

Bass, B. M. (1998). The ethics of transformational leadership. In J. B. Ciulla (Ed.), *Ethics, the heart of leadership* (pp. 169-192). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2008). *The Bass handbook of leadership* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Free Press.

Bass, B. M., & Steidlmeier, P. (1999). Ethics, character, and authentic transformational

   leadership behavior: A systematic analysis of issues, alternatives, and approaches.

   Leadership Quarterly, *10*(2), 181-217.

Bass, B. M., & Stogdill, R. M. (1990). *The Bass handbook of leadership: Theory,*

   research & managerial applications. New York, NY: Free Press.

Bauer, T. N. (2011). *Onboarding new employees: Maximizing success [*SHRM

   Foundation's Effective Practice Guideline Series]. Alexandria, VA: Society for

   Human Resource Management. Retrieved from http://www.shrm.org/about/

   foundation/products/pages/onboardingEPG.aspx

Bennis, W., & Nanus, B. (1997). *Leaders: Strategies for taking charge.* San Francisco,

   CA: Harper & Row.

Berger, L. A., & Berger, D. R. (Eds.). (2011). *The talent management handbook:*

   Creating a sustainable competitive advantage by selecting, developing, and

   promoting the best people. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Bernthal, P. R., & Wellins, R. S. (2001). Retaining talent: A benchmarking study. *HR*

   Benchmark Group, *2*(3), 1-28.

Bernthal, P., & Wellins, R. (2006). Trends in leader development and succession. *Human*

   Resource Planning, *29*(2), 31-41.

Bersin & Associates. (2010). *High impact succession planning*, v.1.0. Oakland, CA:

   Author.

Boudreau, J. W., & Ramstad, P. M. (2004). *Talentship and the evolution of human*

   resource management: From "professional practices" to "strategic talent

   decision science" [CEO Publication G04-6(458)]. Los Angeles, CA: Center for

Effective Organizations. Retrieved from http://www-marshall.usc.edu/assets/
047/9842.pdf

Boudreau, J. W., & Ramstad, P. M. (2005). Talentship, talent segmentation, and
sustainability: A new HR decision science paradigm for a new strategy definition.
Human Resource Management, *44*(2), 129-136.

Bracken, D. W. (1994). Straight talk about multi-rater feedback. *Training and
Development*, *28*(9), 44-51.

Burke, M. J., & Day, R. R. (1986). A cumulative study of the effectiveness of managerial
training. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *71*(2), 232-245.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Byars, L. L., & Rue, L. W. (1984). *Human resource and management*. Homewood, IL:
Richard D. Irwin.

Byham, W. C., Smith, A. B., & Paese, M. J. (2012). *Grow your own leaders:
Acceleration pools, a new method of succession management* (2nd ed.).
Bridgeville, PA: Development Dimensions International.

Cheloha, R., & Swain, J. (2005). Talent management system key to effective succession
planning. *Canadian HR Reporter*, *18*(17), 5-7.

Chen, Y., Gupta, A., & Hoshower, L. (2006, March/April). Factors that motivate business
faculty to conduct research: An expectancy theory analysis. *Journal for Education
for Business, 81,* 179-189.

Church, A. H. (2006, May 6). *Bring on the high potentials—talent assessment at
PepsiCo.* Presented at the symposium "Talent Management: Will the High

Potentials Stand Up?," Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Houston, TX.

Church, A. H. (2013). Engagement is in the eye of the beholder: Understanding differences in the OD vs. talent management mindset. *OD Practitioner, 45*(2),42-48.

Church, A. H. (2014, June 19-26). *High-potential & senior executive talent management strategies in top companies: A 2014 benchmark study.* Presented at the Conference Board Council of Talent Management Executives I & II.

Church, A. H., & Bracken, D. W. (1997). Advancing the state of the art of 360-degree feedback. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *27*, 983-1020.

Church, A. & Rotolo, C.T. (2013). *How are top companies assessing their high-potentials and senior executives?: A talent management benchmark study.* Consulting Psychology Journal. (3), 199-223.

Clark, K. C., Clark, M. B., & Campbell, D. P. (1992). *Impact of leadership.* Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership.

Combs, W. L., & Falletta, S. V. (2000). *The targeted evaluation process: A performance consultant's guide to asking the right questions and getting the results you trust*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training & Development.

Conger, J. A. (1992). *Learning to lead: The art of transforming managers into leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Conger, J. A., & Benjamin, B. (1999). *Building leaders: How successful companies develop the next generation.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research method: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Daugherty, R. A., & Williams, S. E. (1997). The long-term impacts of leadership development: An assessment of a statewide program. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *4*(2), 101-115.

Day, D. V. (2000). Leadership development: A review in context. *Leadership Quarterly, 11,* 581-613.

Day, D. V., & Harrison, M. M. (2007). A multilevel, identity-based approach to leadership development. *Human Resource Management Review, 17,* 360-373.

Denison, D.R. (1996) What is the difference between organizational culture and organizational climate? A native's point of view on a decade of paradigm wars. *The Academy of Management Review*, 21, 3, 619-654.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (1998). Introduction: Entering the field of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (pp. 1-34). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DeRue, D. S., & Ashford, S. J. (2010a). Who will lead and who will follow? A social process of leadership identity construction in organizations. *Academy of Management Review, 35*, 627-647.

DeRue, D. S., & Myers, C. G. (2011). *What is your motivation for learning? Cultural differences and the impact on leader development*. Paper presented at the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, San Antonio, TX.

DeRue, D. S., & Myers, C. G. (2013). Leadership development: A review and agenda for future research. In D. V. Day (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of leadership and organizations*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Doh, J. P. (2003). Can leadership be taught? Perspectives from management educators. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *2*(1), 54-67.

Donaldson, T., & Preston, L. (1995). The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence and implications. *Academy of Management Review, 20*, 65-91.

Dowell, B. E. (2010). Managing leadership talent pools. In R. F. Silzer & B. E. Dowell (Eds.), *Strategy driven talent management: A leadership imperative.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Downton, J. V. (1973). *Rebel leadership: Commitment and charisma in the revolutionary process*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Dunet, D. O., & Reyes, M. (2006). Stakeholder-focused evaluation of an online course for health care providers. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, *26*(4), 257-267.

Dychtwald, K., Erickson, T. J., & Morison, R. (2006). *Workforce crisis: How to beat the coming shortage of skills and talent.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Eisenhardt, K. M., & Graebner, M. E. (2007). Theory building from cases: Opportunities and challenges. *Academy of Management Journal*, *50*(1), 25-32.

Evans, M. G. (1970). The effects of supervisory behavior on the path-goal relationship. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *5*, 277-298.

Fiedler, F. E. (1964). A contingency model of leadership effectiveness. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 149-190). New York, NY: Academic Press.

Fleishman, E. A., & Harris, E. F. (1962). Patterns of leadership behavior related to employee grievances and turnover. *Personnel Psychology*, *15*(1), 43-56.

Flood, P. C., Hannan, E., Smith, K. G., Turner, T., West, M. A., & Dawson, J. (2000). Chief executive leadership style, consensus decision making, and top management team effectiveness. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *9*(3), 401-420.

Freeman, R. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston, MA: Ballinger.

Freeman, R., & McVea, J. (2010). A stakeholder approach to strategic management. In M. Hitt, E. Freeman, & J. Harrison (Eds.), *Handbook of strategic management.* Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Friedman, S. D., & Singh, H. (1989). CEO succession and stockholder reaction: The influence of organizational context and event content. *Academy of Management Journal*, *32*, 718-744.

Fudge, R. S., & Schlacter, J. L. (1999, February). Motivating employees to act ethically: An expectancy theory approach. *Journal of Business Ethics, 18*(3), 295-304.

Fulmer, R. M., & Goldsmith, M. (2001). *The leadership investment: How the world's best organizations gain strategic advantage through leadership development*. New York, NY: American Management Association.

233

Gaffney, S. (2005). Career development as a retention and succession planning tool. *Journal for Quality and Participation*, *28*(3), 7-10.

Graen, G. (1976). Role-making processes within complex organizations. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology.* Chicago, IL: Rand McNally.

Greengard, S. (2001). Why succession planning can't wait. *Workforce*, *80*(2), 34-38.

Groves, K. S. (2007). Integrating leadership development and succession planning best practices. *Journal of Management Development*, *26*(3), 239-260.

Hackman, J. R., & Walton, R. E. (1986). Leading groups in organizations. In P. S. Goodman & Associates (Eds.), *Designing effective work groups* (pp. 72-119). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hambrick, D. C., & Mason, P. A. (1984). Upper echelons: The organization as a reflection of its top managers. *Academy of Management Review, 9*, 193-206.

Hankin, H. (2005). *The new workforce: Five sweeping trends that will shape your company's future.* New York, NY: AMACOM.

Heathfield, S. M. (2009). Secrets of leadership success. In *Human resources guide.* Chicago, IL: About.com. Retrieved from http://humanresources. about.com/od/leadership/a/leader_success.htm

Hersen, M. (2004) *Comprehensive Handbook of Psychological Assessment.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (1969). Life-cycle theory of leadership. *Training and Development Journal, 23,* 26-34.

Hogan Assessment Systems Inc. (2009). *The Hogan Development Survey: Overview guide*. Tulsa, OK: Author.

House, R. J. (1971). A path goal theory of leader effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *16*, 321-339.

House, R. J., & Aditya, R. N. (1997). The social scientific study of leadership: Quo vadis? *Journal of Management*, *23*, 409-473.

Illeris, K. (2002). *Three dimensions of learning: Contemporary learning theory in the tension field between the cognitive, the emotional and the social* (D. Reader & M. Malone, Trans.). Roskilde, Denmark: Roskilde University Press.

Isaac, R. G., Zerbe, W. J., & Pitt, D. C. (2001, Summer). Leadership and motivation: The effective application of expectancy theory. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, *13*, 212-226.

Jarzabkowski, P. (2008). Shaping strategy as a structuration process. *Academy of Management Journal, 51,* 621-650.

Kaplan-Leiserson, E. (2005). Leader loss: The talent crisis isn't just about workers. *Training & Development Journal*, *59*(9), 14-15.

Karaevli, A., & Hall, D. T. (2003). Growing leaders for turbulent times: Is succession planning up to the challenge? *Organizational Dynamics, 32*, 62-79.

Kaye, B., & Jordan-Evans, S. (2002). Retention in tough times: Here's what 25 global talent leaders say about keeping good people—especially now. *T&D*, *56*(1), 32-37.

Kesler, G. C. (2002). Why the leadership bench never gets deeper: Ten insights about executive talent development. *Human Resource Planning*, *25*(1), 32-45.

235

Klenke, K. (1993). Meta-analytic studies of leadership: Added insights or added

    paradoxes? *Current Psychology*, *12*, 326-343.

Krupp, S. (2008). Bench strength: How are you developing your high-potential leaders?

    Oliver Wyman Journal, 24 (Spring), 32-39.

Kuchinke, K. P. (2000). The role of feedback in management training settings. *Human*

    Resource Development Quarterly, *11*, 381-401.

Kur, E., & Bunning, R. (2002). Assuring corporate leadership for the future. *Journal of*

    Management Development, 21, 761-779.

Lepsinger, R., & Lucia, A. D. (1997). *The art and science of 360 feedback.* San

    Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer.

Lewis, R. E. (2007, April). *Breakthroughs in talent management: Applying a*

    "talentship" decision science. Presented at the Annual Conference of the Society

    for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New York, NY.

Lewis, R. E., & Heckman, R. J. (2006). Talent management: A critical review. *Human*

    Resource Management Review, *16*, 139-154.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (Vol. 75). Thousand Oaks,

    CA: Sage.

Lombardo, M. M., & Eichinger, R. W. (2000). High potentials as high learners. *Human*

    Resource Management, 39, 321-329.

London, M., & Smither, J. W. (1995). Can multi-source feedback change self-

    evaluations, skill development, and performance? Theory-based applications and

    directions for research. *Personnel Psychology, 48*, 803-839.

Lynham, S. A. (2000). Leadership development: A review of the theory and literature. In

    P. Kuchinke (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 2000 Academy of Human Resource*

    Development Annual Meeting. Baton Rouge, LA: Academy of Human Resource

    Development.

Mabey, C. (2001). Closing the circle: Participant views of a 360 degree feedback

    programme. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *11*(1), 41-53.

March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1958). *Organizations*. New York, NY: John Wiley &

    Sons.

McCall, M. W. (1998). *High flyers: Developing the next generation of leaders*.

    Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press.

McCall, M. W. (2010). Recasting leadership development. *Industrial and Organizational*

    Psychology, 3, 3-19.

McCall, M. W., Jr., Lombardo, M. M., & Morrison, A. M. (1998). *The lessons of*

    experience: How successful executives develop on the job. New York, NY:

    Lexington Books.

McCauley, C. D., & Brutus, S. (1998). *Management development through job*

    experiences: An annotated bibliography. Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative

    Leadership.

McCauley, C. D., Ruderman, M. N., Ohlott, P. J., & Morrow, J. E. (1994). Assessing the

    developmental components of managerial jobs. *Journal of Applied Psychology*,

    79, 544-560.

McCauley, C. D., & Van Velsor, E. (Eds.). (2004). *The Center for Creative Leadership*

    handbook of leadership development. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

McCauley, C., & Wakefield, M. (2006). Talent management in the 21st century: Help

  your company find, develop, and keep its strongest workers. *Journal for Quality*

  and Participation, *29*(4), 4-7.

Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* San

  Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* San

  Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam-Webster Inc. (2012). *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary* (10th ed.).

  Springfield, MA: Author.

Michaels, E., Handfield-Jones, H., & Axelrod, B. (2001). *War for talent*. Cambridge,

  MA: Harvard Business Press.

Michalski, G. V., & Cousins, J. B. (2000). Differences in stakeholder perceptions about

  training evaluation: A concept mapping/pattern matching investigation.

  Evaluation and Program Planning, *23*, 211-230.

Michalski, G. V., & Cousins, J. B. (2001). Multiple perspectives on training evaluation:

  Probing stakeholder perceptions in a global network development firm. *American*

  Journal of Evaluation, *22*(1), 37-53.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks,

  CA: Sage.

Mintzberg, H., & Waters, J. (1982). Tracking strategy in an entrepreneurial firm.

  Academy of Management Journal, 25, 465-499.

Mumford, M. D., Zaccaro, S. J., Harding, F. D., Jacobs, T. O., & Fleishman, E. A. (2000). Leadership skills for a changing world: Solving complex social problems. *Leadership Quarterly, 11,* 11-35.

Mumford, T. V., Campion, M. A., & Morgeson, F. P. (2007). The leadership skills strataplex: Leadership skill requirements across organizational levels. *Leadership Quarterly, 18,* 154-166.

Naveen, L. (2006). Organizational complexity and succession planning. *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, *41*, 661-683.

Nickols, F. W. (2005). Why a stakeholder approach to evaluating training. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *7*(1), 121-134.

Northouse. P. G. (2013). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Oakes, K., & Galagan, P. (2011). *The executive guide to integrated talent management.* Danvers, MA: ASTD Press.

O'Leonard, K. (2010). *The corporate learning factbook 2009: Benchmarks, trends and analysis of the U.S. training market.* Oakland, CA: Bersin & Associates.

Parasher, P., & McDaniel, S. L. (2008, April 9). *Executive talent management: Creating and implementing practices that drive business results.* Workshop presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, San Francisco, CA.

Penwell, L. W. (1992). The impact of leaders on group and intergroup dynamics in teleconferences between interdependent work teams. In K. E. Clark, M. B. Clark,

& D. P. Campbell (Eds.), *Impact of leadership* (pp. 477-486). Greensboro, NC:

    Center for Creative Leadership.

Peterson, D. B., & Erdahl, P. (2007, April). *Early identification and development of*

    senior leadership talent: The secret insider's guide. Workshop presented at the

    Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology,

    New York, NY.

Peterson, R. S., Smith, D. B., Martorana, P. V., & Owens, P. D. (2003). The impact of

    chief executive officer personality on top management team dynamics. *Journal of*

    Applied Psychology, 88, 795-808.

Pinder, C. C. (1984). Valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory. In V. H. Vroom & E.

    L. Deci (Eds.), *Management and motivation* (pp. 90-102). London, UK: Penguin

    Books.

Porter, M. E. (1985). *The competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior*

    performance. New York, NY: Free Press.

Preskill, H., & Jones, N. (2009). *A practical guide for engaging stakeholders in*

    developing evaluations [White paper]. Princeton, NJ: Robert Wood Johnson

    Foundation Publishing.

Quast, L. N., & Hazucha, J. (1992). The relationship between leaders' management skills

    and their groups' effectiveness. In K. E. Clark, M. B. Clark, & D. P. Campbell

    (Eds.), *Impact of leadership* (pp. 199-214). Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative

    Leadership.

Ready, D. A., & Conger, J. A. (2007). Make your company a talent factory. *Harvard*

    Business Review, 85(6):68-77, 141.

Riechmann, D. (1992, October 20). Corporate America goes to school: B-schools are

   hustling to meet the demand for executive education. Here's how the best

   programs rate. *Business Week*, p. 66.

Roberts, D. C. (2003). Crossing the boundaries in leadership program design. In C.

   Cherrey, J. J. Gardiner, & N. Huber (Eds.), *Building leadership bridges* (pp. 137–

   149). College Park, MD: International Leadership Association.

Rogers, R. W., & Smith, A. B. (2007). *Finding future perfect senior leaders: Spotting*

   executive potential. Bridgeville, PA: Development Dimensions International.

Rossman, G. B., & Wilson, B. L. (1985). Numbers and words combining quantitative and

   qualitative methods in a single large-scale evaluation study. *Evaluation Review*, *9*,

   627-643.

Rost, J. C. (1991). *Leadership for the twenty-first century*. New York, NY: Praeger.

Rosti, R. T., Jr., & Shipper, F. (1998). A study of the impact of training in a management

   development program based on 360 feedback. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*,

   13(1/2), 77-89.

Rothwell, W. J. (2010). *Effective succession planning: Ensuring leadership continuity*

   and building talent from within (4th ed.). New York, NY: AMACOM.

Saks, A. M. (2006). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of*

   Managerial Psychology, *21*, 600-619.

Saks, A., & Belcourt, M. (2006). An investigation of training activities and transfer of

   training in organizations. *Human Resources Management, 45*, 629–648.

Schein, E.H. (1985) *Organizational culture and leadership.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey

   Bass.

Schepman, S. B., & Richmond, L. (2003, September). Employee expectations and

    motivation: An application from the "learned helplessness" paradigm. *Journal of*

    American Academy of Business, 3(1/2), 405-408.

Schneider, S. C., & Angelmar, R. (1993). Cognition in organizational analysis: Who's

    minding the store? *Organizational Studies, 14*, 347-374.

Sears, D. (2003). *Successful talent strategies: Achieving superior business results*

    through market focused staffing. New York, NY: AMACOM.

Shipper, F., & Dillard, J. E., Jr. (2000). A study of impending derailment and recovery of

    middle managers across career stages. *Human Resource Management*, *39*, 331-

    345.

Shipper, F., Hoffman, R. C., & Rotondo, D. M. (2007). Does the 360 feedback process

    create actionable knowledge equally across cultures? *Academy of Management*

    Learning & Education, *6*(1), 33-50.

Silzer, R. F. (2006, May 6). *Making a difference in talent management.* Presented at the

    symposium "Talent Management: Will the High Potentials Stand Up?," Annual

    Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Houston,

    TX.

Silzer, R. F., & Church, A. H. (2010). Identifying and assessing high potential talent:

    Current organizational practices. In R. F. Silzer & B. E. Dowell (Eds.), *Strategy*

    driven talent management: A leadership imperative. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-

    Bass.

Silzer, R. F., & Church, A. H. (2013). *The pearls and perils of identifying potential*

    [Working paper; in press].

Silzer, R. F., & Dowell, B. E. (co-chairs). (2009a). *The talent imperative: Pursuing strategy driven talent management* [Panel discussion]. Presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Silzer, R. F., & Dowell, B. E. (co-chairs). (2009b). *Leadership talent management* [Community of interest session]. Presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Silzer, R. F., & Dowell, B. E. (Eds.). (2010a). *Strategy driven talent management: A leadership imperative.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Silzer, R. F., & Dowell, B. E. (2010b). Strategic talent management. In R. F. Silzer & B. E. Dowell (Eds.), *Strategy driven talent management: A leadership imperative.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Silzer, R. F., & Kaiser, R. B. (co-chairs). (2008). *Leadership talent management* [Community of interest session]. Presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, San Francisco, CA.

Smith, A. D., & Rupp, W. T. (2003). Knowledge workers: Exploring the link among performance rating, pay and motivational aspects. *Journal of Knowledge Management, 7*(1), 107-124.

Sobol, R. S., Harkins, P., & Conley, T. (2007). *Best practices for succession planning.* San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Stack, R., Baier, J., & Fahlander, A. (2008). Managing demographic risk. *Harvard Business Review, 86*(2), 119-128.

Stake, R. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 433-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Talent Management White Paper. (2012, October). Retrieved from company intranet site.

Talent Management System. (2013, January). Retrieved from company intranet site.

Tichy, N. (1997). *The leadership engine: How winning companies build leaders at every level.* New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Ulrich, D., Zenger, J. H., & Smallwood, W. N. (1999). *Results-based leadership: How leaders build the business and improve the bottom line.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press.

Van Velsor, E., McCauley, C. D., & Ruderman, M. N. (2010). *The Center for Creative Leadership handbook of leadership development.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Voom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Vroom, V. H. (1992). Management theories and their motivational bases. In V. H. Vroom & E. L. Deci (Eds.), *Management and motivation* (pp. 341-353). London, UK: Penguin Books.

Vroom, V. H. (1995). *Work and motivation.* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Vroom, V. H., & Deci, E. L. (1992). *Management and motivation, Second Edition*. London: Penguin.

Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A.G. (1988). *The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Vroom, V. H., & Yetton, P. W. (1973). *Leadership and decision-making*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Waldman, D. A., Atwater, L. E., & Antonioni, D. (1998). Has 360 degree feedback gone amok? *Academy of Management Executive*, *12*(2), 86-94.

Waldman, D. A., Ramirez, G. G., House, R. J., & Puranam, P. (2001). Does leadership matter? CEO leadership attributes and profitability under conditions of perceived environmental uncertainty. *Academy of Management Journal, 44*, 134-143.

Watson, C. E. (1979). *Management development through training*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Wells, L. (2009, April 2). *Implementing talent management in complex organizations—challenges and approaches.* Presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Worley, C. G., Hitchin, D., & Ross, W. L. (1996). *Integrated strategic change: How OD builds competitive advantage*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed., Vol. 5). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yost, P. R., & McCall, M. W., Jr. (2007, April). *Talent management: The promise and paradox of potential.* Workshop presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New York, NY.

Yukl, G. A. (2012). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Research element	Description
Research problem	There is a dearth in understanding how an organization's efforts around the identification of leadership potential both inform and are informed by the stakeholders involved in such activities within the context of an attempted leader development pool strategy.
Purpose and research question	The purpose of this study was to understand stakeholders' perceptions of a leader identification process within a large, U.S.-based corrections organization. The purpose informed the research question: *What are the perceptions of various stakeholder groups regarding the leader identification process as part of a leader development pool strategy?* It was expected that *perceptions* would entail stakeholder *expectations*, *roles*, and *contributions*, among other yet unknown concepts.
Conceptual framework	The three constructs of this study were *leader identification* (within the larger construct of leader development), *stakeholder theory,* and *expectancy theory*. In addition, the construct of *leader development pools in succession management* served as context for the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework, as depicted in Figure 1.1, suggests that stakeholders' perceptions both inform, and are informed by, the activity of leader development within a talent pool strategy.
Research design	An embedded, bounded, single case study approach was used. Data were collected around three discrete implementation phases of the organization's leader identification process: (1) the original communication and training sessions around the leader development pool strategy and the leader identification process, from January to February 2013; (2) the pilot of the leader identification process with 77 leaders who were nominated and/or applied to the leader development pool through the leader identification process, from June to July 2013; and (3) the identification and communication (to all the stakeholder groups) of the planned changes to the leader identification process, from September to October 2013.
Site selection	Approval was obtained from the largest U.S.-based, for-profit partnership corrections organization to serve as the study site.
Population and sample	Representatives from three stakeholder groups—executives, human resources leaders, and the senior leaders involved in the leader identification process—were interviewed. Four inclusion criteria were used for purposeful sampling: (1) identification as an executive (one of six in the organization), human resources leader (one of eight), or senior leader (one of 24); (2) participation in the leader identification process during all three discrete implementation phases; (3) no direct reporting relationship between the individual and the researcher; and (4) a willingness to participate in the study. The maximum number of potential interviewees meeting all criteria was 15. The actual number interviewed was 14.

Research element	Description
Data collection	Data were collected from two sources: individual interviews with the participants discussed above and review of documents for each implementation phase of the study. The interviews were semistructured, in-depth individual interviews an hour in length, following an interview protocol with a single lead question for each implementation phase with accompanying follow-up probes. Documents examined for the first implementation phase included those about the leader identification process design, about the process plan, and about communication and education around the leader identification process. For the second implementation phase the talent management system itself (specifically the nomination screen and the high-potential leader application screen) was reviewed, as well as leader identification notes and decision documents that emerged from the talent review meetings and documents pertaining to the communication of leader identification decisions. For the third implementation phase, documents pertaining to the feedback received during the postmortem exercise on the process, documents articulating the planned change based on the feedback, and documents communicating the planned change for the leader identification process were reviewed.
Data analysis	Data analysis techniques included pattern matching and explanation building. The analysis proceeded in five steps: (1) organizing the data, (2) reading and memoing the data, (3) describing and classifying the data into codes and themes, (4) interpreting the data, and (5) representing and visualizing the data. Steps to ensure credibility in this process included collection of data from multiple sources, peer debriefing by a committee member, and member check from a participant in each of the three stakeholder groups. A case study database was used to ensure transferability, and an audit of the research process aided dependability. Finally, to ensure confirmability, a simple survey was given to all interview participants to audit the findings of the research.

The Timeline below shows the steps involved in the research and the time allotted for each.

IRB Approval	Data Collection	Data Analysis	Write Chapters 4 & 5	Defend
Sep–Nov 2013	Dec 2013–Apr 2014	May–August2014	August–Nov 2014	February 2015
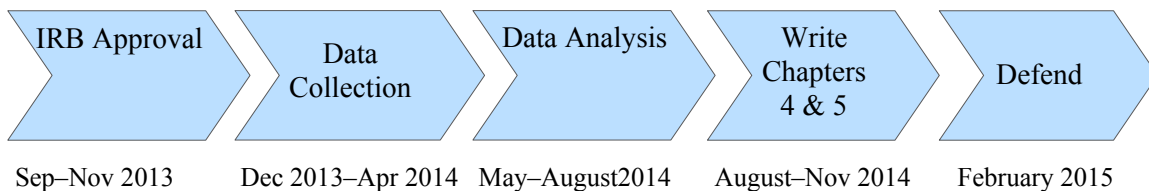
Date:
Recipient:
Title:
Stakeholder Group:

Dear Executives and Senior Leaders,

As you may or may not know, I am in the dissertation phase of a doctoral degree from The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., in Organizational Learning. My dissertation research focuses on the organizational learning concept of leader identification for accelerated development (what we call our talent management process). Specifically, I am looking at your perceptions of the leader identification process (talent management) during three different phases of implementation: (1) January–February 2013, when the process was first communicated and participants were trained; (2) June–July 2013, when we identified and assessed 77 high-potential candidates; and (3) September–October 2013, when we communicated the results and the proposed changes for 2014.

The purpose is to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of the leader identification process held by the stakeholders (those who have a vested interest). You are receiving this memo because you fall into one of the three stakeholder groups: (1) executives who helped craft the vision and strategy for this process and/or sponsored it, (2) senior leaders who participated in the talent review meetings to disposition the 77 applicants/nominees, or (3) human resources members involved in facilitating and/or communicating this process.

To gain a better understanding of your perspectives, I would like to interview you. This interview will take about 1 hour and will be somewhat structured in that I'll be asking specific questions with flexibility for follow up. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Your responses will be aggregated with others' responses for an overall summary, and your names (and that of the company) will not be revealed.

I will follow up with you within the next week to determine your willingness to participate. Or, if you'd like, you may contact me directly before I call. Thank you for considering this request, and I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

David Churchill
Sr. Director, Organization Development

APPENDIX C:

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Implementation Phase	Description
Explanation	Thanks for taking the time to meet with me today regarding your perceptions of the organization's leader identification (talent management) process. As you know, we communicated the goal and parameters of this process, including the scope for 2013, back in January and February of 2013. All eligible participants were trained in the process and in the web-enabled system at that time, with nomination and application procedures explained. We then enlisted several senior leaders to have two sets of talent review meetings: one set for the applicants/nominees from the facilities and another set for the applicants/nominees from the facility support center. These meetings were held over the 2-month period of June and July 2013. We then communicated the decisions and the planned changes for the process in September to October 2013. I want to ask you about your perceptions of the talent management process at each of these three phases of implementation.
Phase 1: January to February 2013 Communication of and education around the leader identification process	**Main question**: *Think back to January to February 2013 when the initiation of the leader identification process (or "talent management," as the organization has labeled it) was first communicated. What was your initial perception of the leader identification process?* **Follow-up questions:** 1. What general expectations did you have of the leader identification process? 2. What role did you expect to play in the process, if any? 3. What organizational benefits did you anticipate? 4. What personal benefits did you anticipate? 5. What benefits did you anticipate for others (if any), including facilities, individuals, groups, etc.?
Phase 2: June to July 2013 Implementation of the leader identification process	**Main question**: *Now, think back to June to July 2013, when the senior leaders engaged in talent review meetings to review and identify who, among the 77 applicants/nominees, was deemed to have high potential for accelerated development within the organization. What was your perception of the leader identification (talent management) process at that point?* **Follow-up questions:** 1. What general expectations did you have of the leader identification process? 2. What role did you play in the process, if any? 3. What future role did you expect to play, if any? 4. What organizational benefits did you anticipate? Did you see any of these come to fruition? 5. What personal benefits did you anticipate? Did you see any of these come to fruition? 6. What benefits did you anticipate for others (if any), including facilities, individuals, groups, etc.? Did you see any of these come to fruition?

Implementation Phase	Description
Phase 3: September to October 2013 Outcomes and planned changes of the leader identification process Planned changes: • More sr. leader ownership • No nomination • Still use system for talent profile data • Review all leaders in the three roles at FSC and 4 roles in the field • Talent Review decisions pushed lower in the org. • Remove the label "HIPO" and just refer to the group as an "Accelerated Development Pool."	**Main question**: *Now that we have communicated the decisions from the leader identification (talent management) process and discussed planned changes for the next generation (2014) of this process, what is your overall perception of the process? What is your perception of the leader identification process at this point?* **Follow-up questions:** 1. What general expectations do you have of the leader identification (talent management) process going forward? 2. How do you feel about the planned changes? 3. Did you play a role, and if so, what role did you play in this part of the process, if any? 4. What future role did you expect to play, if any? 5. What organizational benefits do you still anticipate? 6. What personal benefits do you still anticipate? 7. What benefits do you still anticipate for others (if any), including facilities, individuals, groups, etc.?

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Human resources stakeholder group: Phase 1		
Perceptions	1	System-driven, controlled by few
	2	System did not match the process
	3	Struggled with process at first
	4	Input from others helped
	5	Did what told by CHRO in design process
	6	CHRO didn't seek buy-in from others
	7	HR and Operations at odds over design
	8	Got customer involved, but too late
	9	No early buy-in or collaboration led to mediocre design
	10	No early collaboration = less engagement
	11	SP name concerned OPS
	12	Changing name to TM doesn't fix HR/OPS tension
	13	OPS wanted self-nomination so there would be a "good ol' boy"
	14	Challenging process for our culture
	15	Concerned that organizational leaders wouldn't understand intent
	16	Auto and self-nomination processes complicated and cumbersome
	17	Original process and system poorly conceived
Expectations	18	Should have bought vs. built system
	19	Should not have been conflict within HR (OD and HRIS)
	20	Should not have been conflict between HRIS and IT
	21	Customer was going through motions
	22	Expected Year 1 to look like what Year 2 will probably look like—more mature
	23	Build the right leaders vs. buying the wrong ones
	24	Thought we'd never have enough candidates due to bad process and clunky system
	25	Concerned there would be too many candidates for HR/OD bandwidth
Roles	26	Keep project moving
	27	Referee conflict within HR and between HR and other groups
	28	Learned a lot. New to me
	29	OD not involved in system design
	30	Support role—explain process to participants
	31	System support role
	32	Supporting SD of OD's efforts
	33	Thought I'd be more involved until SD of OD arrived
Benefits	34	Knowing who's got potential
	35	Knowing who's got commitment
	36	What senior leaders think of organizational leadership talent
	37	Decisions on whom to invest in
	38	Didn't know what I didn't know at this time; TM was new to me

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	39	Objective decisions on talent
	40	Money invested in those who'll most impact the company
	41	OD function managed a difficult situation very well
	42	Customers have a better view of OD
	43	A better system will increase OD's stock value even more
	44	Real opportunity for unknown leaders to get visibility
	45	Execs don't know cross-functional talent
	46	Internal candidates know our culture
	47	Operations benefits the most
	48	Reduces "good ol' boy" syndrome. FMSP is "good ol' boy." Nine year-old FMSP is a subjective process.
	49	Need to combine FMSP and TM processes
	50	Possible future visibility for OD professionals
	51	Healthy challenge for me
	52	Excited about opportunities for our leaders
	53	Despite reservations, I hoped we'd have unprecedented people development conversations
	54	Leaders took to the new process quickly
	55	Held out hope that this would reap huge benefits
	56	Had concerns about HIPO label – fraternity
	57	Operations would benefit more than FSC due to sheer numbers
	58	FSC has specialized talent we buy anyway

Human resources stakeholder group: Phase 2

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Perceptions	59	Improved from Phase 1
	60	Low participation in FSC TRs due to lack of early engagement by HR
	61	Some in the FSC TR were reserved in their participation due to conflict
	62	Communication in TR was guarded
	63	TRs weren't clear on the goal of TRs
	64	We had the right people involved in TRs
	65	Perception didn't change from Phase 1
	66	System provided some challenge for users
	67	Was a confusing, hard-to-understand system
	68	TRs realized too late: no nomination = no discussion
	69	Leaders hesitant to raise hand if not nominated.
	70	Disconnect between the process and the system
	71	Process should have been defined first
	72	Expected more validity from the assessments used for potential. This left a hole in our objective decision-making
	73	Performance data also unreliable because of no calibration
	74	Left to rely on nominator data (sponsor, self, or both)
	75	Great, rich discussions despite lack of objective data. Best when TRs knew candidates well.
	76	Made the best identification decisions with the data we had
	77	FSC TR revealed a difference in opinion over data vs. experience/knowledge of candidate.
	78	Blind data was original design.

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Expectations	79	No change from Phase 1
	80	Expectations exceeded due to "aha" moments I saw in TRs
	81	I didn't have faith that TRs could be objective; I was wrong
	82	Exceeded expectations due to effort that senior director put into it
	83	Expected system to perform better than it did
Roles	84	TR for FSC
	85	Supported TRs
	86	Tracked data during and after TRs
	87	Observed FSC and field TRs
Benefits	88	We had some nonengaged execs in FSC; need to educate better for 2014
	89	TR objectivity helped me communicate TM status
	90	Objectivity was new to our culture; process helped drive that
	91	TRs stood by their talent decisions
	92	FMSP shows how a subjective process is inferior
	93	Applicants didn't put in enough effort
	94	Communicating talent status to them revealed that participants provided excuses. They learned their lesson for next time.
	95	Excuses included "too busy" and "waited until last minute"
	96	If it was important to applicants, they should have still put in the time, effort
	97	Some were intimidated by the system
	98	Applicants without a TR representative were at a disadvantage
	99	Proved we can be objective in decision making
	100	Fear of senior leaders pushing for their candidates wasn't realized. Evidenced by small final pool.
	101	Still concerned that aren't enough landing positions
	102	Learned a lot in FSC TRs
	103	CHRO left at the end of the 2013 process
	104	MDs didn't know chiefs well enough. Benefit was that this forced them to rely on objective application data.
	105	FSC lack of participation. We tried to get them to come to the table.
	106	Need more buy-in from execs. Again, lack of representation forced objective decision-making

Human resources stakeholder group: Phase 3

Perceptions	107	2014 plan is solid
	108	HR bandwidth concerns
	109	Unsure of number of reviewers in 2014
	110	No HIPO label a good thing
	111	Leaders ill-equipped to communicate status
	112	"Haves" vs. "have nots" was a bad thing in 2013
	113	Development messages were well received by applicants and their managers
	114	Concerned about what leaders are saying to applicants beyond the script
	115	Bad status communication is worse than no communication or action at all
	116	Process is demotivating for nonchosen

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	117	Concerned about HR bandwidth for development
	118	We have strong buy-in for 2014 but can HR deliver?
	119	Some sponsors were upset that nominees weren't selected
	120	Application can't reveal all about a person
	121	Lack of TRs represented in TRs not helpful
	122	Some didn't receive accelerated development because of "horns" effect
	123	There was a disconnect in information shared between sponsoring manager and TR representative. Opportunity for improvement.
	124	Some took the development data to heart: "I hope they get in in 2014."
	125	Some haven't done anything regarding development yet
	126	Concerned about OD bandwidth in 2014
	127	2014 process will be much better
	128	No nominations is good
	129	OPS leaders are more on board with 2014 process
	130	EVP of OPS still has BOP paradigm
	131	TRs who know candidates better will make for a better process
	132	Landing spots are too few for the pool; 60 wardens for six landing spots
Expectations	133	Notification of status and next steps has to be better in 2014
	134	Those not chosen need development too
	135	Help nonchosen to own their development
	136	We need to develop *all* leaders
	137	Partnership Corrections Inc. University will be a source of development
	138	for all
	139	Leaders have feelings: nonchosen will disengage
	140	Do we even need to communicate status in 2014?
	141	Hopeful for more involvement from FSC leaders in 2014
	142	Need EVP involvement in 2014 process, including TRs
	143	Need to better educate TRs in 2014 for their role
	144	TRs need to be more prepared in 2014. This will result in more valid TRs in 2014
	145	We need to allow people to recover from "horns" effect
	146	Expect leaders will take process more seriously in 2014
	147	We need a shorter system window in 2014
	148	Managers of candidates need to be more involved
	149	We're taking the first step towards a learning organization, a reflective organization
	150	We've got to tie TM to SP in the future
	151	Development for what?
	152	We need to start looking at demand side
		We would manage candidates' expectations in 2014, especially regarding demand side
Roles	153	More involved in 2014 since CHRO left
	154	To clear hurdles
	155	OD team is the expert; my role is to get resources
	156	There are too many cooks in the kitchen
	157	Some may want credit for OD work; all involved can share the credit
	158	OD should ask HR executive for help
	159	Communicated TM status to OPS candidates

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	160	Notified candidates' managers as to status and how they can support their emerging leading leaders
	161	Managers know more than TRs. Some who weren't selected should have been.
	162	TRs discussed things sponsoring managers didn't think of—like diversity of candidate pool
	163	I needlessly dreaded communicating status
	164	Trained coaches; we have a one-on-one coaching relationship
	165	Using retirees as coaches. We have the right coaches.
	166	We'll need more coaches in 2014. Bigger pool.
	167	Need better training for coaches
	168	Coaches are doing a great job
	169	Coaches hate the system
	170	Heavier lift in 2014 managing and monitoring coaches
	171	See role growing in 2014
	172	Won't dread communicating status in 2014
	173	To help create expectations of a learning organization
	174	Help TRs be better leaders
	175	Need to fix system/process issues with IDP
Benefits	176	2014 will land us in a much better place with a more prepared bench
	177	They appreciated that we communicated status to them. We don't do that with FMSP.
	178	Managers are better equipped to have talent discussions. They learned well.
	179	Coaches are learning a lot. Great development for them. Challenged at first, but grew to love role and contributions.
	180	See great benefit with 2014 plan. We'll reach more people.
	181	Didn't see in Phase 1 how much coaches would benefit.
	182	2014 process will have the right TRs at the table
	183	We'll be creating a shared mental model of what makes a learning organization. This is healthy.
	184	I love supporting this effort. I'm growing as the coaches' coach.

Talent reviewer stakeholder group: Phase 1

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Perceptions	185	Started as SP in name and purpose
	186	I understand goal better than others, as I was responsible for software
	187	Need this process because of turnover
	188	Need to build leaders not just managers
	189	Many of our leaders are tactical managers
	190	We're not in agreement as a company as to the type of leader build/buy
	191	External leaders challenge our way of doing things
	192	I wasn't confident that HR could execute this properly
	193	Took a "wait and see" approach when it was first communicated
	194	Lots of information in initial communication
	195	Many decisions about process were decided before OD leader came on board—and he didn't agree with all of them
	196	Started as SP effort due to expected growth
	197	We needed to build a better bench

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	198	SP term was a concern to OPS executive, so it was changed to TM
	199	We started with sponsor nomination, self-nomination, and auto nomination
	200	There was some initial confusion over nomination processes, so we had to issue several communications
	201	We had to limit communication channels because some roles were ineligible
	202	There was plenty and thorough communication
	203	Excited, involved, well-communicated
	204	Thorough process
	205	New and needed process
	206	Identify HIPOs
	207	Develop HIPOs
	208	Good process of evaluating candidates against future roles/competencies
	209	Good opportunity to get candidates' needed development and track development
	210	Very well rolled out; very positive
	211	Apprehensive. We've tried before and it didn't take. It stalled.
	212	We needed this because our promotion criteria were subjective
	213	We haven't based promotions on skills needed
	214	The communicated plan was sound
	215	Self- and sponsored-nomination didn't net the right candidates
	216	Some who got to approval stage shouldn't have; others who didn't should have
	217	We've promoted a few folks not on the HIPO list
	218	We need to review all
	219	So what do we do with these people? Need to be ready to move them
	220	Old selection criteria won't work
	221	Better than any process we've used before
	222	Wasn't clear what the development process would be
	223	Concerned that these aren't the people we're selecting in FMSP
	224	Very positive
	225	Back when opening facilities faster we were robbing facilities of leaders, bringing them to new facilities, so we needed SP
	226	In past we only concerned ourselves with SP in facilities, not FSC
	227	Expanding concept to FSC was real positive
	228	We've never had intentional talent discussions before
Expectations	229	TM transparency would break apart fiefdoms
	230	We've tried SP in the past, but it didn't work. This time, I was hopeful that it would.
	231	One, comprehensive SP process available to us as senior leaders, but I realized that it's a much broader process than just a SP list
	232	That selected leaders would get allocated resources to engage in 70-20-10 development
	233	Envisioned people in more complex roles
	234	Skill gaps identified
	235	An SP slate
	236	Develop non-corrections folks into facility leaders

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Roles	237	Led the development of the software, system
	238	Participated in FSC TRs
	239	Nominated others
	240	Participated in field TRs
	241	Helped with some of the communications
	242	Participated in FSC TRs
	243	Did nominate; my folks were not at a level of eligibility
	244	I communicated to leaders in the field
	245	I provided input on the process and thankful for the opportunity
	246	Encouraged my people to participate
	247	I nominated leaders
	248	Communicated in monthly calls to my downline
	249	Explained to my people the importance of completing an application
	250	I made sure they were thorough in their responses
	251	Involved in communication meetings
	252	I was focused on how this would benefit my department, so I encouraged my people to participate
	253	Nominated some of my folks so I could showcase them during Phase 2 to other executives that they have capability beyond my department
Benefits	254	Saw more benefits to facilities than to FSC
	255	We've identified leaders in many incongruent ways; this was a way to get one standardized, transparent, objective way for the organization
	256	Saw the need to build the leadership bench
	257	One standardized method for leader identification. Very thorough and accurate process.
	258	Getting leaders the right 70-20-10 development they need
	259	SP slate
	260	Leaders getting the development they need
	261	We've done this before, but informally
	262	We've never asked leaders their career ambitions before
	263	SP slate better than before
	264	Benefit for field and FSC
	265	The field would benefit greatly from an improved bench
	266	My function not eligible due to levels, so no benefit to my function
	267	My organization would have a deeper, stronger bench
	268	We've struggled to "buy" the right fit in the past. Thus, we've had concerns about a shallow bench for a few years.
	269	Hoped this process would address these concerns for the field.
	270	Most useful for ADO roles
	271	Identify the next generation of wardens, assistant wardens, chiefs
	272	That HR/OD leaders were in the same room in discussions with OPS leaders regarding talent
	273	Developing field leaders
	274	Investing in people serves as a retention tool, even if they're not promoted in the short term
	275	Investment resources are limited, and I wanted my people to get their share of these resources

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Talent reviewer stakeholder group: Phase 2		
Perceptions	276	All TRs didn't show up for FSC TR. Shows lack of support.
	277	Leaders from major parts of organization didn't participate in FSC TR—problematic
	278	Lack of participation diminished legitimacy of effort
	279	TRs shouldn't be able to opt out
	280	Shouldn't have given more weight to those who were nominated—caste system
	281	It wasn't clear whether executives should nominate or not
	282	We should have been told that nomination was weighted more
	283	In FSC TR, some TRs looked only at quality of application; this was wrong. We know the candidates.
	284	It was like a blind college admissions process
	285	Candidates should have taken process more seriously and been instructed to do so
	286	We went through a storming phase in FSC TR
	287	TR facilitators contributed a few times; they should have remained objective
	288	OPS TR process was a very positive experience
	289	We had the right TRs to make the talent decisions
	290	We need to calibrate on performance reviews better as a company
	291	TR process was well calibrated
	292	Having talent discussions is healthy for our organization
	293	We need to discuss everyone, not just those nominated
	294	Very thorough process with strong decision tools in place
	295	First time we ever had the opportunity to discuss key talent in objective, structured way
	296	Some applicants didn't take process seriously
	297	Very thorough IDP and ADP process, including training of coaches
	298	My perception during Phase 2 was quite positive
	299	Level 1 field TR netted names that shouldn't have gotten to level 2 TR
	300	Surprised that some leaders nominated the people they did. They had no business doing so.
	301	We should have a way to mitigate that before the approval phase and expectations are already raised.
	302	Some TRs weren't able to attend TR, which left some decision gaps
	303	Surprised that some made the list for approval and some didn't who should have
	304	Shocked to see what applicants thought of their career vs. what we thought
	305	Process brought out disconnect between what we expect of leaders and what they expect of themselves
	306	Showed us how immobile our leader pool is
	307	Many don't want to move. We need to address this.
	308	Process was good and thorough
	309	Disappointing that some of the best leaders didn't even apply
	310	Good to know we have a plan in place for ADPs in future
	311	MDs know these candidates better than I; they're closer to them

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	312	Need to know more about ADP development process
	313	Overall, the process worked well
	314	The final mix in the pool was good
	315	MDs know better why some weren't nominated
	316	Some put more into application process than others
	317	I didn't tell my people there were few TRs because I didn't want them to think this was unimportant
	318	Some applicants didn't take the application process seriously
	319	Surprised that some departments had no nominees
	320	This was not for lack of communication because we all received lots
	321	Some said they thought they couldn't nominate themselves. But, the communication was clear that you could. They just didn't take ownership.
	322	Some TRs were uncomfortable with open sparring in TRs
	323	I'm comfortable with debate. Others weren't, so it affected participation and decision outcomes
	324	Some TRs wanted to base decisions on application quality and others on what they knew of applicant
	325	It was still the best discussion of talent that we've ever had in this company
	326	I learned what other leaders think of my folks, so that shaped how I'm developing them
	327	There was unevenness in applications of participants and TRs
Expectations	328	EVPs should have been in TR meetings before approval
	329	I didn't know EVPs had a separate TR meeting to review VPs and approve others
	330	Better communication to VPs
	331	Wasn't looking forward to TR meetings; by the end of day 3, I thought it was a great process
	332	We need to calibrate better on performance reviews as a company
	333	TR process was well calibrated
	334	VPs would be involved in Level 1 TR
	335	That direct manager would have input on candidate if they're not at TR— to address disconnect of why some got in who shouldn't have
	336	That I'd learn more than I did about ADP development process
	337	That we'd have a succession plan by the end of this phase
	338	Not many from pool have been promoted
	339	Those in pool should have at least been encouraged to apply in FMSP process
	340	Not sure why some who get promotions didn't come from the pool
	341	We've got a bad pattern of only looking at BOP/federal agency people for promotions instead of HIPOs
	342	That other leaders would nominate their people
	343	That applicants would take more ownership for their applications
	344	That TRs would participate in TRs more
	345	Adoption rate of process would be greater than it was

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Roles	346	Was a field TR
	347	We had a good mix of TRs in the field TRs
	348	Helped with some communications
	349	Participated in FSC TRs
	350	Approver of field candidates from field TRs
	351	Approval level was definitely needed
	352	Good that we VPs were in the approval phase and not stifling our leaders in TRs
	353	Needed more time and more robust communication
	354	Didn't question enough why certain people nominated and others not because I was new to role and relying on my VPs. But, I followed up with my MDs on the people in my facilities and we changed the status of some
	355	It's my job to ensure HIPOs get interviews in FMSP process
	356	Would have nominated others in other departments if I had known their leaders weren't going to
Benefits	357	Deeper, more prepared bench
	358	If I had better understood the process, I would have encouraged more leaders to participate
	359	Expected benefit greater than Phase 1 because I realized it included FSC
	360	We ended up with an exceptional talent pool
	361	This has positioned us well as a company
	362	The organization will benefit greatly
	363	Still felt we were getting a big enough talent pool that we needed
	364	The process was a little clunky with approval levels not always agreeing with nominations
	365	Identified talent pools
	366	That we'd have a HIPO pool (which came to fruition) and that we'd select from this pool (this didn't come to fruition)
	367	HIPO list for targeted development money
	368	Potentially identify my successor
	369	Surprised that we didn't discuss some field folks
	370	No benefit to my group as they were ineligible by level
	371	Identified talent pool for warden and assistant warden levels in field
	372	Healthy conversations about field talent
	373	Some of my people would get targeted development money

Talent reviewer stakeholder group: Phase 3

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Perceptions	374	Changes for 2014 give me hope
	375	Been doing SP in IT for years now
	376	In IT we also look at demand side of SP, including critical roles
	377	Concerned I'm lone wolf pushing for objectivity in this process
	378	The major disconnect between TM and SP isn't fixed with new approach
	379	Planned changes right on
	380	Great that wardens will be involved
	381	One warden in ADP who keeps me informed of progress, another one in ADP who does not. This is a concern.
	382	One of my HIPOs is neglecting her work in favor of development only

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	383	Communicating changes from 2013 process to 2014 is critical
	384	2013 process was selective and, therefore, secretive. Like the new process better. We tried not to hurt people's feelings in 2013.
	385	Doing away with nomination is a positive thing
	386	In the past, we did SP based on time in role. This is a much more objective process.
	387	While this process makes tons of sense for field, FSC is so small that the process may net too many candidates for too few landing spots
	388	OD leader brought credibility that this process needed. He took this process from "flavor of the month" to embedded in culture
	389	Planned changes were only vetted with executive committee. I would have like to have had input.
	390	The change to review everyone is a heavy lift for us
	391	Getting the input from all the people (for a given candidate) is still a concern for me
	392	Reviewing all means it will take longer to get to some levels; this is a concern
	393	Concerned about time commitment with volume
	394	Too many unknowns concerns me; I wasn't involved in decisions regarding planned changes
	395	Concerned we won't have enough resources for development of larger pool
	396	Planned changes are right ones
	397	Great move to get wardens involved in TRs in 2014. They know candidates better.
	398	All planned changes are excellent
	399	Removing HIPO label and having functional TRs are good things
	400	What do we do with HIPOs who don't move up
	401	HIPO label going away will help manage expectations
	402	Never had cross-functional talent discussions before. This is great.
	403	Haven't prepared leaders for roles outside their function; we're siloed
	404	Still need HIPO designation because it creates incentive to get better. We need to be transparent.
	405	Shouldn't review all because we'll have too many in ADP pool and not enough resources
	406	Investment funds are limited. If we dilute development money, HIPOs won't get all they need.
	407	Resource allocation for development and how we staff the organization are different discussions
	408	Like department, then calibrated TR idea
	409	See more clearly how 2014 will work and I like it
	410	Discussing all could create territorialism
	411	Seems like we're making changes unnecessarily.
	412	Process is fine. Lack of participation is the issue
Expectations	413	Taking HIPO label away doesn't change the fact that we've got to identify top talent
	414	We need cross-functional talent movement – but I don't see it happening soon

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	415	Need VPs in room with MDs during TRs so that we can work through disagreement on HIPO status in real time
	416	Need to integrate HIPO decisions and IDP in same TR
	417	The HIPO progress or lack thereof should be incorporated into PMDS – but I respect the confidentiality of the process
	418	Being selected as a HIPO is a motivating thing and that's good
	419	There's no mechanism for me as a HIPO manager to provide and receive input to/from my HIPO's coach
	420	People will review 2014 more positively
	421	Getting more leaders at TRs in 2014 is critical
	422	Facility TRs should include HR leaders who know talent
	423	That candidates will be satisfied with development vs. promotion
	424	Looking for HIPOs to engage in stretch assignments. Not sure other leaders are doing this. We need someone centrally managing the progression of their development.
	425	That there will be more money allocated for HIPO development
	426	OPS VPs involved in FSC TRs
	427	Marry up TM with FMSP – SP
	428	PM calibration training will help process
	429	Refreshed competency models will help as well
	430	Would like to know more about development progress of 2013 HIPO pool
	431	Would like feedback from the HIPO development pool
	432	Would like coaches' perspectives on 2013 HIPO development progress
	433	We need more executive collaboration on experiential assignments for HIPOs
	434	Need to hear HIPOs' managers' perspectives too
	435	Getting more reviewers involved will net a better quality pool
	436	Relying less on application data and more on what we know of candidates will be helpful in TR process
	437	We all have biases, and checks and balances will be helpful
	438	Interview ADP candidate pool when we have FMSP openings. Need to keep those in ADP pool in front of promotion opportunities.
	439	Those on FMSP panel need to know which applicants are in the ADP pool
	440	Need to ask the hard questions in FMSP process of why we're not interviewing ADP candidates
	441	External hires need different development than those who grew up in the company
	442	Identify and assess is not enough. We have to develop.
	443	Tie TM to FMSP
	444	Make ADPs aware of growth opportunities
	445	Last year's structure with more participation
	446	That we better educate people on what HIPO means
	447	If we discuss everyone, then we'll spend too much time on those who'll never be HIPOs
	448	In calibrated TR, focus on top-tier talent identified in departmental TRs
	449	We'll end up with too many in ADP
	450	Discussing all shouldn't detract from identifying top talent
	451	Require participation by all TRs

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Roles	452	Driving the process for my group
	453	Helping wardens with their role
	454	As a manager of a HIPO, I should hear from their coach on the HIPO's progress
	455	I'll be a reviewer again
	456	Felt left out of planned changes
	457	I'm trying to make sure my HIPOs have development opportunities
	458	Making sure HIPOs get first shot at assignments/projects
	459	ADO staff selections is my most important role as facility executive
	460	Need to communicate to leader pools that TM is not selective, also that not being HIPO doesn't mean no promotion opportunities. Need to continue to communicate this so there's no "club"
	461	Most senior leaders don't need to be involved in lower-level candidates' TRs
	462	Senior leaders need to be involved in warden and MD discussions
	463	To ensure all candidates have a solid development plan
	464	Ensure ADPs develop per plan
	465	Provide input on candidates' development plans
	466	Making sure ADPs get the right experiences
	467	Everything expected of a TR and a senior leader
Benefits	468	Will benefit my group, but other execs still aren't buying in
	469	Allowing wardens from one customer to move to a similar role with another customer
	470	This discussion cleared up a lot of things for me, helps me know how to support this better.
	471	Don't want to dilute the investment for my people
	472	Best benefit of the process is letting execs know their "golden boy" isn't so golden
	473	Cross-functional talent movement if we can get it
	474	Deeper, stronger bench in facilities is very much needed
	475	What we have is better than nothing
	476	Some HIPOs need to get promoted soon to boost credibility of TM process. However, we may not be able to because of some of the rules in place.
	477	Some may not take developmental assignments. Great outcome if they do.
	478	Reviewing all will be best for company
	479	Having career and development data on all will be a plus
	480	Cross-functional talent movement, not just vertical silos
	481	Planned changes will help organization; all are needed
	482	Won't overlook any hidden talent by reviewing all
	483	By reviewing all, including recent hires, we can ensure they get the right development (e.g., BOP hires need business acumen)
	484	Telling HIPOs their status even without promotion helps engagement and retention if they know that they are being invested in
	485	Getting a coach helps reduce turnover of HIPOs

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Executive stakeholder group: Phase 1		
Perceptions	486	Comprehensive process
	487	More purposeful than BOP process
	488	Positions us well for SP
	489	Strong, formal process
	490	Process well communicated
	491	Team told me process was fair
	492	We needed this process
	493	Excited we started this process
	494	Knew it wouldn't be perfect to start
	495	Need to identify bench because we're challenged in buying talent
	496	This is the first real legitimate attempt
	497	We've had large growth spurts in past and need to prepare for that possibility in future
	498	Glad we're doing TM
	499	TM was a weak spot in HR
	500	Didn't agree with original ideas of outgoing CHRO
	501	Concerned about hidden costs of development of HIPOs
	502	Few have considered total costs
	503	Wanted self-nomination so we didn't exclude anyone—glad we'll review all in 2014
	504	We originally planned only e-learning for development
	505	Glad we landed on blended learning because some learning requires classroom, even though it drives up cost. Extra cost is worth it.
Expectations	506	Objective, comprehensive process
	507	That we'd have a succession plan
	508	A succession plan
	509	Identifying HIPO means nothing
	510	Development plans and development needs identified
	511	A deeper, more prepared bench
	512	Engaged and better retained talent
	513	If leaders see others promoting as a result of this process, that will be motivating
	514	A plan to discuss talent down to the chief level. They are the future leaders.
	515	Investment in leaders and future leaders
Roles	516	Participated in webinars to prepare for role in nominating and as a TR
	517	Didn't participate in Phase 1, except hearing plan
	518	Told my team I wasn't nominating anyone to see if they'd show initiative to nominate themselves. Had four people nominate themselves.
	519	Cheerleader, help stakeholders (including board) see benefit
	520	Support and engage others
	521	Because of my early concerns with outgoing CHRO's plan, I shaped where we landed in 2013
	522	Getting leaders in the facilities to talk about it

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Benefits	523	Better bench
	524	Identify hidden talent
	525	Objective, comprehensive process
	526	A succession plan
	527	Identifying HIPO means nothing
	528	Development plans and development needs identified
	529	A deeper, more prepared bench
	530	Gives candidates a career roadmap
	531	Engaged and better retains talent
	532	If leaders see others promoting as a result of this process, that will be motivating
	533	Glad we finally had a plan to discuss talent down to the chief level. They are the future leaders.
	534	Confused a bit about the role of Partnership Corrections Inc. University in
	535	relation to TM
		Investment in FLLs in Partnership Corrections Inc. University will help
	536	with talent pipeline. I'm a big fan of that.
	537	Fill vacancies in my area
	538	Prepare me to have better career discussions with my people
	539	That HIPOs would have plans in place with needs identified.
		Get HIPOs ready for my role is to ensure they learn *all* the business.
	540	We're a small company and EVP is a jack of all trades.
	541	Identify executive successors internally
	542	We still may want to buy talent at lower leadership levels
	543	Internal executive candidates know the organization and the culture
		Executive successors identified

Executive stakeholder group: Phase 2

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Perceptions	544	Dreaded the amount of work as a TR
	545	Surprised at how low the FSC candidate pool was
	546	Surprised that other TRs relied more on experiences with candidates than on objective application data. Had disagreements over that.
	547	Some TRs held back too much over the dissention
	548	Fits and starts during Phase 1
	549	I heard some criticism over the way some HIPOs were chosen
	550	Disappointed that few executives chose to participate in FSC TR. So, TRs did not have broad enough perspective
	551	TRs didn't know candidates well enough. One candidate who was mis-understood by TRs was not selected but should have been. I coached this person to look at this as an opportunity to improve, not to get down.
	552	Some HIPO selections I agree with, others I didn't
	553	Pleased with the progression and coaching my HIPOs are making and getting
		Haven't spoken to one of my non-HIPOs. The other one is determined to
	554	improve and be selected next time.
		Pleasantly surprised at how comprehensive the process was
	555	Same as Phase 1. Didn't change.
	556	TRs were formal and objective. Much better than prior experiences.
	557	EVPs need to sit in on TRs. I missed that process. This will help me learn
	558	process better

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Expectations	559	A large candidate pool
	560	An objective TR process
	561	More and better executive involvement in TRs
	562	That TRs would know candidates better
	563	More accurate HIPO selections
	564	A less comprehensive process
	565	More executive involvement in TRs
Roles	566	Executive TR
	567	Participated in approval process TR
Benefits	568	Did not change from Phase 1
	569	Too few in candidate pool would not render a deep enough bench in FSC
	570	Phase 1 anticipated benefits were coming to fruition
	571	Identify skill gaps and find right solutions to close them
	572	We can find solutions that cost money and don't close gaps
	573	Our competency-based approach should ensure better skill gap closure
	574	I learned other executives' talent better
	575	Helps with building organizational bench, but this will take longer than I thought during Phase 1

Executive stakeholder group: Phase 3

Interview question	Code #	Code description
Perceptions	576	Need to manage TRs' expectations better
	577	Encourage TRs to be more open, honest, less intimidated. I was shut down during Phase 2. Therefore I wasn't as open as I wanted to be.
	578	Planned improvements are right on
	579	Some people didn't nominate self in 2013 because their boss didn't
	580	Reviewing all will eliminate need for self-promotion
	581	Reviewing all will ensure we uncover hidden talent
	582	Concerned about disenfranchising the nonchosen
	583	Development resources don't match identification resources
	584	Excited about the planned changes
	585	Don't like HIPO label. Glad it's going away.
	586	One candidate who's been with the company 18 years should have been a HIPO
	587	Glad we're gonna review all people
	588	Reviewing all helps with engagement (not a "good ol' boy" process)
	589	Multiple levels of TRs is good. This will drive senior leader ownership and allow candidates to be better represented.
	590	Some candidates don't know how to sell themselves
	591	Some candidates won't make the required effort
	592	Some candidates will still see process as "flavor of the month"
	593	EVPs know some of these candidates well
	594	Some chosen HIPOs are absolutely the right ones, others are not
	595	Appreciate OD continuing to improve the process through introspection
	596	Planned changes are right on
	597	Perception hasn't changed since Phase 1
	598	Getting wardens involved in field TRs will be great. They will feel more engaged.

Interview question	Code #	Code description
	599	Communicating status to non-HIPOs is demoralizing
	600	Because we're reviewing all, it's not necessary to communicate status
	601	Pleased with new direction
	602	Still concerned about development costs
Expectations	603	2014 process will be a huge undertaking
	604	Deeper, stronger bench
	605	Better talent conversations
	606	Leaders will get better feedback from senior leaders
	607	Sustainability for the enterprise
	608	Must make the connection to SP. If we promote outside the HIPO pool, then we don't need this process
	609	Need a process for breaking a tie in TR when consensus can't be reached
	610	We need ground rules for TRs
	611	Getting all senior leaders involved in TRs
	612	We need to do all we can to ensure we're identifying the right people
	613	That planned changes come to fruition
	614	Need to map out all costs and resources needed
	615	Going slower to help defray costs
Roles	616	I made recommendations for potential process improvements
	617	I'll be spokesperson for this process going forward
	618	I'm looking at the enterprise bench
	619	We need to force all VPs and EVPs to participate in TRs
	620	Other executives may not agree with me on what their role is
	621	My role is to leave the organization in a better situation than I found it from a talent perspective
	622	I need to know our talent because I'm ultimately responsible for identifying successors
Benefits	623	2014 will be even better because we'll know where to buy vs. build talent
	624	We're hamstrung with the process and system started by outgoing CHRO. We did the best with what we had.
	625	More and better communication with executives
	626	Reviewing all in 2014 will lead to the bigger, better bench we need
	627	Would like for the organization to be known as a place that builds leaders—to have that reputation, even if that means we're an exporter of talent.
	628	Talent development is more difficult here because, unlike a government agency, we have a unique, for-profit culture, and most of our talent pool comes from government agencies. We have to teach them this unique culture.
	629	This process will help us build more talent than we're buying

Note. ADO indicates administrative duty officer; ADP, accelerated development pool; BOP, Bureau of Prisons; CHRO, chief human resources officer; EVP, executive vice president; FLL, front line leader; FMSP, facility management selection process; FSC, Facility Support Center; HIPO, high-potential leaders; HR, human resources; HRIS, human resources information system; IDP, individual development plan; IT, information technology; MDs, managing directors; OD, organization development; OPS, operations; PM, performance management; SD, senior director; SP, succession planning; TM, talent management; TR, talent review(er).

RESEARCH CODES: SECOND PASS

Research question	Code #	Code description
Phase 1		
Perceptions	1	System cumbersome, complicated, poorly conceived
	2	Process purposeful, but too formal
	3	Nomination process good ol' boy
	4	HR at odds with other stakeholders
	5	CHRO dictated process to Technology, Operations, and HR
	6	OD function managed relationships and dysfunctions well.
	7	Started as SP, OPS had concerns with this
	8	HR didn't know what's best and couldn't sell
Expectations	9	That Year 1 would look like Year 2 shaping up to be
	10	Make a connection between talent pools and succession planning
	11	Expected a final, codified SP
	12	Process would serve as a unifier/integrator for the organization
	13	Deeper, more prepared bench through investment in development
Roles	14	HR to manage conflict between and expectations of other stakeholders
	15	HR to facilitate process, TR meetings, and serve as SMEs for process
	16	Some TRs took role as sponsor seriously, others did not
	17	Some TRs nominated, others did not
	18	Some TRs highly participative in TRs, others minimally
	19	Some TRs engaged with their nominees, others didn't
	20	Executives were supporters, cheerleaders, communicators
	21	Some executives actively shaped direction, others more passive
	22	Leaders never engaged in a process like this before
Benefits	23	Parsing leadership potential
	24	Process has objectivity built in; this builds credibility for HR and OD
	25	Transparency and standardization prevail
	26	Process mostly benefits the field; FSC buys its talent
	27	Investment in leaders results in retention and engagement
Phase 2		
Perceptions	28	Improved from Phase 1
	29	Systems and process issues continue
	30	Leaders hesitant to raise hands
	31	Leader and executive participation in TRs varied
	32	Potential assessments lacked face validity and performance data unreliable
	33	TRs involved rich discussions despite less than expected participation
	34	Natural tension between objective applicant data and subjective data based on performance history
	35	Difference in opinions caused dissention in TRs
	36	Candidate pool was small
	37	Comprehensive, formal TR process
	38	Some candidates didn't take process seriously

Research question	Code #	Code description
	39	Concerns over who made the list
	40	Interest in, but unsure about development process
	41	OD did a great job facilitating the process and communication from OD was thorough
	42	TR process was well calibrated
	43	Disappointment that some leaders didn't apply
	44	Unevenness in applications
	45	Unevenness in TRs' abilities
Expectations	46	No change from Phase 1
	47	Expectations were exceeded
	48	TR discussions very rich
	49	Fewer systems issues
	50	Better communications to senior leaders
	51	Larger candidate pool
	52	More and better executive and senior leader participation
	53	More accurate selections
	54	Less comprehensive process
	55	Wasn't looking forward to TR process, but TRs were excellent
	56	That the candidate's manager would have some role in the process
	57	Result in a SP
	58	Connect this process to FMSP
	59	Break the mold of looking at only BOP candidates
	60	More leaders would nominate
	61	More applicants would take the process seriously
Roles	62	HR to support, track, facilitate, observe
	63	Few executives participated in TRs, all participated in approval TR
	64	Executives and TRs wanted more time in TRs
	65	Some executives and senior leaders followed up with downline communication regarding talent status
	66	No executives nominated anyone
	67	Some senior leaders nominated others
	68	Some TRs participated in TRs
Benefits	69	CHRO left near the end of the 2013 process
	70	Objectivity was new and helpful to culture
	71	TRs stood by their decisions. Relying on application data forced objectivity
	72	Candidates learned they needed to put more time into process
	73	Concerns over too few landing positions
	74	New and improved skills for some in HR and OD
	75	Phase 1 expectations coming to fruition
	76	Identify skill gaps and find right solutions to close
	77	Competency-based approach leads to a deeper, stronger bench
	78	Concerned about the need for development funds
	79	Not a deep enough bench, due to a smaller than anticipated candidate pool
	80	Learned other executives' talent better
	81	More prepared candidates
	82	Greater than thought at Phase 1

Research question	Code #	Code description
	83	Still not connecting this process to FMSP
	84	Targeted development funding
	85	Concerns about ineligibility of director level and below
	86	TRs contained robust, healthy conversations
Phase 3		
Perceptions	87	2014 is a solid plan. All planned changes are good and needed.
	88	HR bandwidth concerns with identify, assess, and develop
	89	Need more money for development
	90	Concerns that we'll spend too much money on development that we don't have
	91	Concerns about communications skills of applicants' managers
	92	Concerns about engagement of nonchosen
	93	Strong buy-in for 2014 process
	94	Leadership engagement in 2014 process much better
	95	Great communication from OD
	96	Halo and horns effect in play
	97	Some in the ADP aren't taking the process seriously
	98	Still a BOP paradigm
	99	Landing spots are, in fact, too few
	100	Need to manage TRs' expectations better in 2014
	101	OD is continuously improving the process; great introspection by OD
	102	Planned changes still don't fix the disconnect between TM and SP
	103	2014 is still an objective process
	104	Communication from OD to executives is better than from OD to senior leaders; senior leaders not involved enough in decisions
	105	Concerns about TRs' bandwidth to review all in 2014
	106	What do we do with HIPOs who don't develop?
	107	Cross-functional talent discussions are great
	108	2013 process was fine. It was the lack of senior leader participation that was the problem
Expectations	109	All would get development (nonchosen too).
	110	Partnership Corrections Inc. University is a great development device
	111	More involvement from senior leaders and executives in development plans
	112	Better educate senior leaders and executives for their role so they are better prepared
	113	More valid TRs
	114	Allow people to recover (horns effect)
	115	Shorter window in 2014
	116	That managers of candidates would get involved
	117	This is the first step toward a learning, reflective organization
	118	Development for what?
	119	Start looking at the demand side
	120	2014, the way it is laid out, is a huge undertaking
	121	Deeper, stronger bench
	122	Better talent conversations
	123	Sustainability for the enterprise

Research question	Code #	Code description
	124	Make the connection to SP in 2014
	125	Ground rules for TRs
	126	All senior leaders and executives involved in TRs
	127	Identify the right people
	128	That planned changes for 2014 would come to fruition
	129	Go slower to help defray costs
	130	Cross-functional talent movement
	131	Link the IDPs
	132	HR leaders should be involved as TRs
	133	Candidates will be satisfied with development vs. promotion
	134	HIPOs take development seriously
	135	Collaboration on expected assignments
	136	That assignments and experiences make up much of development
	137	Need PM calibration training
	138	Need refined competency models
	139	Better communication from OD regarding development progress of HIPOs
	140	Coaches, managers of HIPOs, and HIPOs should all be involved in future
	141	Rely less on application data and more on what we know of the candidates
	142	Connect this process to FMSP
	143	Concerns that we'll have too many in ADP
Roles	144	HR to clear hurdles
	145	OD is an expert
	146	Too many cooks in the kitchen
	147	HR communicated status to candidates, sponsors, and managers; some in HR dreaded this
	148	OD trained coaches
	149	HR helped TRs be better leaders
	150	Coaches are doing well but hate the system
	151	Heavier HR lift in 2014
	152	OD to advance the "learning organization" agenda
	153	HR to fix system and processes
	154	Executives' and TRs' recommended improvements
	155	Executives served as spokespersons
	156	Executives looked at the enterprise bench
	157	Executives will be expected to force participation in TRs, but not all participated themselves in 2013
	158	Executives and senior leaders need to know all the talent in the organization
	159	Senior leaders will drive the process, serve as TRs, and help wardens with their role
	160	Senior leaders to ensure development of ADP pool
	161	Senior leaders should ensure ADO staff selections through FMSP are informed by this process
	162	Senior leaders to communicate that being selected does not constitute a promise and that not being selected does not constitute no potential for promotion.
	163	Senior leaders to provide input on development plans

Research question	Code #	Code description
Benefits	164	2014 will land us with a deeper, stronger bench
	165	Managers are better equipped to have talent discussions
	166	Coaches are developing a lot
	167	We'll have the right TRs at the table
	168	A shared mental model of what makes a learning organization
	169	We'll know where to buy vs. build talent
	170	We'll build more talent that we'll buy
	171	We're still hamstrung with ill-conceived technology
	172	Cross-functional talent discussions
	173	We'll be known as a place that builds leaders, even if we're an exporter of talent
	174	Letting executives know their "golden boy" isn't so "golden"
	175	We need to promote some HIPOs soon to increase the credibility of the process
	176	Need to connect this process with SP
	177	If candidates take developmental assignments, then we'll have the talent mobility we need through cross-functional talent movement
	178	We'll have better engagement, even if HIPOs aren't approved
	179	Development opportunities and being assigned a coach = engagement of ADP pool
	180	Better retention of ADP pool
	181	Some execs still not totally buying in
	182	This will lead to candidates' exposure to different customers and contracts
	183	Let's develop a few and not dilute it

Note. ADO indicates administrative duty officer; ADP, accelerated development pool; BOP, Bureau of Prisons; CHRO, chief human resources officer; FMSP facility management selection process; FSC, Facility Support Center; HIPO, high-potential leaders; HR, human resources; IDP, individual development plan; OD, organization development; OPS, operations; PM, performance management; SD, senior director; SME, subject matter expert; SP, succession planning; TM, talent management; TR, talent review(er).

Code #	Code description
1	The business case for change was lacking in content. There was a missed opportunity to demonstrate the need.
2	The process was well communicated but not well conceived
3	The stakeholder groups and the process served the system rather than the system serving the process and the stakeholder groups
4	Collaboration is key to implementation success
5	Some in human resources dictated the process to the organization
6	Talent management is not succession planning
7	Considering the circumstances, organization development managed the conflict well
8	Executives viewed their role as supporting cast
9	Some executives actively shaped the direction of the initiative, others were more passive
10	Operations (the field) saw a more tangible and short-term benefit than did the corporate functions (Facility Support Center)
11	Nomination and communication activities varied among senior leader talent reviewers
12	Talent review discussions were rich despite variable participation
13	Quality of talent review discussions exceeded expectations
14	There was a natural tension between quantitative application data and qualitative historical data
15	The objectivity of the talent review process was perceived as healthy and culture-changing for the organization
16	The candidate pool was smaller and less robust than expected
17	The planned changes for 2014 will net better outcomes and engagement
18	The planned changes will not address some of the inherent issues
19	Talent management is not the same as organization development