

The Impact of an Organization Development Intervention on the Strength-Based Leadership Behaviors of Team Leaders and Team Members: A case study in the Health Systems Division of Philips Thailand

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Abstract

This study was designed to determine the impact of the organization development interventions on strength-based leadership behaviors of team leaders in order to support the strategic objectives of an organization in developing a capable workforce, winning in the market, and creating an ability to capture rising opportunities associated with the aging population trend in Thailand. The theoretical framework of leadership for this action research project use the five leadership practices of Kouzes and Posner: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. These five practices are regarded as strength-based leadership behaviors and share similar characteristics with culture competencies of the focal organization in this study. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were conducted. The research instruments were the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the structured-interview. Quantitative data was used to examine the change in level of the team leaders' strength-based leadership behaviors and qualitative data was used to examine the impact of the team leader's strength-based leadership behaviors on their team members. Two statistical tools (arithmetic mean and paired sample t-test) were utilized in this study. The data collected confirmed that after the organization development interventions, there was a change in the level of the strength-based leadership behaviors of team leaders. It also reflected that these changes resulted in an impact on their team members. This research has responded to the focal organization's need of developing leadership skills within its workforce. While findings supported the research objectives and proved the hypotheses, the organization also strives for sustainable behavioral change, which will require further action. This next step will help create truly effective team leaders who can make a greater impact in the long run.

Keywords: strength-based leadership behaviors, effective leader, organization development intervention, change, impact of leadership behaviors

Introduction

Global companies are currently undergoing massive changes shaped by global trends. These global megatrends, as reported by the Hay Group, Global Management Consultancy, include the globalization 2.0, the environmental crisis, the individualization

and value pluralism, the digital era, the demographic changes, and the technological convergence (Vielmetter & Sell, 2014). They pinpointed that these six massive global forces will reshape business by the year 2030. In terms of “reach” they can affect all regions, and in terms of “impact”, can fundamentally transform companies.

The demographic change associated with the population’s age structure has caused a major impact on the living conditions. Population aging is defined as the increasing proportion of persons 60 years and above to the total population. The aging of the population generates the demographic transition due to reductions in mortality and fertility and is taking place in many countries in all regions. In fact, countries such as the United States, Japan, China, and many countries in Europe, have been aging for decades (United Nations, 2013). The changing trend in the aging population partly derives from an increased interest amongst people to live longer with healthier lifestyles. This trend ultimately brings business opportunities for companies in healthcare industry and market. However, business opportunities always bring business competition. In order to win in the marketplace under complex business environment as well as to outshine their competitors in the same industry and market, leadership capability can be regarded as a key success factor in all organizations. Organizations with effective leaders tend to respond better to changes in environments in order to sustain high performance (Vardiman et al., 2006).

Theoretical Background and Framework

The theoretical framework of leadership development for this action research used the five practices of exemplary leadership model as researched and developed by Kouzes and Posner (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). They suggested that leadership is about a collection of practices and behaviors. These five practices serve as guidance for effective leaders to get their goals or to get extraordinary things done. These practices seem to be essential components of the concept of transformational leadership. These five practices include challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. These five practices approach leadership as a measurable, learnable, and teachable set of behaviors.

Modeling the Way

“Modeling the way” is the most fundamental leadership practice of effective leaders that helps them to earn trust and sustain credibility. An effective leader develops his own voice, something that is critical for an authentic leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, pp. 44). As "modeling the way", leaders make sure that their words and actions are aligned and consistent. They do what they say they will do. Effective leaders comprehend fully the values, beliefs, and assumptions that freely and honestly drive and guide their actions. They clearly express their values to everyone in the organization.

Inspiring a Shared Vision

Kouzes and Posner asserted that effective leaders share their vision in order to

inspire people in the organizations to foster a commitment and to co-create a shared future together. Effective leaders imagine and communicate an exciting/attractive future for the organization. They want to make a difference and create something that no one else has ever created before. Their passion is composed of collaboration and hope with the power of positive optimistic energy to inspire those around them.

Challenging the Process

Effective leaders look for innovative ideas to improve and change the status quo by creating new ways or new ideas. They show a fearless willingness to challenge the process and system in order to get new opportunities (e.g. products, processes, and services). They explore ways to increase innovation and do not shy away from mistakes but rather use those experiences as learning opportunities. Effective leaders dare to take potential risks and accept failure as a part of learning experience.

Enabling Others to Act

Effective leaders get things done through others. Kouzes and Posner describe effective leaders create an environment that enables others to act by fostering collaboration and building trust. This collaboration can go beyond own group to engage all those who are moving toward the same goals. Enabling others to act fosters a feeling in people that they are strong, capable, and committed. Enablement reinforces the belief in building on the strength of each other to realize each person full potential so that everyone feel a sense of personal power and ownership.

Encouraging the Heart

This practice refers to genuine acts of caring to uplift the spirits of people on the team. While encouraging the heart, effective leaders respond to the needs, efforts and successes of people around them. Kouzes and Posner state that extraordinary results are a product of hardworking people in teams. Therefore, effective leaders make every opportunity to recognize their teams' contribution and to celebrate achievements in order to make people feel valued.

Several characteristics make the work of Kouzes and Posner an ideal model for this particular study. They introduced five behavioral practices which they believed make up an effective leader. These leadership behaviors were based on values that are expressed in action and observable by others. Upon analyzing these practices, all seem to have direct links to strength-based approaches, which garner success for individual leaders that adopt it into their regimen. Furthermore, the terms used in the Kouzes & Posner's leadership model are much easier to understand as compared to other transformational leadership models. For example, upon comparing the titles "*Idealized influence*" (Bass, 1985) as compared to "*modeling the way*", both terms share the same meaning that leaders are strong role models that people want to emulate; that they have high standards and can be counted on to do the right thing. However, the term used by

Kouzes and Posner assumes a more positive and accessible character, and thus have a “prescriptive quality” (Northouse, 2010, p. 185) in the sense that it can easily appeal to a larger range of audiences.

Another reason for using the Kouzes and Posner is that, these five leadership practices share similar characteristics with the cultural competencies of the study’s focal organization (Customer Service Department, Health Systems Thailand). These cultural competencies include; 1) Create meaningful innovation; 2) Focus on customers; 3) Deliver results; 4) Drive operational excellence; 5) Inspired by example; and 6) Lead change (Philips, 2014) . Therefore, Kouzes and Posner’s leadership model can easily be embedded into the company's culture. With a regular practice, it can improve and strengthen the company’s leadership competencies.

The Need for Action Research, Objectives, and Hypotheses

The focal organization has encountered both challenges and opportunities. The organization has encountered the need to develop a capable workforce as well as the challenge due to high competition in the market. Meanwhile, Thailand’s trend of population aging as well as its position as a medical hub of Asia has contributed to a rise of healthcare business opportunities in the country (Thailand’s Medical Industry, 2014; Thailand Medical Hub of Asia, 2014).

With these factors both challenges and opportunities taken into account, there is a clear need to develop team leaders at the focal organization who can effectively lead customer service engineers to achieve the organizational goals. While the organization had initiated such a program, the appointed team leaders were assuming their roles for the first time, and had never experienced leading people and/or teams before. Thus, an action research intervention in leadership behavior was deemed desirable, to help address the business challenges and capture the opportunities created by demographic change.

The Purpose of the Study and Hypotheses

The research problem focused on the development of the strength-based leadership behaviors of team leaders. This study was aimed at analyzing the impact of the organization development interventions on the strength-based leadership behaviors of team leaders.

The independent variables are the organizational development interventions, which represent the leadership development training and coaching sessions that are intended to create positive change in the strength-based leadership behaviors of team leaders. The five leadership behaviors (Modeling the way “Modeling”, Inspiring a shared vision “Inspiring”, Challenging the process “Challenging”, Enabling others to act “Enabling”, and Encouraging the heart “Encouraging”) are identified as dependent variables in this study.

There are seven hypotheses (H1 to H7) for this study. The hypotheses H1 to H6 use quantitative data to prove the change in level. The hypothesis H7 uses qualitative data to prove the impact. All hypotheses are presented as follows.

Hypothesis 1

H1₀: There is no difference on the change in level between pre-ODI and post-ODI of team leaders' strength-based leadership behaviors.

H1_a: There is a difference on the change in level between pre-ODI and post-ODI of team leaders' strength-based leadership behaviors.

Hypothesis 2

H2₀: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Modeling" does not change after organization development interventions.

H2_a: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Modeling" has changed after organization development interventions.

Hypothesis 3

H3₀: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Inspiring" does not change after organization development interventions.

H3_a: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Inspiring" has changed after organization development interventions.

Hypothesis 4

H4₀: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Challenging" does not change after organization development interventions.

H4_a: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Challenging" has changed after organization development interventions.

Hypothesis 5

H5₀: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Enabling" does not change after organization development interventions.

H5_a: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Enabling" has changed after organization development interventions.

Hypothesis 6

H6₀: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior "Encouraging" does not change after organization development interventions.

H6_a: The level of the strength-based leadership behavior “Encouraging” has changed after organization development interventions.

Hypothesis 7

H7: The change of team leaders’ strength-based leadership behaviors can make an impact on their team members.

There is no quantitative data to approve hypothesis H7. Therefore, the qualitative data from interviews is only used to approve or disprove this assumption.

Method

This study used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data from pre- and post-ODI surveys were used to examine the change in level of the team leaders’ strength-based leadership behaviors. All team leaders and all team members were required to participate in the survey. The qualitative data from pre- and post-ODI was applied to examine the impact on team members. The qualitative method required all team leaders and only representatives of the team members to participate in interviews.

Two statistical tools were used for the data analysis. First, the quantitative data was analyzed based on the arithmetic means and the paired samples t-test using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) program. The paired sample t-test was used to determine if the two sets of data between pre- and post-ODI would show any difference from each other at the significance level of 0.05. The data analysis included each of the five practices as well as cumulative results of all five practices together. Second, the qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed by using the content analysis. The content analysis was introduced in order to analyze a large amount of textual information and look for a common theme and pattern. It is a comparative content analysis between pre- and post-ODI.

Sample

All participants were selected from the Customer Service Department. 10 team leaders and 37 team members participated in this study. The team members are all customer service engineers (CSEs). The CSEs are mainly responsible for corrective maintenance, preventive maintenance, and machine installation. All team leaders are male in the range age of 30 - 40. All team members are also male in the age range of 24 – 35. All respondents hold Bachelor degrees in engineering.

Measures

Instruments’ validity and reliability for quantitative data

The survey instrument used in this study was Leadership Practices Inventory or LPI (Posner & Kouzes, 1993). The LPI was used to measure the frequency of use of the

strength-based leadership behaviors. In this study, the two LPI instruments were used: 1) LPI-Self and 2) LPI-Observer. The LPI-Self was for the team leaders to provide their self-evaluation of the level of the strength-based leadership behaviors as they had experienced and practiced them. Since their self-evaluation may be biased, the LPI-Observer data was provided from the team members for a comparative purpose. The LPI-Observer was for the team members to provide their feedback on how they observed their team leaders practicing the five strength-based leadership behaviors. Both LPI surveys contain thirty statements. There are six statements measuring each of the five key practices of effective leaders. Each statement is evaluated on a 10-point Likert-scale ranging from 1, “almost never engages in the behavior” to 10, “almost always engages in the behavior.”

The reliabilities from several studies for the LPI are consistently above 0.60 (Bauer, 1993; Mactavish, 1993; Stoner-Zemel, 1988; Crnkovich & Hesterly, 1993; Adams, 1999; Strack, 2001). In this study, the Cronbach’s alpha for LPI-Self and LPI-Observer were 0.73 for Modeling the way, 0.90 for Inspiring a shared vision, 0.77 for Challenging the process, 0.71 for Enabling others to act, and 0.83 for Encouraging the heart.

Instruments’ validity and reliability for qualitative data

The qualitative data was collected from structured interviews with open-end questions. The LPI-Interview was designed for the pre-ODI and the post-ODI qualitative data. There were two sets of interviews: 1) LPI-Interview A and 2) LPI-Interview B. The LPI-Interview A was designed to get self-evaluation of the team leaders. The LPI-Interview B was designed to get feedback from their team members based on their experiences on how their team leaders had been using these five practices with them. The interview process was conducted in Thai. The validity and reliability of the LPI-interview protocol refer to the stability and reproducibility of the results. The stability and reproducibility were achieved by using the same set of the five leadership practices and the same set of interview questions.

Procedure

The sources of data were collected from these instruments (LPI-Self for Team Leaders, LPI-Observer for Team Members, LPI-Interview set A for Team Leaders, and LPI-Interview set B for representative Team Members). The organization development interventions (ODIs) included strengths-based leadership development workshops and a series of coaching activities. The data collection plan was designed as follows.

- a. The team leaders reported the level of the strength-based leadership behaviors during Pre- and Post-ODI using the LPI-Self.
- b. The team members reported their experiences’ level of their team leaders’ strength-based leadership behaviors during Pre- and Post-ODI using the LPI-

Observer.

c. The team leaders provided their experiences of the strength-based leadership behaviors during Pre- and Post-ODI using the LPI-Interview set A.

d. The Representatives of team members also provided their experiences based on the strength-based leadership behaviors that they perceived from their team leaders during Pre- and Post-ODI using the LPI-Interview set B.

All team leaders were interviewed, but only 40% of the team members were selectively interviewed. The team members were selected for the interview by using a simple random sampling (SRS) method (without replacement).

During the Pre-ODI, all instruments (LPI-Self, LPI-Observer, and LPI-Interview) were introduced to selected participants and completed within 2 weeks before the ODIs. The ODI activities were conducted in a period of three months. Key activities included the strength-based leadership development workshops and the coaching sessions that were comprised of two sessions in a group and one-on-one coaching session with each team leader. These coaching sessions were put in place in order to reinforce, support, and monitor the progress with each team leader. After completion of the ODIs, the post-ODI began. The same three instruments were used with the same group of participants. The results collected from the post-ODI measurement were compared with the pre-ODI measurement.

Results

Quantitative Data from Team Leaders and Team Members

The pre- and post-ODI quantitative data from team leaders is presented in Table 1. The pre- and post-ODI quantitative data from team members is presented in Table 2.

Table 1

Pre- and Post- ODI mean scores from team leaders

Pre-ODI Mean Scores from Team Leaders' Self Evaluation						
	Modeling	Inspiring	Challenging	Enabling	Encouraging	Average
TL1	6.7	6.5	6.3	7.5	6.7	6.7
TL2	5.2	3.5	5.0	7.7	4.0	5.1
TL3	7.0	3.2	4.8	7.7	5.0	5.5
TL4	8.5	9.0	9.2	9.0	9.3	9.0
TL5	5.8	4.2	4.7	7.3	4.8	5.4
TL6	4.3	2.8	3.5	7.0	4.2	4.4

TL7	4.5	2.0	3.8	7.0	5.0	4.5
TL8	5.2	3.3	5.2	7.0	6.7	5.5
TL9	6.8	4.2	5.3	8.2	6.3	6.2
TL10	8.0	7.3	6.8	8.2	8.2	7.7
Average	6.2	4.6	5.5	7.7	6.0	6.0

Post-ODI Mean Scores from Team Leaders' Self Evaluation						
	Modeling	Inspiring	Challenging	Enabling	Encouraging	Average
TL1	7.0	7.0	7.2	7.8	7.8	7.4
TL2	6.2	3.8	5.3	9.0	5.5	6.0
TL3	7.0	5.2	6.8	9.3	6.5	7.0
TL4	8.8	9.3	9.6	9.7	9.5	9.4
TL5	6.3	3.2	6.7	9.0	6.7	6.4
TL6	5.3	6.3	6.0	7.2	5.5	6.1
TL7	8.0	4.3	6.0	9.8	7.0	7.0
TL8	7.2	5.8	7.7	9.7	9.5	8.0
TL9	7.0	4.3	8.2	8.7	8.8	7.4
TL10	8.0	7.8	7.3	7.8	8.2	7.8
Average	7.1	5.7	7.1	8.8	7.5	7.2

Table 2

Pre- and Post- ODI mean scores from team members

Pre-ODI Mean Scores from Team Members' Perception						
	Modeling	Inspiring	Challenging	Enabling	Encouraging	Average
TL1	7.2	6.0	6.1	7.7	6.7	6.7
TL2	5.4	4.8	5.7	7.0	4.5	5.5
TL3	7.2	6.7	5.9	8.0	6.8	6.9
TL4	5.2	2.9	5.3	6.2	4.1	4.8
TL5	6.8	6.2	6.6	7.4	6.6	6.7
TL6	6.1	3.5	5.5	8.9	7.0	6.2
TL7	5.5	3.5	4.1	7.2	5.7	5.2
TL8	5.9	4.7	3.6	7.2	6.9	5.6
TL9	7.0	6.9	6.9	7.7	7.5	7.2
TL10	6.5	6.8	6.3	6.8	7.7	6.8
Average	6.3	5.2	5.6	7.4	6.4	6.2

Post-ODI Mean Scores from Team Members' Perception						
	Modeling	Inspiring	Challenging	Enabling	Encouraging	Average
TL1	7.8	6.4	7.7	8.8	7.55	7.6
TL2	6.8	6.5	6.8	7.6	6.2	6.7
TL3	8.4	8.8	8.1	8.7	8.4	8.5
TL4	6.1	3.4	5.3	7.3	5.3	5.5
TL5	7.6	7.2	7.5	8.1	7.1	7.5
TL6	7.2	5.2	6.9	8.7	7.5	7.1
TL7	5.7	4.1	4.5	7.5	6.0	5.6
TL8	7.7	6.9	6.3	7.7	7.3	7.2
TL9	7.3	6.8	7.2	8.3	7.1	7.3
TL10	5.6	5.2	5.4	6.3	6.7	5.8
Average	7.0	6.0	6.6	7.9	6.9	6.9

Comparisons between pre- and post-ODI from team leaders and team members

The change in level based on mean score changed at the post-ODI is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Change in level of Leadership Practices

Change in Level of Leadership Practices from Team Leaders' Self Evaluation						
	Modeling	Inspiring	Challenging	Enabling	Encouraging	Total Change
TL1	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.3	1.2	3.2
TL2	1.0	0.3	0.3	1.3	1.5	4.5
TL3	0.0	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.5	7.2
TL4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.2	1.9
TL5	0.5	-1.0	2.0	1.1	1.8	5.0
TL6	1.0	3.5	2.5	0.2	1.3	8.5
TL7	3.5	2.3	2.2	2.8	2.0	12.8
TL8	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.8	12.5
TL9	0.2	0.1	2.8	0.5	2.5	6.1
TL10	0.0	0.5	0.5	-0.3	0.0	0.7

Change in Level of Leadership Practices from Team Members' Perception						
	Modeling	Inspiring	Challenging	Enabling	Encouraging	Total Change
TL1	0.6	0.4	1.5	1.1	0.8	4.4
TL2	1.3	1.7	1.1	0.6	1.6	6.3
TL3	1.2	2.2	2.2	0.7	1.7	7.9
TL4	0.8	0.5	0.0	1.1	1.2	3.6
TL5	0.8	11.0	0.9	0.7	0.4	3.8
TL6	1.1	1.7	1.4	-0.2	0.5	4.4
TL7	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.3	1.7
TL8	1.8	2.2	2.7	0.5	0.4	7.7
TL9	0.3	-0.1	0.3	0.7	-0.4	0.7
TL10	-0.9	-1.6	-0.9	-0.5	-1.0	-0.5

Based on the total change of mean scores from all practices of each team leader's self-evaluation as shown in above table, the change in level was increased at the post-ODI for all 10 team leaders. Regarding the change in level of all leadership practices as perceived by their team members, it was found that nine team leaders had total mean increased at the post-ODI with the exception of TL10 whose score decreased.

Statistical Analysis for Quantitative Data from Team Leaders and Team Members

The Paired Sample t-test was carried out to compare the mean scores on the change in level of all leadership practices before and after the ODI. Based on the "mean difference" data in the table 4 below, it was shown that mean of each pair for each practice from team leaders and team members increased for all leadership practices after the ODI.

In this study, the significant value (2 tailed) at 95% confidence level was tested. Based upon the results of the significant value (2 tailed) at 95% confidence level in the below tables, it was less than 0.05 for both team leaders' own evaluation and team members' perception.

Table 4

Paired Sample Statistics from team leaders and team members

Paired Sample t-test for Quantitative Data from Team Leaders' Self Evaluation								
Variables		N	Mean Diff.	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Pair 1	Modeling Post-Pre	10	0.9	1.118	0.354	-2.449	9	0.037
Pair 2	Inspiring Post-Pre	10	1.1	1.323	0.419	-3.106	9	0.013
Pair 3	Challenging Post-Pre	10	1.6	0.890	0.281	-5.035	9	0.001
Pair 4	Enabling Post-Pre	10	1.1	1.064	0.337	-3.417	9	0.008
Pair 5	Encouraging Post-Pre	10	1.5	0.872	0.276	-4.656	9	0.001

Paired Sample t-test for Quantitative Data from Team Members' Perception								
Variables		N	Mean Diff.	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Pair 1	Modeling Post-Pre	37	0.7	1.260	0.213	-3.153	36	0.003
Pair 2	Inspiring Post-Pre	37	0.8	1.851	0.313	-3.319	36	0.002
Pair 3	Challenging Post-Pre	37	1.0	1.444	0.244	-3.609	36	0.001
Pair 4	Enabling Post-Pre	37	0.5	0.904	0.153	-3.895	36	0.000
Pair 5	Encouraging Post-Pre	37	0.5	1.367	0.231	-2.309	36	0.027

With the change of mean score after post-ODI at the significance level less than 0.05, it can be confirmed that the organization development interventions can make the difference on the strength-based leadership behaviors. The level of the strength-based leadership behaviors after ODI was increased for both team leaders and team members. Therefore, the hypothesis from H1₀ to H6₀ can be rejected. And the hypothesis from H1_a to H6_a can be accepted.

Qualitative data and its findings

There was an interesting finding discovered during pre-ODI interview with team members. The leadership strength in terms of what one behavior that team leaders did well as demonstrated by team leaders was also recognized from their team members. The following patterns and themes were found and simply illustrated in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Summary of patterns and themes found during pre-ODI interview

Pre-ODI Interview		
Team Leader	One leadership practice that team leader did well	Leadership practice that team members saw his team leader did well
TL1	Enabling	Enabling
TL2	Challenging	Challenging
TL3	Modeling	Modeling
TL4	Enabling	Enabling
TL5	Challenging	Challenging
TL6	Enabling	Enabling
TL7	Enabling	Enabling
TL8	Modeling	Modeling
TL9	Enabling	Enabling
TL10	Encouraging	Enabling

Based on the outcomes from interviews during pre-ODI, the two examples below are based on the pre-ODI interview from team leaders in terms of what was one behavior that team leaders did well.

- TL1 said that I did well on **Enabling**. I asked my team members to make his decision, then I monitored, for example - when they made order for spare parts. Overall, they listened to me. When they faced issues, I would ask, “Can you tell me what you have done?” Now we have Group Line. I praised them via Group Line e.g. “Very good”, “Excellent”, or “Great”.
- TL2 said that I did well on **Challenging**. I did well how to find new ways to solve problems for my work. For example, when new machine was launched without work instructions and that machine had problems, I was able to adjust the machine without machine manuals by doing it and observing it. Then I could fix it successfully. Later, the factory sent the manual and told us that the machine can be adjusted the same way that I have done.

The two examples below are based on the pre-ODI interview from team members in terms of what one behavior that team leaders did well as demonstrated by team leaders was also recognized from their team members.

- From team member who reports to TL1: I saw my team leader did well on

Enabling. When I called my team leader for his advice in fixing mechanical problems, he coached me how to analyze the problem by narrowing the scope of problem. If I was able to solve that problem by myself, he empowered me to make a decision by myself. If there were any costs incurred due to spare parts' usage, he would coach me to analyze in order to minimize for cost saving. My team leader also provided information to me on how to solve problems.

- From team member who reports to TL2: I saw my team leader did well on **Challenging.** For example, he sent e-mail to inform his team members clearly how to back up data after problem was fixed and also explained the reasons for doing it including photos. It was the best way to improve way of working to be more efficient. He had good structure for his way of working so that he was able to provide good answers to his customers.

Based upon the outcomes in Table 5, it was found that the leadership practice that team leaders did well was recognized from their team members. For example, when TL1 said that he did well on Enabling, his team members also recognized the same behavior that Enabling was the leadership practice that his team leader did well. There was a consistent pattern found for TL1, TL2, TL3, TL4, TL5, TL6, TL7, TL8, and TL9, with the exception of TL10. The one behavior that team leaders did well as reported in the above table could be regarded as their leadership strength. It appeared that when team leaders used their strength, their team members were able to recognize.

During post-ODI interview, the team leaders and the same representatives of team members were interviewed to examine whether or not the team members recognized the leadership practice that their team leaders did more of during ODI and how the change of leadership practices had impacted them. The following patterns and themes were found and simply illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Summary of patterns and themes found during post-ODI interview

Post-ODI Interview			
Team Leader	One leadership practice that team leader did more of in the last 3 months	One key leadership practice reported by team members what they saw team leader did more of in the last 3 months during ODI	Impact reported by team members
TL1	Enabling	Enabling	Yes
TL2	Enabling	Enabling	Yes
TL3	Modeling	Modeling	Yes

TL4	Enabling	Enabling	Yes
TL5	Modeling	Modeling	Yes
TL6	Enabling	Enabling	Yes
TL7	Modeling	Modeling	Yes
TL8	Encouraging	Encouraging	Yes
TL9	Enabling	Enabling	Yes
TL10	Enabling	Challenging	No

It appeared during post-ODI interview that the leadership behavior that team leaders did more of during ODI was recognized from their team members as shown in Table 6. For example, TL2 reported that he did more of on **Enabling** while his team members also recognized the same behavior that **Enabling** was the leadership practice that his team leader did more of during ODI. This relationship pattern was found similarly for nine team leaders TL1, TL2, TL3, TL4, TL5, TL6, TL7, TL8, and TL9, with the exception of TL10.

Moreover, team members reported the initial impact they received from the increased practice of these leadership behaviors by their team leaders in the last 3 months during ODI. It was consistently founded that representative team members who reported to TL1, TL2, TL3, TL4, TL5, TL6, TL7, TL8, and TL9 reported a positive impact, with the exception of TL10 which reported no impact. The two examples below are based on the post-ODI interview from team leaders and representative team members in regards to the impact of team leaders' strength-based leadership behaviors.

- From team member who reports to TL1: When I called my team leader to ask for his advice, he coached me to minimize the scope in order to fix the problems. He was really helping me to get my job done faster. I could diagnose problems correctly so that I was able to order spare parts accurately. I could finish my job more on my own and saved costs.
- From team member who reports to TL2: I saw that my team leader was trying to organize a team meeting and eat dinner together. Indeed, he provided more ideas and suggestions via Line group how to work. At least I had better direction to do my work that helped me work easier.

In this study, there was no quantitative data analysis to test the hypothesis H7. Hence, it used the qualitative data from interviews to answer instead. This hypothesis was aimed at finding the extent that the change of the team leaders' strength-based leadership behaviors impacts their team members.

In summary, it was concluded that to some extent there was a connection between the practice of the leadership strengths and the perception of the team members. When the

team leaders used their strengths, the team members were able to recognize and be affected by them. The findings discovered from the qualitative data analysis shall be used to provide the answer for the hypothesis H7.

In the view of the researcher, the findings above positively support the promotion of strength-based approaches to help embrace positive change in people. It also helps expand the possibilities for supporting others to change. As described by Clifton and Harter (2003), strengths referred to a pattern of behavior, thought, and feeling that produces high degree of satisfaction and pride. In other words, when the team leaders practice and use more of their strengths, it has an impact on their team members' behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.

In this study, there are four major observations to be reported as follows.

- 1) Enabling was rated the most frequently used whereas Inspiring was the least used (see Table 1 and Table 2). The team leaders' self-evaluation and the team members' perception were reported the same. These same findings were reported out the same by other researchers (Haggerty, 1989; Mira, 2005; Mitchell, 2013; Sylvester, 2009; Curran, 2008; Singh, 1998). During the interviews, the majority of the team leaders reported that they did less well on Inspiring because they did not know how to practice it. Hence, it was not so surprising to see the lowest score on Inspiring.
- 2) The team leaders' view scores are higher than the team members' perception scores (see "Total Mean Score Changed" in Table 3). The majority of the team leaders (TL5, TL6, TL7, TL8, TL9, and TL10) viewed themselves with higher scores, as compared to the team members' perception scores. According to Plowman's research, it has been usual to find Self-scores higher than Observer-scores in specific workshop or research settings (Plowman, 1991). This observation should be further studied in order to confirm its outcomes. During interviews, it was discovered that the team leaders just started developing or practicing the leadership practice that can be regarded as basic level but they felt that they put more effort into it.
- 3) Leadership practices are culturally and universally relevant. According to the study from this group of researchers (Ergeneli et. al, 2007), the Challenging and Enabling aspects seem to be universally relevant, whereas the Inspiring, Modeling, and Encouraging aspects are culturally dependent. In this study, Encouraging was not considered as the major strength for this group of participants. It seemed that Encouraging might be relevant to culture. In some cultures especially East Asian praise is rare. In China and Japan for example, praise is scarcely used (Lewis, 1995; Salili, 1996; Salili & Hau, 1994). Encouraging words like "great job!", "fantastic!", "well done!" seem to be seldom given for regular tasks, and praise would instead be given when people accomplished something big. This is partly due to the fact that in these East Asian cultures, praise is sometimes seen as harmful towards a child's character if given too often (Salili, 1996). Thus, it might impact behaviors when child

grew up. In this study, Encouraging was also not the leadership practice that team leaders wanted to do more of or did it well. However, Encouraging was the leadership practice that team leaders thought about practicing next to Enabling and/or Modeling.

- 4) The findings suggested that when team leaders did more of one leadership practice, it will influence the improvement of other leadership practices. Table 6 demonstrates the single behavior that a leader had increased in practice. However, although team leaders only did more of one behavior, it was observed that the mean scores of other leadership practices also increased after post-ODI, which can be seen in Table 3. Thus, it seems to suggest that all leadership practices share an unavoidable connection. Even it was practiced separately, it would impact others. This relationship may be another interesting area of study for future research.

Discussion and Conclusions

The empirical evidence suggests that organization development interventions (ODIs) can be used to develop strength-based leadership behaviors. The findings confirmed that the organization development interventions in this study increased the development of the strength-based leadership behaviors for the team leaders. The five practices of the exemplary leadership (Kouzes and Posner, 2002) and the LPI contribute to an understanding of the leadership process and to the development and unleashing of leadership capabilities of team leaders in this organization and had a positive impact on team members.

In response to the need for this action research, the development of team leaders' leadership skills was achieved in this study. This research has supported the focal organization in striving towards its objectives, and may mark as the beginning step towards future growth. It has assisted to some extent in increasing the leadership capability of this organization, though, further actions are still required for team leaders to enhance their leadership skills. In the researcher's view, the more team leaders practice such skills, the greater the impact on their team members. The creation of capable, highly efficient teams will thus help the organization capitalize on growth brought about by Thailand's aging population trends, and flourish in the midst of demographic change.

Recommendations

Recommendations are presented in two perspectives: 1) for the organization and 2) for further studies.

1. For the organization, there is a recommendation to continue coaching and feedback for another year in order to institutionalize the impact of change. The more team leaders practice, the more impact they will have on team members. Hence, a longer period of training would help them experience more of the strength-based leadership behaviors and reinforce the practices needed to transform themselves as leaders. This

approach should help the organization strengthen the leadership capability of their team leaders and strive for sustainable behavioral change.

2. Further studies are recommended in order to understand why Enabling is always rated as the most frequently used practice by team leaders. An explanation for the popularity of its use has yet to be found in research. However, attempting to find out why behaviors like Enabling constantly garner frequent practice may be an important point of discussion, as it may help further the investigation of what makes a great leader. In addition, the results of impact on team members should be further studied by using quantitative data analysis to accept or reject the hypothesis. This would provide a stronger case to test the impact.

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