
CEO Attitudes and Motivations: Are They Different for High-Performing Organizations?

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This article details the findings from an exploratory, mixed-method, multiple case study on the motivational and attitudinal patterns (MAPs) of CEOs who have led successful organization transformations. The paper identifies six differentiating MAPs based on the analysis of results from the iWAM survey and in-depth interviews with Baldrige Award recipient CEOs. Using quantitative and qualitative analysis methods, the authors found that CEOs from Baldrige Award recipient companies have six identifiable differences when it comes to motivation and attitudes associated with their role of transforming organizations to achieve performance excellence including: need to drive continuous evolution, high focus on systems, low need for sole responsibility, high focus on learning from the past, high focus on information, and low tolerance for actions that are inconsistent with the values of the organization. These six patterns are consistent with the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. Implications of these findings also serve as a facilitator for the development of leaders of performance excellence, as well as future research directions.

Key words: attitudes, Baldrige, iWAM, leading change, motivation, transformation

INTRODUCTION

Research estimates the failure rate of organization transformation initiatives at somewhere between 70 and 80 percent (Miller 2002). In fact, while there have been more than 1,000 applicants for the Baldrige Award, fewer than 10 percent actually received the award. This study investigates the comparative differences between the attitudes and motivations of CEOs from Baldrige Award recipient organizations and other effective senior leaders from organizations that have not received the award. The initial motivation for this study was generated at a summit meeting between Baldrige practitioners and academic researchers (Latham 2008). In 2006, executives from several Baldrige recipients along with academics from several universities met at a summit meeting in Colorado to develop and prioritize a research agenda. At this multiday retreat, practitioners and academics identified 11 areas of interest, including innovation, measurement, knowledge management, people, integration, processes, stakeholders, culture, leadership, strategy, and the MBNQA criteria. Through a process of multivoting, culture and leadership were ranked as the top two priorities, respectively. Even more specific, one of the driving questions of Baldrige recipient executives was whether there are differences between Baldrige recipient leaders and non-Baldrige recipient leaders (Latham 2008). The two specific leadership questions that emerged included: a) how do leaders and leadership processes differ between Baldrige recipients and non-Baldrige recipients; and b) what are the most effective methods to institutionalize leadership

development? This paper addresses the differences in motivation and attitude patterns (MAPs) between Baldrige recipient senior leaders and other effective senior leaders and the potential application of those findings to leader development.

The results of this multiday summit echo some of the same concerns from earlier research regarding top management teams and their ability to lead organizations effectively through a transformation process. While much is known about leadership in general (Bass 1990), senior leader activities and practices (Hambrick and Mason 1984; Hambrick, Finkelstein, and Mooney 2005), leading organizational transformation (Kotter 1995; Beckhard and Harris 1987), leading in times of crisis (Clinebell and Rowley 2003; Fowler, Kling, and Larson 2005), and the relationship between high levels of quality improvement and transformational and transactional leadership (Laohavichien, Fredendall, and Cantrell 2009; Hirtz, Murray, and Riordan 2007), the current knowledge of CEO perspectives, including attitudes and motivations, related to leading the journey to performance excellence are primarily anecdotal examples from high-performing organizations (for example, Spong and Collard 2009; Ryan 2007). More specifically, Beer (2003) suggests one of the main reasons employees become cynical with top leaders and ultimately lose motivation with top leaders is because of the inconsistencies with their leaders' behavior. In other words, top leaders often talk a great talk but do not walk the talk. Beer (2003) found that in order to sustain the positive direction for a company's future, executives must demonstrate consistent behaviors that will lead a successful transformation. The attitudes and motivations behind a leader's behaviors, if aligned, help create consistency and authenticity. The challenge, thus far, has been what MAPs are relevant for CEOs in high-performing organizations? This study tries to initiate an understanding into these CEO MAPs.

BACKGROUND

Much of the early research on leadership has focused on identifying traits and personality characteristics of successful leaders (Dubinsky, Yammarino, and Jolson

1995; Judge and Bono 2000; Judge et al. 2002). The goal of this early research was to classify an easy explanation about the characteristics that set successful leaders apart from their followers. A recent PsychInfo search revealed 12,498 peer-reviewed articles have been published on the topic of leadership since 1990, and out of the 12,498 articles published, 788 articles focused on personality and the implications it has on leadership. More specifically, recent meta-analytical research has advanced the insights and provided evidence that some traits, such as self-confidence and intelligence, are more consistently associated with leadership effectiveness (Judge et al. 2002; Bono and Judge 2004).

Despite a plethora of studies, there remains confusion about the contributions offered by the personality research literature. In the Judge et al. (2002) meta-analysis, several insights are worth noting. One of the biggest problems in past research linking personality and leadership effectiveness is the lack of structure used to describe personality traits. Ultimately this has led to a wide range of traits being studied under different names. Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy (1996, 179) suggest "the labeling dilemma made it almost impossible to find consistent relationships between personality and leadership even when they really existed." Because of the confusion that remains in the personality research, one could argue that, if someone were to ask 10 leadership researchers whether personality theory was a valid lens in which to study leadership, most of the researchers would agree that personality theory is a valid lens. However, a follow-up question to 10 researchers who asked them to identify which personality traits were the most valid, one would likely receive 10 different answers. Not only are the personality constructs often ill defined, as Murphy and Dzieweczynski (2005) point out, the validity of personality tests is limited. They point out the connection between personality and job performance thus far has been minimal at best, and the problem is probably due to the nature of the domain itself.

Other theoretical frameworks have tried to advance the understanding of leadership as well. For example, Bass (1985) has contributed to the leadership discussion by suggesting there are certain leadership behaviors that prove to be effective. More specifically, Bass (1985) and others (Avolio, Bass, and

Jung 1999) have suggested two main types of behaviors—transformational leadership behaviors and transactional leadership behaviors. Examples of these transformational behaviors include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. For transactional leaders, influencing employees is focused more on the economic means such as contingent rewards. In other words, leaders provide tangible support and resources to their employees in exchange for the efforts. Although transformational and transactional leadership behaviors are different, they also complement one another and have been found to be effective when used in conjunction (Avolio, Bass, and Jung 1999; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Rich 2001). According to the transformational leadership model, eight dimensions of leadership behaviors initially offered another view of effective leadership. These dimensions included idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management by exception, and laissez-faire. Hirtz, Murray, and Riordan (2007), in their study of an academic institution, found that transformational leadership was positively related to quality and the implementation of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE). Like most research, however, these specific dimensions of leadership behaviors have been the topic of debate (Avolio, Bass, and Jung 1999; Judge and Bono 2000), which confirms the need for more research into the sources of leadership effectiveness. In addition, several leadership researchers have noted just how slowly the knowledge has progressed on leadership over the last few decades (Hunt 1999; Hunt and Dodge 2000). However, neither of these articles mentions the underlying attitudes and motives that drive leadership behavior and approaches. As Bennis and Nanus (1985, 4) lament, “never have so many labored so long to say so little.”

Leadership research has produced many theories and concepts related to leaders’ traits and characteristics and the “visible” aspects of leadership such as what leaders do (Kotter 1990) and styles (Bass 1999). However, activities (where leaders spend their time) and their behaviors and styles are manifestations of deeper attitudes and motivational patterns. As Locke and Latham (2004, 388)

point out, “motivation can affect not only the acquisition of people’s skills and abilities but also how and to what extent they utilize their skills and abilities.” To better understand motivation in organizations many theories have been proposed by numerous researchers, including McClelland, Vroom, Herzberg, Hackman and Oldman, to name just a few. For discussions of the motivation theory and research “landscape” see Ramlall (2004) and Van Nuland et al. (2010). While motivation has been of interest to organization researchers since the 1930s, there is little understanding of the underlying attitudes and motivations of leaders themselves (Locke and Latham 2004) and, in particular, leaders who successfully lead organization transformations. Focused on the ethical behavior of leaders, Harshman and Harshman (2007) propose looking “upstream” at the filters leaders use when viewing events. They examine the filter of MAPs using the iWAM instrument developed by jobEQ. How does this filter of motivations and attitudes differ between leaders of successful transformations using the Baldrige CPE and other effective leaders?

QUESTIONS

This study begins to address this gap by comparing the MAPs of leaders who have led successful organization transformations with other effective senior leaders. At this point, there is almost no research on the MAPs in North America and even less on leadership MAPs in particular, and to date no research has explored the MAPs of Baldrige recipient CEOs and compared those with other effective leaders. More specifically, in a major meta-analysis on the personality of leaders, Judge et al. (2002) specifically omitted motivation as a focus of their study because they believed it was not a personality trait. Second, unlike some assessment instruments that measure constructs like personality and intelligence and that have been in place for years, there is no large national database on motivational and attitudinal patterns with which to compare this group of CEOs. At the same time, some studies of the relationship between MAPs in the United States and abroad indicate that they are very powerful predictors of a significant portion of performance. Typically MAPs will account for 35 to 55

percent of performance ratings for a given role in a given context (Harshman 2009). The publisher (jobEQ) of the *Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation (iWAM)* does not encourage the creation of models for individuals who are in different contexts because the context (for example, the nature of the business or organization, the preferred culture of an organization, the region in which the organization functions) may have different requirements that drive success. However, there may be some patterns that are common to success in certain roles and contexts with common elements. Beyond the “context” of a specific organization, Baldrige leaders share the context of “leading organization transformation” using a common model, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award CPE, to guide their individual organization transformations (NIST 2011).

The main question that drove this study is whether the top leaders in organizations that achieve Baldrige Award recognition somehow differ in their MAPs from those leaders who are at the top of non-Baldrige Award recipient organizations. Second, if Baldrige CEOs do differ, which factors or MAPs are different compared with other effective leaders? Third, how do these MAPs affect leading the journey to performance excellence? Applied work by Carl Harshman, the leading proponent of the application of MAPs to performance in North America, and his colleagues studying leadership in a number of organizations (private sector, government, and non-profit) suggest some ways in which top leaders differ from employees. For example, leaders tend to be more proactive and more goal-oriented than employees. Shelle Rose Charvet, of Success Strategies, a leading expert internationally on the Language and Behavior (LAB) Profile, an interview tool for assessing motivational and attitudinal patterns, says that the majority of leaders in the United States are “internal;” that is, they want to make their own decisions based on criteria they hold versus being influenced by input from others or having someone else make the decisions.

METHODOLOGY

Given the limited research on motivational and attitudinal patterns in general, and leaders’ MAPs in particular and the nature of the research questions,

the overall approach for this study was an exploratory three-phase, mixed-method, multiple case study (Creswell and Plano-Clark 2007; Eisenhardt 1989). Phase one was a theory-building, multiple case study designed to identify the senior leader (CEO) behaviors and approaches used to lead successful organization transformation using the Baldrige CPE model. This study is a subset of this much larger phase one qualitative multiple case study. Phase two consisted of a quantitative survey on attitudes and motivations along with difference tests to identify the MAPs that were significantly different between Baldrige CEOs and other effective senior leaders. Phase three converges the data and results from the first two phases into an integrated analysis that includes the enfolding of extant literature (Eisenhardt 1989). Three groups were involved in this

Table 1 BCG participants.

Industry sector	# of Employees	Phase 1 interview	Phase 2 iWAM Survey BCG Group
Manufacturing	1,000–5,000	1	1
	1,000–5,000	1	1
	5,000–10,000	1	
Service	>10,000	1	1
	500–1,000		1
	500–1,000	1	1
	5,000–10,000	1	
Small business	50–500	1	1
	50–500		1
	50–500	1	
Healthcare	1,000–5,000	1	1
	5,000–10,000		1
	>10,000	1	
	5,000–10,000	1	
Education	50–500	1	1
	1,000–5,000	1	1
	500–1,000	1	1
Totals		14	12

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study including Baldrige CEOs, effective leaders (non-Baldrige recipients), and employees.

The first phase included a purposive sample of 14 Baldrige recipient CEOs from a variety of industries and organization sizes (see Table 1). The second phase included three participant groups: a) Baldrige CEO Group (BCG); b) Effective Leader Comparison Group (LCG); and c) iWAM U.S. Standard Group. The Baldrige CEO Group (BCG) in phase two consisted of 12 iWAM survey participants. This group included nine of the interview participants from phase one. The LCG was also a purposive sample selected by The Institute for Work Attitude & Motivation from the pool of top leaders who completed the iWAM survey as part of a leadership development effort in their company, agency, or organization. The LCG was chosen based on their success as leaders in their respective organizations. "Success," in this case, was determined by an experienced consultant who worked with each leader and judged success based on organizational performance and the impact of their leadership. In addition, the LCG group was selected on the basis of being either the head of the organization (comparable to the CEO) or a member of the top team in the organization. The majority (about 75 percent) of the LCG group were from the private sector. The remainder consists of a government agency leader, a university administrator, and a not-for-profit chief executive. The third group included in the survey analysis was the iWAM U.S. Standard Group ($n = 1921$). The U.S. Standard Group is part of the jobEQ database and can be retrieved for use in statistical analysis. Based on a comparison with the U.S. Department of Labor statistics, the U.S. Standard Group has a larger proportion of managers and professionals, is better educated, and has a slightly larger proportion of women in it than does the American workforce. The BCG and LCG groups were combined and tested against the group used in this study to determine which MAPs were different for leaders vs. employees.

Phase one was a multiple case study following the approach described by Eisenhardt (1989) and Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007). The purpose of phase one was to identify the behaviors and approaches required to lead a major organization transformation based on the CPE and determine how these behaviors and approaches influenced the transformation. Data

collection in the first phase consisted of in-depth interviews with 14 Baldrige recipient CEOs from a variety of organizations (see Table 1). CEOs were asked open-ended questions on why they started the journey, how they led the journey, the challenges they face, what worked and what did not work, and what they learned along the way. Their "stories" were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcript from each case was analyzed individually (within case analysis) using an inductive approach supported by NVivo8, a qualitative data analysis software package (Richards 2005) and visual data displays as described by Miles and Huberman (1994). The next step involved a cross-case analysis to compare and contrast within case findings to identify themes common across the cases and anomalies among the cases. Over time a framework of nodes (variables) and relationships was developed and tested using NVivo and standard qualitative analysis methods. While more than 200 variables were explored, the final, top-level model consists of 35 key variables. These 35 nodes are organized into five categories: leader behaviors, leader approaches, forces of change, culture, and the individual leader. One of the top-level nodes identified in the individual leader category was attitudes and motivations (i5). To further investigate the attitudes and motivations unique to this group, a quantitative survey was used to determine how these leaders differed from other effective senior leaders.

Phase two consisted of a quantitative survey and analysis to identify which MAPs were significantly different for leaders (BCG+LCG) compared with employees and between the BCG and the LCG. Based on the sample size, t-tests were conducted on 48 potential MAPs. The BCG was combined with the LCG to form a Senior Leader Group, which was then tested against the iWAM U.S. Standard group of employees (see Appendix Table A2). The MAPs of Baldrige CEOs (BCG) were then compared to other effective leaders (LCG). These tests identified six MAPs that were noticeably different at the 0.05 significance level or below (see Table 2). The validity and reliability of the iWAM instrument has been developed over the past 20 years through constant testing and applications such as coaching, leadership development, and the development of models of excellence. (For a complete

Table 2 Baldrige CEO differentiating factors.

iWAM Pattern	p Value <	Direction	Implications
Evolution	0.00	Higher	Baldrige CEOs are more likely to want to evolve change and drive continuous improvement.
Focus on systems	0.01	Higher	Baldrige CEOs are strongly motivated to work with systems and processes.
Sole responsibility	0.05	Lower	Baldrige CEOs are less likely to think having sole responsibility is important.
Focus on the past	0.05	Higher	Baldrige CEOs concentrate on (study) the past and use their experience to make decisions.
Focus on information	0.05	Higher	Baldrige CEOs are strongly motivated to work with facts and knowledge (information).
Tolerance	0.01	Lower	Baldrige CEOs are likely to be intolerant of the actions of others when they differ from their own or are not consistent across the workforce; that is, they are not very motivated to deal with people who have rules different than their own.

Note: "Direction" indicates how the mean of the Baldrige CEO Group (BCG) compares with the mean of the Leader Comparison Group (LCG).

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discussion of the validity and reliability of the iWAM instrument see Harshman and Merlevede 2011).

In phase three the findings from the first two phases were converged and the research literature and CPE model were subsequently enfolded into the analysis (Eisenhardt 1989). Seventeen of the 35 top-level nodes from phase one were directly applicable to the six MAPs identified in phase two. See the Appendix (Table A1) for a summary of the NVivo data related to the 17 nodes used in this study. This phase culminated in a theory-building exercise that integrated the quantitative and qualitative analysis with the extant literature including the core values and concepts from the CPE (NIST 2011).

RESULTS

The difference tests in phase two identified six motivational and attitudinal patterns that differentiate Baldrige CEOs from the LCG (see Table 2). The remainder of this paper discusses each of these six MAPs and integrates the phase one findings and key theories and concepts from the extant literature.

Evolution

Baldrige CEOs are more likely to want to evolve change and drive continuous improvement. As one Baldrige CEO noted, "There is no doubt that the Baldrige process changes you forever ... how you

think, work, and see yourself and others as well as your organization. In a good way, you are never finished and never satisfied ... you and all around you can improve!" The participant CEOs (12 of 14) described how their perspective changed during the journey (see Appendix, i4). This dissatisfaction with the status quo helped create useful tension to help the organization overcome inertia and move forward (see Appendix, f1). In addition, all of the Baldrige recipient organizations in this study used four key approaches to learning and continuous improvement, including: a) strategic management system; b) process improvement such as Six Sigma, lean, and PDSA; c) benchmarking; and d) Baldrige-based assessments (see Appendix, a9). This MAP is not surprising given the fundamental nature and purpose of the CPE assessment and improvement process is organization improvement or evolution (Van der Wiele et al. 2000; Ruben 2007). In addition, organization improvement is embedded in the CPE core values and concepts (organizational and personal learning and managing for innovation), criteria items and areas to address as well as the scoring scales—process learning dimension and results trends (NIST 2011).

Transformational leaders focus on continuous learning and organization improvement (Mackenzie and Barnes 2007). They create an environment where organization members question the organization's processes and underlying assumptions and develop new

ways to understand and run the organization (Avolio, Bass, and Jung 1999). Developing the capabilities of the organization members to engage everyone in the process of improvement was a key finding from the interview data (see Appendix, a4). As one Baldrige CEO put it, “While you may have to put the ‘rudder over hard,’ the ship doesn’t turn quickly. It takes time for culture change and you have to take the group along with you (see Appendix, c1).” Kotter (1995) seems to support this approach and proposes leaders focus on short-term wins to gain momentum and then consolidate those small wins into larger gains. While the Baldrige CEOs were motivated to continuously improve or evolve the organization, they also sponsored breakthrough projects to achieve world-class performance. As one CEO noted, “I think of continuous improvement as 3 to 5 percent and breakthrough improvement as 20 percent plus. I can’t think of any Baldrige recipients as not having both.” The continuous evolution of the organization requires the assessment and redesign of key systems and a systems perspective.

Focus on Systems

Baldrige CEOs are strongly motivated to work with systems and processes. Systems thinking was identified separately and prior to the survey as one of nine key leadership behaviors (see Appendix, b7). Systems thinking came out in many forms but often was focused on an understanding of the causal chain of engaged employees combined with high-performing suppliers and partners producing quality products and services resulting in customer satisfaction (repeat and referral business) and financial success. This understanding of the organization as a system is not new and was proposed by Deming (1986), Ackoff (1970), and others. Deming’s systems model has been confirmed by several research studies such as Wayhan et al. (2010). Systems perspective is embedded throughout the CPE and is one of 11 core values and concepts. The CPE include explicit linkages between the items and areas to address, and alignment and integration is one of four dimensions for the scoring of processes (NIST 2011). In addition, a systems perspective influenced the degree to which the leaders are able to align and integrate the various organization policies,

process, and strategies, which is one of the identified forces of change (see Appendix, f3).

The need for systems thinking in modern organizations is not new (Atwater, Kannan, and Stephens 2008) and the inclusion of a systems perspective during organization assessments has been linked to competitive advantage (Duncan, Ginter, and Swayne 1998). In addition to achieving performance excellence, a systems perspective is critical to understanding and managing the many relationships that are essential for creating sustainable value for multiple stakeholders (see Appendix, a1), such as investors, society, and the natural environment (Grant, 2007; Senge et al. 2008). Combined with the Breadth (big picture) pattern, the Baldrige CEOs have a combination of MAPs that would motivate them to work with relationships among components of the organization and the synergy of those components as a system. In addition, the cases in this study also found that as the level of understanding of the organization system increased so did the level of teamwork among the various functions (see Appendix, c3). However, for systems thinking to result in increased teamwork across functions, a collaborative approach to leading and managing is needed.

Sole Responsibility

Baldrige CEOs are less likely to think that having sole responsibility is important and are more team-oriented than self-oriented in terms of responsibility. They would rather share responsibility than keep it themselves. All of the Baldrige CEOs described situations that indicated that they were often very collaborative in their approach to leading the organization (see Appendix, b3). This led to increased employee engagement (a4) and teamwork (c3) across the organization. Related to the MAP of sole responsibility is the individual characteristic of being humble but confident. Most of the Baldrige CEOs demonstrated a moderate degree of humility through their descriptions of how they handled particular situations, the credit that they gave to the team, and so forth (see Appendix, i2). While they advocated their ideas (confident), they also inquired into alternative ideas from the group (humble). While the CPE do not specifically address sole responsibility,

sole responsibility and a collaborative approach support several key aspects of the CPE including individual (b9) and organization (a9) learning and continuous improvement, which are essential for the transformation to excellence (NIST 2011).

Shared responsibility and a collaborative approach increase the quality of the new management processes, solutions, and strategies and decrease the resistance to change (see Appendix, f2). Ford and Evans (2001) note that collaborative dialogue enhances organizational learning and thus the quality of the improvements in management processes. As the CEO of IDEO, Tim Brown notes, “The increasing complexity of products, services, and experiences has replaced the myth of the lone creative genius with the reality of the enthusiastic interdisciplinary collaborator” (Brown 2008, 87). In addition, Ireland and Hitt (2005) propose that there is no way for a single individual to have all the answers and thus the reliance of a single strategist at the top is “increasingly counterproductive.” As the level of collaboration increases, the level of resistance among the workforce decreases, which is essential to successful transformation to excellence (Beckhard and Harris 1987; Ford, Evans, and Mathews 2004).

Focus on the Past

The examination of past strategies, activities, and performance is a key part of collaboration (b3) and learning (b9). Baldrige CEOs concentrate on the past and use experience to make decisions, and they have a higher than average “past” orientation to time. This indicates the importance of experience may well motivate them to learn from experience, and provides the experience base with which they may use to make decisions about the present or future (b9, a9). As previously noted, all of the Baldrige cases used four methods to facilitate continuous learning and improvement (a9). All four approaches involve assessments of previous performance and the results associated with changes. In other words, they all learned from performance “trends,” which provided feedback on the effectiveness of previous changes. The examination of the performance trends is how leaders know the impact of the changes in management processes and systems. It is

also a key CPE evaluation dimension for results. In addition, the CPE also call for a systematic approach to reviewing organization performance, which drives learning from performance trends over time.

The connection between reflection on the past and CPE assessments has been established by several researchers (Ford and Evans 2001; Ruben et al. 2007; and Duncan, Ginter, and Swayne 1998). Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1999) note that learning from the past, both successes and failures, is a combination of transformational and transactional leadership, which is considered to be the most effective style. Baldrige leaders did not focus on classifying results as failures or successes but rather examined the performance trends and patterns to understand the impact of the strategies and actions. Reviewing performance from the past requires a comprehensive scorecard and information (see Appendix, a6 and a7). While Baldrige leaders focused on the past, they also focused on the future. Focus on the future was a common MAP between the BCG and LCG, and they were significantly more motivated to pay attention to the future than the employee group (see Appendix Table A2). Consequently, the Baldrige leaders were motivated to focus on and learn from the past and to focus on the future.

Focus on Information

Baldrige CEOs are strongly motivated to work with facts and knowledge (information) and always want to know more—gathering information, getting the facts, knowing what there is to know is important. All of the Baldrige CEOs used a comprehensive scorecard (a6) and results that included the current performance levels, trends over time, and comparisons to other high-performing organizations to understand their performance and develop plans for improvement. As one Baldrige CEO noted, “Baldrige organizations are very fact based. They also know that running tests and trials are critical to successful product or service changes that will impact customers and clients. There is an old saying about ‘In God We Trust ... all others must bring data.’” Fact-based management is a core concept and value of the CPE, and just under half the overall CPE score (450 out of 1,000) is based on results

in five major areas: products and processes, customers, workforce, leadership and governance, and financial and market outcomes (NIST 2011). In addition, an entire category in the CPE is dedicated to measurement, analysis, and knowledge management.

The use of measures to track performance relative to strategy, including projections and comparisons, is consistent with the findings of Ford and Evans (2000). However, the “bar” continues to be raised. As the definition of organization success evolves to include more stakeholders (a1) and a systems perspective (b7), the enterprise scorecard (a6) becomes more comprehensive, such as the concept of a “balanced scorecard” proposed by Kaplan and Norton (1992; 1996). In fact, as Grant (2007) points out, organizations are faced with increasing pressure from additional stakeholders, including the natural environment driving the need for even more measures, data, and information pertaining to externalities such as greenhouse gases, corporate ethics, and so forth. Given the complexity of challenges facing leaders today it seems there is a need for leaders to move beyond the tendency to say, “just give me the bottom line” or “give me a few options to choose from.” Instead, leaders need to push toward a deeper and richer understanding of the organization as a system.

As organizations increased the number of measures and comparisons, they realized their performance was not as good as they had once thought. The difference between the desired performance and the actual performance created tension that helped overcome inertia and move the organization forward (see Appendix, f1). For the tension to be effective at moving the organization forward, the leaders had to have a certain level of intolerance for behavior that is inconsistent with the new direction.

Tolerance

Baldrige CEOs are likely to be intolerant of the actions of others when they differ from their own or are not consistent across the workforce; that is, they are not very motivated to deal with people who have rules different than their own. Many of the Baldrige CEOs described how they had to deal with resistance to change (f2). “And my basic belief in people is that I

would rather work with you and do everything I can to help you get through denial and get on the right track and go.” Or as another Baldrige CEO described it, “We are going to try it one year, if it doesn’t work we will go back to what’s not working now.” Many of the Baldrige CEOs identified accountability (b6) as key to getting people to actually take the actions necessary. Most of the Baldrige CEOs had to get rid of employees who did not change and instead use their influence as the CEO to support the transformation toward the desired reality (see Appendix, a8). While some of these employees left on their own, half of the Baldrige CEOs in the study had to force some employees to leave.

While the Baldrige CEOs often demonstrated transformational leadership characteristics, they also used contingent rewards consistent with transactional leadership style (Avolio, Bass, and Jung 1999). Baldrige CEOs focused on coaching and teaching or a transformational style. However, if it became apparent that these methods were not working, the Baldrige CEOs used a more transactional approach and in some cases had to remove people from the organization, a practice consistent with the findings of Collins (2001). If people who behave in ways that are inconsistent with the vision and values of the organization are allowed to remain or succeed, then organization members will quickly realize that the leaders are not serious about the vision and values and thus are not credible or believable, an essential component to successful change (Beer 2003; Beckhard and Harris 1987). It should be noted, however, that individuals can have very different tolerance patterns in different contexts, and low tolerance should not be confused with the extent to which an individual cares about people.

POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS

There are at least four potential applications for the findings of this study to help leaders on the journey to performance excellence and help leaders of high-performing organizations (for example, Baldrige recipients) sustain their current levels of performance in a constantly changing environment and lead their organizations to even higher levels of performance. Similar to the MAPs application discussion in Harshman and

Harshman (2007), the four potential applications include: personal development, leadership development programs, succession planning, and hiring.

The first potential application is the personal development of leaders. Combined with their own MAPs, the results can help leaders understand how they “fit the motivational and attitudinal patterns required for the success” of transforming an organization using the Baldrige model. The notions of “fit” and “development” are not inconsistent. One major difference between leader traits, such as intelligence and personality, and MAPs is that traits tend to be fixed and stable over a variety of contexts, while MAPs are both adjusted in contexts and may be altered. So, the fact that a leader’s MAPs may not completely fit a high-performance profile at a given point in time does not preclude the possibility that he or she can make pattern adjustments that result in better alignment with known performance patterns. Encouragingly, this study begins to shed light on an element of leadership that is not only proving to be fairly powerful in predicting performance, but also something that has the potential to be shaped and adjusted to fit a given context, situation, and/or relationship. As part of the development of an individual, an effective design and deployment of leadership training and development programs is also required. When combined with other leadership behaviors and practices, the results of this study can be used to inform the design and delivery of leadership development programs for today’s high-level leaders. This would help create a “pipeline” of leaders suitable for consideration in the succession-planning process.

The results of this study combined with individual MAPs could provide a useful input to help inform the succession-planning process. As previously noted, senior leaders of high-performing organizations are concerned about developing and selecting the best leaders who will continue the journey to performance excellence. These results and the use of the iWAM to assess individual leader MAPs could increase the odds of selecting leaders with the underlying attitudes and motives to consistently drive the behaviors and actions necessary to lead the organization to even higher levels of performance. Finally, the findings in this study can be used to inform the hiring process for top leadership

or define parameters for leadership positions to be used in talent management processes for high potential leader advancement. As practitioners and researchers use these findings they should keep in mind the limitations associated with this study.

LIMITATIONS

As with most exploratory research studies there are a few limitations:

1. As is common for exploratory model-building studies, the sample sizes for the Baldrige CEO and LCG were small. This may limit the generalizability of the findings.
2. The study was limited to Baldrige CEOs. It is not clear if the results are applicable to other levels in the organization beyond the upper echelon.
3. There were no female CEOs included in the Baldrige group. Consequently, it is not clear if the findings are equally applicable to female Baldrige CEOs.
4. Industry representation in the Baldrige CEO group does not include government or nonprofit sectors. While the results for the five sectors that were included (service, manufacturing, small business, healthcare, and education) indicated consistency, it is not clear if the results would be the same for Baldrige CEOs from the government and nonprofit sectors.
5. This is an *ex post facto* study, which does not allow for the determination of whether these motivational and attitudinal patterns were always present in the Baldrige CEOs or instead were a result of personal transformations that occurred due to the experience of leading a transformation using the Baldrige model. As previously noted, the process changes the leaders forever.

RECOMMENDED FUTURE RESEARCH

It will never be possible to build a perfect model because of the nuances of contexts and the potential differences among individuals. For example, the publisher of the iWAM notes that if one computes the

combinations and permutations of the 48 patterns, the result is a number larger than the population of the earth. So, there are going to be differences. The question is: Are there some core motivational and attitudinal patterns that tend to characterize the majority of Baldrige CEOs and that might differentiate this group from their counterparts who are effective, but not interested in or able to achieve the Baldrige Award?

Four suggestions for future research:

1. Conduct a longitudinal study by adding more Baldrige CEOs and continue each year with new recipients. At the same time increase the diversity of the group by including female Baldrige CEOs.
2. Increase the size and diversity of the leadership comparison group.
3. Increase the number of comparison groups. Add a comparison group of leaders who attempted to transform their organizations using the Baldrige model but were unable to achieve performance high enough to receive recognition of the Baldrige award.
4. Finally, a pre- and post-transformation study of senior leader MAPs to identify how the MAPs changed during the transformation process would help answer the question whether the Baldrige CEOs' MAPs were pre-existing or developed during the process.

CONCLUSION

It seems clear from the quantitative and qualitative analysis that the Baldrige CEOs are significantly different from other effective leaders on six MAPs. These six MAPs appear to be important for leading successful organization transformation based on the Baldrige CPE. These six MAPs are also consistent with the existing research and literature on leading organization transformation. In addition, the six MAPs work together to create a coherent set of MAPs that facilitate leading organization transformation.

Baldrige CEOs were motivated to constantly evolve and improve the organization to improve performance. This evolution required them to take a systems perspective and redesign the various elements of the organization to work as a coordinated enterprise system. Effectively designing the components to work as

a system requires collaboration of a diverse group of leaders with a wide variety of functional perspectives. The continuous improvement was based on fact-based evaluation of past performance patterns to fully understand the impact of previous strategies and system changes and develop plans for the future. Finally, while the Baldrige CEOs focused primarily on a transformational approach to leading change, in some instances they were intolerant of behaviors that were inconsistent with the vision and values of the organization.

It seems that Baldrige leaders are rare. What makes these leaders different has been the topic of many discussions among the Baldrige community and was a question identified at the Summit in 2006 (Latham 2008). This study is just the beginning of what will hopefully be a stream of research focused on answering this question. The six MAPs identified in this study appear to be important to the future success of organizations operating in a constantly evolving environment where the definition of success is constantly changing and becoming more difficult to achieve.

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APPENDIX

Phase One Results

Seventeen of 35 nodes in the larger phase one study are directly related to the six MAPs identified in this study. Table A-1 depicts the 17 codes vs. the 14 cases. Each cell contains the number of times the code/node (variable) was found in the transcript from that particular case. The last column identifies the number of cases out of 14 where this code/node was found.

Codes/Nodes	Cases														Total	Cases
	34	40	41	46	48	50	52	58	61	62	64	65	67	69		
a1 Stakeholder value	19	12	1	53	11	4	4	2	20	6	13	4	24	4	177	14
a4 E3 People	8	28	12	45	11	11	8	8	20	9	25	14	33	24	256	14
a6 Measure performance	22	11	25	56	30	15	18	25	20	12	49	25	50	16	374	14
a7 Review performance	1	20	10	38	15	5	3	0	3	2	7	9	17	14	144	13
a8 Reinforce behavior	9	9	1	19	4	3	3	1	3	2	10	3	16	1	84	14
a9 Learn and improve	12	26	27	77	28	17	17	29	30	16	43	30	36	29	417	14
b3 Collaborative	8	1	11	20	2	2	5	11	9	1	3	7	2	6	88	14
b6 Accountability	0	20	2	11	12	6	3	0	1	0	1	9	8	10	83	11
b7 Systems thinking	1	6	3	42	2	7	3	0	4	4	6	1	2	0	81	12
b9 Personal learning	19	11	8	24	18	1	2	11	14	7	17	20	5	9	166	14
c1 Culture change	8	12	7	11	3	19	2	5	2	1	10	8	7	2	97	14
c3 Teamwork	4	4	9	36	0	0	5	4	13	1	5	5	4	3	93	12
f1 Tension	16	11	19	32	9	15	11	11	14	7	45	23	17	17	247	14
f2 Resistance to change	4	2	5	13	1	2	2	0	6	2	10	6	4	4	61	13
f3 Alignment	0	0	0	22	8	6	3	2	1	0	3	0	5	0	50	8
i2 Humble and confident	5	11	2	9	9	0	2	7	5	4	3	12	4	6	79	13
i4 Perspective	10	4	1	8	1	0	2	1	4	3	1	2	2	0	39	12

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Phase 2 Results

There were 17 patterns for which the combined BCG and LCG were significantly different from the Standard Group. These are shown in the Figure A2 along with a statement of the implication for each difference.

Table A2 MAPs common to both the BCG and LCG that were significantly different than the iWAM U.S. Standard Group.

iWAM Pattern	Direction	Implication
Goal orientation	Higher	Leaders are more likely to want/need goals toward which they work.
Breadth	Higher	Leaders are more likely to want to see the big picture.
Depth	Lower	Leaders are less motivated to want to deal with details.
Neutral communication	Lower	Leaders want to pay less attention to the specific content of messages.
Group environment	Higher	Leaders tend to want to have contact with people as part of their work.
Individual environment	Lower	Leaders have less of a tendency to want to work alone.
Shared responsibility	Higher	Leaders are more likely to want to share responsibility with the team.
Sameness	Lower	Leaders are less motivated to maintain the status quo; to resist change.
Use	Lower	Leaders are less likely to want to implement or do the task.
Future	Higher	Leaders are more motivated to pay attention to the future.
Indifference	Lower	Leaders view rules as more important than those in the standard group.
Convinced by doing	Lower	Leaders are less likely to want to be convinced by trying something.
Convinced by consistency	Higher	Leaders will both need consistent convincing and may be very persistent; that is, they are not convinced easily nor are they likely to stay convinced (may be seen as skeptics). Individuals who score very high may be very persistent. In this case, the pattern results in someone who is very difficult to convince that "it can't be done."
Interest in people	Higher	Leaders who score high are more likely to want to deal with people as part of work. Conversely, leaders who score low are more likely to want to deal with "things" (tools, numbers, products, processes, facilities, and so on) as part of their work.
Interest in tools	Higher	Leaders are more likely to want to work with tools as part of a role. The notion of tools could be equipment, software, or even processes. A high score indicates an interest in a tool or tools as part of the work.
Interest in money	Lower	Leaders are less likely to want to manage money as part of a role. One would expect a controller or director of budget to have a high score on this pattern. A lower score among leaders is not unusual and they will almost always use money as a goal factor, but they are not motivated to work with it directly or to manage it directly.
Interest in activity	Lower	Leaders are less likely to want to deal with/have a lot of activity in work. High-activity leaders need action or movement. Low-activity leaders might be seen as "thinkers rather than doers." A low score is not an indicator of energy, rather it reflects a need or motivation for action.

Note: "Direction" is an indicator of how the combined mean of the Baldrige CEOs (BCG) and Leader Comparison Group (LCG) compare with the mean of the Standard Group.

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