

LEADERSHIP: COMPETING VALUES FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS OF BEHAVIORAL  
ROLES, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, AND CAREER EXPERINECE AMONG  
NONPROFIT EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

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By

Eileen M. McKeown, Bachelor of Arts

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Thesis Advisor: Christopher M. Toppe, PhD.

Abstract

This study explores the concept of leadership in light of today's leadership crisis with a specific focus on the nonprofit sector. The study explores the impact of career experience on an executive director's leadership style using the Competing Values Framework. The Competing Values Framework is used to determine the way career experience impacts the extent to which nonprofit executive directors are competitive, controlling, collaborative, or creative. The results do not find sector of experience to be statistically significant in determining executive director leadership style. The results have implications for hiring decisions for nonprofit organizations. Hiring implications can be made on the basis of both experience and demographics of executive directors. For example, with age, executive directors are shown to be less creative and less competitive. Executive directors who are promoted into their roles are shown to be less creative and more controlling than those who moved laterally into their roles. The study taps into a field of research that has been largely unexplored quantitatively and reveals a number of areas for further research.

The research and writing of this thesis is dedicated to my mother and grandmother who inspired my love of learning.

Many thanks,  
**Eileen M. McKeown**

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## **Introduction**

Open any major newspaper and you will find comments on leadership etched into its pages. Search the internet for blogs, news sources, and social media and you will find observations on leadership. Sit with friends or colleagues and discuss major issues impacting American society and inevitably, many of these issues will come down to a question of leadership. We have a vibrant, animated, and sometimes controversial conversation about leadership occurring in our country today. In particular, many media and scholarly articles claim that America is facing a crisis in leadership.

Despite the crisis in leadership, this prominent and public discussion on leadership is a relatively new phenomenon. Leadership studies first arose in the mid twentieth century, and the field of leadership study has blossomed in the last several decades as we focus on what has become to be seen as a dearth of American leaders. A field even more latent has been the application of leadership studies to the nonprofit sector, which began to substantively take off in the mid-1990s. Studies of nonprofit leadership are a crucial aspect of the discourse on leadership for several reasons, not the least of which is the fact that the nonprofit sector is the largest growing branch of our economy today. Additionally, the prominence of public-private partnerships and the rise in nonprofit administration of traditional public services make responsible nonprofit leadership increasingly important.

During the current financial crisis, the nonprofit sector has suffered along with many other industries. Strained fiscal resources require effective and efficient leadership to help organizations survive the crisis. Adding further complexity, nonprofit leadership positions exhibit a remarkably high rate of turnover which is substantially greater than that of private sector chief executives. Most nonprofit executive directors only stay in their positions for four to

five years. Given this high turnover rate, nonprofits are frequently challenged with leadership transitions. In addition, nonprofit leadership warrants a conversation of its own due to the unique characteristics and challenges of the sector that differentiate it from the public and for-profit sectors. An understanding of effective leadership could therefore help facilitate smoother transitions.

The challenges unique to the nonprofit sector foster and require a distinct form of leadership. They include but are not limited to: diverse stakeholders, intangible metrics of success, and resource constraints. First, nonprofit executive directors are accountable to a vast array of stakeholders from the communities they serve to their funders. For executive directors, the nonprofit board is only one of numerous stakeholders whom they must work hard to satisfy, given that board members, with their hiring and firing power, function as the executive director's boss. The board holds ultimate control over the direction and governance of the organization even though they are not involved in its daily operation. Second, nonprofits operate in a realm where profit metrics are not the primary indicator of success. Instead, adherence to and progress toward the nonprofit's mission and goals are the main metric for successful organizations. A nonprofit's goals are often intangible and so measurement of the effective use of resources towards these goals can present a challenge. Quantifying these intangible outcomes, however, is often the key to unlocking most funding sources. Third, nonprofits generally operate with fewer financial resources than for-profit organizations, making efficiency a must. These and other challenges necessitate more than a mere application of for-profit and public leadership theories to the nonprofit sector. To help tackle these challenges and due to its prominence and growth, the nonprofit sector demands and deserves its own leadership discourse.

The need to augment the conversation about nonprofit leadership presents a major questions: how do we study this leadership? Much of the general leadership study has been qualitative through interviews, focus groups, and case studies, yet the ability to quantify leadership is a necessity for establishing proven conclusions and garnering esteem for the field. However, the definitions of leadership may be as wide-ranging and diverse as the conversation on leadership itself, making the concept difficult to quantify in a widely acceptable way.

Two commonly accepted measurements of leadership are the behavioral repertoire of the leader and the organizational culture of the organization. Behavioral repertoire includes the variety of values and roles exhibited by a leader. The organizational culture captures the values demonstrated in the organization. While behavioral repertoire is clearly connected to the leaders themselves, organizational culture is an important concept in evaluating leadership as many studies purport that leaders infuse their own values in the principles of the organization.

Both behavioral repertoire and organizational culture can be evaluated under a common set of values called the Competing Values Framework (CVF), (Quinn, 2009). CVF is a system used to explain the ways in which values are represented across an organization and its leadership. Using four primary values, collaborate, create, control and compete, CVF assesses the roles leaders play in an organization based on the values that guide them. The CVF lens views these four values not as unique or independent but as interacting in the behavioral repertoire of a leader and organizational culture (La Belle, 2010).

Once a way to quantify leadership is established, the second question can be posed: What impacts the values and roles displayed by executive directors in the nonprofit sector? The factors impacting nonprofit executive director leadership may be as diverse as the leaders themselves. However, finding some pattern that demonstrates how executive director characteristics translate

into representation of the four CVF values could help nonprofit organizations through some of the challenges described above. Popular media, foundation reports, and studies from research institutions suggest some executive director characteristics that cultivate patterns in leadership values.

One of these characteristics is the leader's past experience in terms of both sector and previous roles. For example, does the executive director have most of their past sector experience in the public, for-profit or nonprofit sphere? Frequent debate centers on whether experience in the for-profit sector and business-savvy leadership is a benefit or hindrance to nonprofit executive directors. In terms of previous roles, leadership may also be impacted by a comparison in rank between current and past roles. Was the executive director position a promotional or lateral career move? Leadership values are often tied to comfort in the executive director position, and comfort in turn can be tied to promotional versus lateral career moves. Another common trait impacting leadership is the tenure of the executive director at the organization. In particular, whether the executive director is also the founder of the organization. Finally, leadership is also influenced by the size of the organization based on staff and revenues. This and the organization's place in the nonprofit life cycle can shape executive director responsibilities, management, and leadership style.

This study contributes to the conversation on nonprofit leadership by addressing this question quantitatively. Nonprofit leadership is examined using the CVF framework of collaborate, create, control, and compete. These four leadership roles are evaluated on two levels: behavioral repertoire and organizational culture. The study explores how the characteristics of the nonprofit leader and their organization contribute to the representation of the four values of CVF. The collaborate, create, control, and compete values serve as dependent

variables. Independent variables include traits of leaders and their organizations such as tenure in the executive director position, previous sector experience, organizational revenue and staff.

Through the CVF lens, this work enhances the leadership discourse by tackling the question of what impacts the roles and values displayed by nonprofit leaders. The study engages not just with leadership in general but more specifically with nonprofit leadership – a topic that is increasingly vital as the sector continues to grow and diversify. Effective leadership is essential for addressing the challenges unique to the nonprofit sector and ensure that nonprofits are meeting the needs of the communities they serve. Expanding the nonprofit leadership dialogue helps us discover how executive director traits translate into expression of roles and values not just in the behavior of the leaders themselves but also in their organizations at large.

## **Chapter I: Literature Review**

### **Leadership**

Scholars, the media, and individuals in their daily lives are in a constant conversation about leadership. But what exactly is leadership? A survey of the literature reflects the range and uncertainty in defining the concept. In *Leadership*, James MacGregor Burns (1978) notes that leadership is simultaneously one of the most common and the least comprehended occurrences in American life. With the emergence of this field of study, our definition of leadership has not narrowed but grown. Bernard Bass in *The Bass Handbook of Leadership* lists more than 150 definitions of leadership used today (Bass, 2008). Early models of leadership focused on traits inherent in leaders. Leadership was nature, not nurture – something that could not be learned (Cronin, 1984). More recent leadership models focus on decision-making, contextual intelligence, and action. Leadership is now perceived to be something that can be learned, honed, and refined (Nye, 2008). Despite our difficulty understanding the term, our need for leaders has spurred a growing field of leadership study.

Regardless of how we define leadership, there seems to be one issue that leadership scholars and the media agree upon: we are in a crisis of leadership. We need better leaders and we need more of them. This research focuses on adding to the conversation about leadership with a particular eye towards nonprofit leadership – a conversation that has become all the more important with the recent growth in the nonprofit sector.

### **Why Study Nonprofit Leadership**

Among the many reasons to study nonprofit leadership, three emerge as the most vital. First, the nonprofit sector is far from immune to the leadership crisis described above. In fact,

Thomas Tierney of the Bridgespan Group contends that the nonprofit sector is fighting an uphill battle for talent against the public and for-profit sectors (Tierney, 2006). Second, the nonprofit sector is growing and so is the need for leaders. For example, a 2007 report released by the Bridgespan Group anticipates 80,000 new senior manager positions will open in nonprofit organizations each year beginning in 2016 (Tierney, 2007). Third, given the growth in the sector, nonprofit organizations play an even larger role in providing important services to our economy today. For example, between 1993 and 2008, the nonprofit sector grew faster than the economy on the whole, with an increase of over 30,000 organizations each year (Crutchfield and Grant, 2008). According to the Chronicle of Philanthropy, there are more than 1.2 million registered nonprofit foundations and charities in the United States (Williams, 2010). The breadth of the sector means that nonprofit organizations are providing more of our public services. According to the Urban Institute, more than 50 percent of federal, state, and local social service government funds go towards nonprofit-provided services (Urban Institute, 2011).

Along with these three reasons, nonprofit leaders have increasingly become nationally renowned icons – recognized not just in their sector but also nationwide and internationally as exemplars of leadership and idols for the next generation. Geoffrey Canada, founder and executive director of the Harlem Children’s Zone, is one such nonprofit leader. Canada’s work, known for being unique, innovative, and effective, has gained him respect and admiration across the globe. His work at Harlem Children’s Zone afforded Canada a spot in the 2011 *Time Magazine* top 100 most influential people in the world (Duncan, 2011). As a nonprofit founder and executive director, Canada has earned a place in the ranks among innovators, revolutionaries, and industry leaders – a symbol not only of his own success but also of the significance of the nonprofit sector on the whole. His work, which began serving 100 students on

a small New York block, has created a revolution in holistic education and development services to youth that helps more than 8,000 students today (Duncan, 2011).

For these reasons and others, the study of what makes for effective and efficient nonprofit leadership is more critical than ever.

### **The Current State of The Nonprofit Sector**

Two recent reports released by the Meyer Foundation in coordination with several other research institutions have been seminal in profiling both the strained state of nonprofit leadership today and the need to augment future leadership. The first of these reports, entitled *Daring to Lead*, focused on the difficulties among leaders in the nonprofit sector (Bell, Moyers, and Wolfred, 2006). For *Daring to Lead*, the Meyer Foundation conducted a survey of nonprofit executives and found that three aspects of the nonprofit sector lead to excessive nonprofit executive director turnover: poor compensation, burnout from overwork, and fundraising deficits across the sector. *Daring to Lead* found that among the executives surveyed, three out of four planned to leave their leadership role within the next five years.

The second report, *Ready to Lead?*, painted a more positive picture on the future of leaders in the sector (Cornelius, Covington, and Ruesga, 2008). The later surveys conducted as part of *Ready to Lead?* included young executive directors, nonprofit employees, and young professionals in other sectors. These young professionals showed a greater interest in joining the nonprofit sector and taking on a leadership role in the nonprofit sector than previous generations. The makeup of the group of young nonprofit leaders reflected high levels of education and experience and racial diversity. *Ready to Lead?* also revealed that the nonprofit sector has

increased in clout and desirability for young professionals. Current and aspiring nonprofit leaders attributed their motivation and dedication to fulfillment resulting from mission-driven work.

Despite the positive spin on nonprofit executives in *Ready to Lead?*, the report also presents the many threats to leaders in the sector. Work-life balance issues made some young professionals apprehensive about taking on leadership roles. Furthermore, compensation continues to be a major challenge. Even potential fulfillment from a leadership role did not make young professionals feel comfortable with the sacrifice of being unable to make ends meet or save for retirement (Cornelius et al., 2008). Career tracks in the nonprofit sector are also often non linear, presenting an additional challenge to leadership. *Ready to Lead?* found a high prevalence of executive directors hired from outside the organization and even outside the nonprofit sector. The high rate of outside hires prevents a culture of mentoring and leadership from developing in many nonprofits. For example, just four percent of nonprofit professionals surveyed reported that they were being explicitly groomed and mentored to serve as the future executive director of the organization where they are currently employed. Finally, although nonprofit leaders' roles vary immensely, many of the young professionals surveyed did not find executive director job descriptions appealing to their innovative and future-focused mindset.

This is compounded by the fact that there is no typical job description for a nonprofit executive director. Nonprofit leadership responsibilities are so diverse and evolving that it is often difficult to generalize the tasks involved in executive director roles. Despite the diversity across the sector, in order to study leadership we must strive to discern some patterns. In an attempt to discern leadership trends, BoardSource, a research organization focused on nonprofit boards, published a report containing a condensed list of the ten main executive director responsibilities (BoardSource, 2006). This report serves as a resource for understanding the

diversity of executive director roles while recognizing the need for some commonality to evaluate leadership in the sector. The responsibilities outlined by BoardSource fall into three categories: mission and vision setting, operational activities, and communication. For mission and vision setting, the nonprofit executive director is responsible for committing to and embodying the mission as well as continually evaluating program effectiveness and developing future leadership. In operational activities, the executive director is primarily responsible for fundraising, financial stewardship, and staff management. For communication, the executive director is responsible for advocacy, relationship building, and cultivating an engaged board (BoardSource, 2006).

### **Challenges Unique to the Nonprofit Sector**

The challenges inherent in the nonprofit sector necessitate and cultivate a distinct form of leadership among executive directors. These intricacies range from finding tangible metrics of success to maintaining talented staff. The complexities innate in the sector spur a field of leadership study specific to nonprofits. Jim Collins highlights this point in *Good to Great and the Social Sectors* when he describes the continual pressure on nonprofit organizations to operate on a business model (Collins, 2005). Collins' work has been widely acclaimed as a leadership model and is especially relevant for the topic studied in this work as his writing is underscored by the unique traits innate in the nonprofit sector. Collins, who has written extensively on both the business and social sectors, argues that business thinking is not the answer to the leadership crisis in the nonprofit sector. There is a tendency in the discourse about nonprofit leadership to pose a business model as the key to great leadership and a solution to operating challenges. Collins argues against this pressure and contends that great leadership is great regardless of

sector but that each sector has distinct qualities confronting leaders and fostering a given leadership style (Collins, 2005).

In *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, Collins takes his initial model of great leadership from the business sector and reviews some unique nonprofit sector traits. According to Collins, there are five primary nonprofit characteristics that require adaptations of the private sector leadership model to make it pertinent to nonprofits (Collins, 2005). The five characteristics described by Collins provide a useful framework to outline the challenges unique to the nonprofit sector. Metrics are the first challenge described by Collins. In the business sector, money is both an input and an output and serves as a primary metric for success. For nonprofits, however, money is an input but is generally not an output. Instead, nonprofits measure success on characteristics such as their adherence to mission, the number of community members served, or increase in support for an issue. Many of the outcomes desired by nonprofits are behavioral. This means that they are often both harder to accomplish and more difficult to measure (Silverman and Taliento, 2006). Some of these success metrics may be quantifiable but others may be measured only qualitatively (Collins, 2005).

Collins cautions against the desire to disregard qualitative outputs simply because they are not hard numbers like those produced by financial data. According to Collins, strong evidence of success is valuable for nonprofits to demonstrate greatness regardless of their qualitative or quantitative nature (Collins, 2005). Joanna Carman's analysis of nonprofit evaluation adds a caveat to Collins' statement on value in qualitative and quantitative assessments. Carman notes that nonprofits who receive state and local funds can often use only qualitative evaluation but organizations that receive funding from the federal government and other large organizations must often comply with more rigorous quantitative standards (Carman,

2010). Nonprofit leaders must be confident in using money as an input only and work towards assembling evidence through other metrics in support of their effectiveness (Collins, 2005).

The next three challenges described by Collins focus on operation and structure in the nonprofit sector. Nonprofits operate on a more diffuse power structure which can make nonprofit leaders appear less firm or resolute, according to Collins (Collins, 2005). Compared to the business world, nonprofit leaders do not automatically command respect but need to earn it by their performance in the leadership role (Silverman and Taliento, 2006). The more lateral power structure of nonprofit organizations requires leaders to navigate a delicate balance between consensus building and more unilateral decision-making (Collins, 2005). Nonprofit leaders often struggle with a problem of unending consensus building due to their innumerable and diverse stakeholders (Silverman and Taliento, 2006). Nonprofits also struggle to “get the right people on the bus” (Collins, 2005, p. 13) as they are often unable to pay talented individuals a salary commensurate to the business sector. In the private sector, organizations can often use large sums of money to attract the most talented staff but limited resources and pressure from donors prevents the nonprofit sector from doing the same (Silverman and Taliento, 2006). Nonprofits are thus challenged to attract talent by garnering support for an organization’s mission rather than financial incentives. This often makes attracting and keeping talent difficult across the sector (Collins, 2005). Operationally, nonprofits depend not just on money but also on resources to keep their organizations afloat. Collins emphasizes the need to consider all types of resources as an important driver of organizational sustainability for nonprofits. These resources could include volunteers, free space for events or pro bono consulting services. This means that nonprofit leaders need to be closely connected to and leverage a wide variety of resources beyond just financial ones.

Finally, accomplishing the goals of an organization's mission is crucial to nonprofit organizations and is the primary motive behind their operation. In the business realm, profit generation is the main motive and is readily quantifiable. Adherence to mission in nonprofits is often complex to measure and many organizations therefore fall into a pattern of taking on initiatives that stray from their primary goals, a concept commonly called mission drift. Collins notes that an essential trait of great leaders in the nonprofit sector is an ability to keep an organization on track towards its mission with a constant consciousness of the potential to drift (Collins, 2005). Grant and Crutchfield warn nonprofits against an over-reliance on mission as a driver of nonprofit organizations (Grant and Crutchfield, 2008) which can shift a nonprofit's focus away from the profit drivers required to keep the organizations afloat. Instead of shying away from markets, nonprofits must make the markets work in their favor and engage with the market mechanism to keep their organizations running smoothly.

### **Factors Impacting Nonprofit Executive Director Leadership Style**

The diversity of factors impacting nonprofit executive director leadership style is almost impossible to capture, but scholars have developed some common ideas on the matter. Some of the common factors affecting nonprofit executive director leadership result from prior socialization. First, sector of previous experience is said to play a large role in developing leadership style. Business leaders who cross over into the nonprofit sector are recognized for a higher level of professionalism and financial savvy than leaders from within the nonprofit sector (Strom, 2008). However, these business leaders must match and meet the needs of a nonprofit in order to demonstrate effective leadership (Tierney, 2005). Often, business leaders come to organizations with different skills and speaking a different language than their nonprofit counterparts. Only if an organization is ready for change can a business leader succeed in a

nonprofit setting. Second, the leader's previous role, and whether the executive director was a promotional or lateral career move, impacts comfort in the position and thus leadership style (La Belle, 2010). Finally, tenure plays a role in influencing leadership style and scholars propose that this varies across stages of tenure from when a leader first takes a position to the development of a solid leadership theme towards the end of a leader's term (Hambrick and Fukutomi, 1991).

Other common factors that impact nonprofit executive director leadership stem from the organization's condition. The state of the organization (from staff size to revenue) influences a leader's work style, especially during their first few years in the role (La Belle, 2010).

Nonprofits, like any organizations, have a life cycle of development and the placement of a nonprofit in its life cycle can also impact leadership (Tierney, 2005). Kearns contends that nonprofits have a six-stage life cycle: development, growth, maturity, decline, turnaround or renewal, demise (Kearns, 2000). Each stage of the cycle requires different leadership techniques (La Belle, 2010).

## **Studying Leadership**

### ***Competing Values Framework***

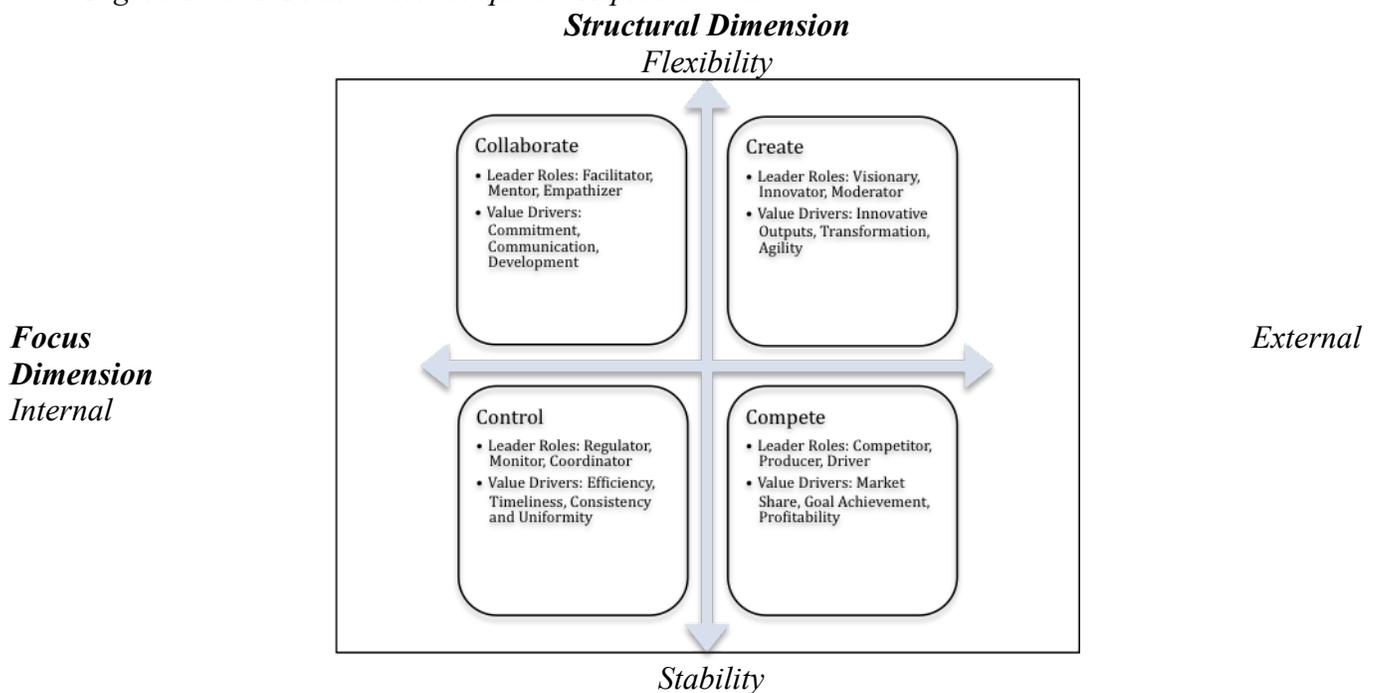
The Competing Values Framework (CVF) is a useful tool to evaluate leadership roles through behavioral repertoire and organization culture. The framework was originally developed in the 1980s and has since been rigorously tested (Quinn and Cameron, 1983, and La Belle, 2010). CVF is a lens used to evaluate "value creation" and manifestation in organizational structures, culture, and leadership (La Belle, 2011). CVF is often expressed as a matrix structure. The heart of CVF rests on two categories of values - those related to structure and those related to focus (Lawrence, Lenk, and Quinn, 2009). Structural values are one axis in the CVF matrix

and focus values are on the other axis. Structural categories are further divided into flexible or stable while focus values are divided into external and internal (Lawrence et al., 2009).

The interaction between the structural and focus values can then be easily understood through the CVF matrix, where each quadrant describes one of the four primary CVF values.

These four primary values are: *Collaborate*, *Create*, *Compete*, and *Control*. According to CVF theorists, the values driving leaders and organizations and the roles leaders play in their organizations differ based on which of the four values the leaders embody. For example, a leader in the collaborate realm is driven by communication and commitment and often takes on a role as a mentor. By comparison, a leader in the create realm is driven by transformation and agility and often takes on a role as an innovator (Lawrence et al., 2009 and La Belle, 2010). The following diagram can be used to represent CVF graphically – it demonstrates the two categories, four primary values, and the roles and drivers within each value (La Belle, 2010).

Figure 1: CVF Framework Graphical Representation



### ***Behavioral Repertoire***

Behavioral repertoire is the first of two primary aspects to consider when using the CVF to evaluate nonprofit leadership. Behavioral repertoire indicates the range of roles a leader can assume (Hooijberg, Hunt, and Dodge, 1997). A study by the Bridgespan Group called attention to the need for nonprofit executive directors to have an especially wide behavioral repertoire to respond to challenges in their dual role of leadership and management (Stid and Bradach, 2008). Leaders must not only be capable of a wide range of behaviors, they must also know how to appropriately match their actions to a given circumstance (La Belle, 2010). For this reason, many scholars also include such differentiation in their definition of behavioral repertoire. Behavioral differentiation is the way in which leaders decide which response suits a circumstance or set of conditions (Hooijberg et al., 1997). Diversity in behavioral repertoire is an important trait for effective leaders and the greater number of roles a leader can draw from, the more successful leadership can be in complex circumstances (Denison and Sprotizer, 1991). According to recent studies, effective leaders are at least proficient in exhibiting each of the twelve behavioral roles of the CVF model (Lawrence et al., 2009 and La Belle, 2010).

### ***Organizational Culture***

The second aspect to consider when studying leadership through the CVF lens is organizational culture. An organization's leader plays a significant role in determining organizational culture. Leaders are the main shapers, communicators, and preservers of organizational culture (Tsui, Zhang, Wang, Xin, and Wu, 2006). There is often a "congruence" rather than "decoupling" of a leader's behavior and an organization's culture (Tsui et al., 2006, p.134). For this reason, organizational culture is an important component of leadership study when using CVF. Through the CVF lens, culture is evaluated on six dimensions: "dominant

characteristics, organizational leadership, management of employees, organization glue, strategic emphases, and criteria for success” (La Belle, 2010, p. 11). An assessment made on these six characteristics then leads to a characterization of culture based on the four primary CVF values (compete, collaborate, create, and control).

### **Conclusion**

A review of the literature demonstrates not only the relevance but also the need to augment the discourse on leadership in the nonprofit sector. The challenges in the sector as well as the remarkable growth across the sector make effective leadership imperative for the next generation of nonprofit leaders. The diversity in the sector and in leadership styles can make finding a general formula for effective leadership difficult. Despite this diversity, finding some pattern for what makes an effective leader is essential and utilizing the CVF framework allows us to do so. Through CVF, with a focus on behavioral repertoire and organizational culture, we can work towards an analysis of the factors contributing to effective executive director leadership.

## **Chapter II: Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis**

For this study, I utilize data from research conducted by Antoinette La Belle (2010) entitled *Boundary Crossings: Professional and Situational Influences on Nonprofit Leaders and their Organizations*. La Belle's data contains survey responses from more than 600 nonprofit executive directors who were each surveyed via mail about their organizations and their own leadership roles. This study utilizes 413 observations from La Belle's dataset that have been isolated based on organization revenue and size. The identified respondents are all of the executive directors who lead organizations with fewer than 50 staff members and less than 5 million dollars in revenues. The data includes executive directors with a variety of experiences who lead organizations with diverse missions from human services to arts and culture.

The survey distributed to the nonprofit executive directors in La Belle's sample included nearly 40 questions, many of which were multipart. The survey asked the leaders about their background, their organization, and a series of questions designed to reveal their roles and values. The survey was based on commonly accepted constructs that convert to the CVF values of collaborate, control, compete, and create (LaBelle, 2010). All executive directors received a mean score for each of the four measures. The mean score indicates the extent to which an executive director displays the value based on their behavioral repertoire and organizational culture. Because the survey was based on a Likert scale, the mean value scores falls in the range of 1 to 5. As an example, an executive director who received a 4.9 mean score on the collaborate value is more collaborative than an executive director who received a mean score of 2.9. To discern more narrow and specific leadership traits, the survey questions can also translate directly into determining how the twelve roles of CVF are displayed by leaders. See Figure 1 in the literature review for a full listing of the leadership roles.

To conduct my analysis, I run four separate multivariate regressions, utilizing the mean of each of the four values of CVF as dependent variables and individual executive directors as the unit of analysis. Independent variables tested include those related to executive director demographics, organizational culture and size, and previous career experience. Some independent variables of interest include: gender, age, compensation range, education level, immediate recent sector of origin, sector experience, lateral vs. promotional career move, whether the executive director founded the organization, tenure, subsector of the organization, staff size, revenues, and age of organization. See table one below for descriptive statistics.

*Table 1: Descriptive Statistics*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Missing Values</b>
Mean collaborate score	Interval	1	5	4.099	0.590	0
Mean create score	Interval	1	5	3.754	0.714	0
Mean competitive score	Interval	1	5	3.279	0.670	0
Mean control score	Interval	1	5	3.177	0.629	0
Most recent previous sector of employment	Categorical	1	4	2.726	0.998	0
Primary sector of previous experience	Categorical	1	4	1.847	1.125	0
Title: Lateral vs. promotional career move	Categorical	1	3	1.758	0.530	0
Responsibilities: stagnant vs. increased from most recent previous employment	Categorical	1	3	1.879	0.457	0
Perspective on Career move: lateral vs. promotional	Categorical	1	3	1.271	0.511	0
Founder	Dummy	1	2	1.835	0.371	0
Tenure range	Categorical	1	4	2.414	1.185	0
Chief Operating Office in organization	Dummy	1	4	1.619	0.486	0

Age of nonprofit	Categorical	1	4	3.482	1.030	0
Revenue	Categorical	1	4	1.634	0.482	0
Full time employees	Categorical	1	4	1.239	0.427	0
Gender	Dummy	1	2	1.593	0.492	0
Current compensation range	Categorical	1	5	2.363	0.827	0
Age range	Categorical	1	5	3.680	1.038	0

The following regression is run for each of the four CVF mean value scores:

$$\text{Mean Score} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{demographics of executive director} + \beta_2 \text{organizational culture and size of nonprofit} + \beta_3 \text{career experience} + \text{error}$$

The hypothesis for this study is based on the assumption that the career experience of a nonprofit leader has a significant impact on the values displayed by nonprofit leaders when controlling for characteristics of both the executive director and the organizational culture and size of the nonprofit they lead. Specifically, career experience is hypothesized to significantly impact the extent to which nonprofit leaders display one of the four CVF values: create, collaborate, compete and control. Career experience includes five variables which track the executive director's previous experience in terms of both sectors and roles. The following hypothesis is tested:

*H<sub>0</sub>: Nonprofit executive director career experience has no effect on the values displayed by nonprofit executive director when controlling for the demographics of the executive director and the organizational culture and size of the nonprofit they lead.*

*H<sub>1</sub>: Nonprofit executive director career experience has a statistically significant effect on the values displayed by nonprofit executive directors, when controlling for the demographics of the executive director and the organizational culture and size of the nonprofit they lead.*

After the regressions are run for each CVF value, the statistical significance of the career experience variables are tested for individual significance and for joint significance.

### **Chapter III: Data and Methods**

Multiple linear regression is the primary statistical method used in this study. The study uses a combination of partial and full regressions to test the impact of career experience on each of the four values of CVF (collaborate, create, compete, control). The dependent variable in each case is continuous and represents the executive director's mean score for the CVF value based on their survey responses.

For each CVF value, one full and three partial regressions are run. The partial regressions allow for the isolation of the effects of demographics, organizational culture, and career experience, using a set of variables as versus a single variable. The selection of these control variables is based on the nonprofit leadership study by LaBelle (2010) as well as the CVF theory presented by Quinn and Cameron (1983). Demographics controls include variables for age, education, and gender. Organizational culture and size controls include variables for the nonprofit's age, revenue, number of full-time staff, and whether or not the organization has a chief operating officer. Career experience controls include the nonprofit executive director's tenure, the sector in which they spent most of their career, the most recent sector they worked in before becoming an executive director, whether or not their career move was lateral or promotional based on responsibilities and title, whether or not they founded the organization, and their compensation. The partial regressions are as follows:

$$\text{Mean Score} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{demographics of executive director} + \text{error}$$

$$\text{Mean Score} = \beta_0 + \beta_2 \text{organizational culture and size of nonprofit} + \text{error}$$

$$\text{Mean Score} = \beta_0 + \beta_3 \text{career experience} + \text{error}$$

The full regressions include all of the variables from the three partial regressions and can be used to answer the primary question of interest: controlling for organizational culture and size

and demographics of the executive director, what impact does career experience have on the executive director's display of CVF values? In order to evaluate the impact of career experience, the individual significance of each career experience variable is tested using a t test on coefficients from the full regression. The joint significance of the career experience variables is also tested, using an F test. Finally, because sector of previous career experience is of particular interest, an F test is conducted on the two variables related to sector experience. The full regression for each of the CVF values, therefore, is as follows:

$$\text{Mean Score} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{demographics of executive director} + \beta_2 \text{organizational culture and size of nonprofit} + \beta_3 \text{career experience} + \text{error}$$

After running the regressions as stated above, the regressions were re-run with just the significant variables and all the of career experience variables. This enabled ease of reporting in tables as well as elimination of any noise from insignificant variables. The reduced tables are shown in the body of this text and the complete tables are attached in the appendix.

Finally, an additional aspect of CVF theory is the interplay between the four CVF values in the manifestation of leadership style. Therefore, for each of the CVF values an additional full regression is run which includes controls for the executive director's mean score on the other three CVF values as independent variables. While not directly related to this study's primary focus on career experience, these regressions allow us to explore an additional question which is an important aspect of the CVF theory: what impact does an individual's score for one CVF value have on their score for another CVF value? For example, is an individual with a high score for creativity more or less likely to have a high score for collaboration. A t test on the coefficients for each of the three CVF values in the regression is used. The regression is as follows:

*Mean Score =  $\beta_0$  +  $\beta_1$ demographics of executive director +  $\beta_2$ organizational culture and size of nonprofit +  $\beta_3$ career experience +  $\beta_4$ mean score for other CVF values + error*

## **Chapter IV: Results**

Below are output tables for regressions for each of the four CVF values. Each CVF value has its respective table. As noted above, these tables include the reduced regressions - only the significant variables and all career experience variables. The results for each CVF table are described separately followed by some broad conclusions and policy ramifications. All F tests results for the joint significant of the career experience variables are included in a single table. Finally, the last table includes the output from the regressions which utilize the additional CVF variables as independent variables. All tables show: Standard errors in parentheses, \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ .

**Collaborate Results**

*Table 2: Multivariate Regression with Collaborate as the Dependent Variable*

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_COLL_OCAI	(2) Mean_COLL_OCAI	(3) Mean_COLL_OCAI	(4) Mean_COLL_OCAI
title			0.0175 (0.0254)	0.0125 (0.0258)
immed			0.0595* (0.0305)	0.0585* (0.0310)
most			0.00611 (0.0259)	0.0109 (0.0262)
tirank			0.0178 (0.0601)	0.00605 (0.0608)
tenure			0.0817*** (0.0256)	0.0880*** (0.0289)
rerank			0.0232 (0.0684)	0.0204 (0.0694)
move			-0.0690 (0.0588)	-0.0557 (0.0602)
founder			0.102 (0.0829)	0.104 (0.0946)
comp			-0.0584 (0.0355)	-0.0455 (0.0398)
coo		0.0743 (0.0609)		0.0704 (0.0602)
npage		0.0230 (0.0300)		0.0180 (0.0343)
rev		-0.0996 (0.0689)		-0.0486 (0.0747)
fte		0.0218 (0.0744)		-0.000112 (0.0733)
female	0.125** (0.0597)			0.0678 (0.0603)
educ	-0.0175 (0.0378)			0.0169 (0.0383)
age	-0.0134 (0.0283)			-0.0360 (0.0318)
Constant	4.141*** (0.177)	4.127*** (0.132)	3.802*** (0.246)	3.795*** (0.298)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.013	0.008	0.072	0.084

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

For the collaborate value, in the complete regression, tenure and immediate sector of previous experience are both significant predictors of the extent to which executive directors are collaborative. Both tenure and immediate sector of previous experience show a positive relationship with the collaborate score. For tenure, as an executive director's tenure increases, they become more collaborative. For immediate sector of experience, if the executive director's most recent experience prior to their current position was in the nonprofit sector, they are predicted to be more collaborative. In the regression in which only career experience variables are included, similar results are seen as only tenure and immediate sector of previous experience are significant. None of the organizational culture characteristics were significant in either the partial regression with just organizational culture characteristics or in the full regression. None of the demographics variables were significant in the full regression and only female was significant in the partial regression. Looking just at the partial regression, females are predicted to be more collaborative on average, and this prediction is statistically significant. The female effect, however, becomes insignificant when included in the full regression.

***Create Results***

*Table 3: Multivariate Regression with Create as the Dependent Variable*

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_CREA_OCA I	(2) Mean_CREA_OCA I	(3) Mean_CREA_OCA I	(4) Mean_CREA_OCA I
age	-0.0642* (0.0338)			-0.121*** (0.0359)
tenure			0.0981*** (0.0306)	0.132*** (0.0324)
founder			0.167* (0.0964)	0.154 (0.0988)
move			-0.163** (0.0675)	-0.123* (0.0707)
rerank				0.0111

tirank				(0.0816)
				-0.0985
most				(0.0717)
				0.0245
immed				(0.0309)
				0.0255
title			-0.0568*	(0.0363)
			(0.0298)	-0.0586*
comp				(0.0302)
				0.0245
coo		0.0515		(0.0427)
		(0.0734)		
npage		-0.0358		
		(0.0362)		
rev		-0.0400		
		(0.0831)		
fte		-0.122		
		(0.0897)		
Constant	3.990***	4.075***	3.893***	4.192***
	(0.129)	(0.160)	(0.169)	(0.309)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.009	0.013	0.076	0.105

Standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

For the create variable, in the complete regression, age, tenure, promotional vs. lateral career move, and promotional vs. lateral title change are significant. Tenure has a positive relationship with creativity, meaning that as an executive director's tenure increases, they are predicted to be more creative. Age shows a negative relationship with the create variable. As age increases, therefore, an executive director's create score is predicted to decline. Both promotional vs. lateral career move and promotional vs. lateral title show a negative relationship with an executive director's create score. This predicts, therefore, that promotional, as compared to lateral, career transitions into the executive director role make an executive director less creative. In the partial regression with just career experience variables, the founder variable is

also significant in addition to the variables which were significant in the full regression.

Founders are predicted to be more creative given the positive relationship between the founder variable and the create score. Age was significant in the partial regression of just demographic variables and had a negative relationship with the create score, as it did in the full regression.

Finally, none of the organizational culture characteristics were significant in the partial regression.

**Compete Results**

*Table 4: Multivariate Regression with Compete as the Dependent Variable*

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_COMP_OCA I	(2) Mean_COMP_OCA I	(3) Mean_COMP_OCA I	(4) Mean_COMP_OCA I
coo		0.184*** (0.0674)		0.138** (0.0660)
tenure			0.0722*** (0.0270)	0.0998*** (0.0303)
founder				-0.0390 (0.0922)
move				-0.00382 (0.0660)
rerank				0.0996 (0.0761)
tirank			-0.123** (0.0610)	-0.180*** (0.0669)
most			0.0514* (0.0285)	0.0557* (0.0289)
immed				-0.0149 (0.0339)
title			-0.111*** (0.0282)	-0.110*** (0.0283)
comp				0.0423 (0.0401)
age	-0.0428 (0.0323)			-0.114*** (0.0335)
female	-0.0463 (0.0680)			
educ	-0.0331			

Constant	(0.0430) 3.590*** (0.202)	3.210*** (0.0415)	3.610*** (0.160)	3.763*** (0.289)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.007	0.018	0.076	0.118

Standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

For the compete variable, the following variables are significant in the full regression: whether or not the organization has a chief operating officer, the executive director’s tenure, the title rank comparison, promotional vs. lateral title, and the executive director’s age. The presence of a chief operating officer and the executive director’s tenure each show a positive relationship with the compete score. Therefore, executive directors leading organizations that have a chief operating officer are predicted to be more competitive as compared to executive directors leading organizations that do not have a chief operating officer. Additionally, as an executive director’s tenure increases, their compete score is also predicted to increase. Age is predicted to have a negative relationship with an executive director’s compete score – meaning that as executive directors age, they are predicted to be less competitive. Finally, the two variables related to promotional vs. lateral and rank of title are predicted to decrease an executive director’s compete score. This signals that promotional or increased rank career moves into their position for an executive director are predicted to decrease an executive director’s competitiveness as compared moves from lateral or comparable rank titles. As seen in the table above, the results in each of the partial regressions show the same results in terms of significance and direction of coefficients for all variables.

**Control Results**

*Table 5: Multivariate Regression with Control as the Dependent Variable*

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_CONT_OCA I	(2) Mean_CONT_OCA I	(3) Mean_CONT_OCA I	(4) Mean_CONT_OCA I
educ	-0.0622 (0.0400)			-0.0417 (0.0397)
female	0.119* (0.0628)			0.134** (0.0626)
npage		0.120*** (0.0295)		0.153*** (0.0346)
tenure			0.0934*** (0.0270)	0.0399 (0.0290)
founder			0.0273 (0.0864)	0.221** (0.0984)
move				-0.00505 (0.0622)
rerank			0.0958 (0.0670)	0.159** (0.0724)
tirank				-0.0836 (0.0634)
most				0.0160 (0.0272)
immed				-0.00169 (0.0322)
title			-0.0387 (0.0268)	-0.0451* (0.0269)
comp				-0.0273 (0.0383)
Constant	3.341*** (0.157)	2.761*** (0.107)	2.901*** (0.166)	2.638*** (0.300)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.014	0.038	0.045	0.105

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

For the control variable, the following variables were significant in the full regression:  
 female, the nonprofit's age, founder, comparable vs. promotional responsibilities, and  
 promotional vs. lateral title. Female, nonprofit age, founder, and comparable vs. promotional

responsibilities all show a positive relationship with the control score. Therefore, females as compared to males, are predicted to be more controlling. Nonprofit executive directors who lead older organizations are predicted to be more controlling as compared to executive directors who lead younger organizations. Executive directors who are also founders of the organization they lead are predicted to be more controlling than those who did not found the organization they lead. Executive directors whose move into the role included increased responsibilities are predicted to be more controlling than those whose previous position had comparable responsibilities. The promotional vs. lateral title variable shows a negative relationship with the control variable – meaning that executive directors whose move into the position included a promotion in title are less controlling than those whose move in terms of title was lateral. This is only marginally statistically significant. The partial regressions demonstrate similar results to the full regression with the exception of the career experience regression, which shows a statistically significant effect of tenure on the control score. This effect disappears with the addition of the demographic and organizational culture characteristics in the full regression.

***F Test Results***

*Table 6: F Test Results for all CVF Values on Joint Significance of Career Variables*

	Collaborate	Control	Compete	Create
F Test on All Career Variables	3.13*** (0.0012)	2.59*** (<0.0001)	4.78*** (<0.0001)	4.83*** (<0.0001)
F Test on Promotional vs. Lateral Variables	0.50 (0.7346)	1.96 (0.0993)	6.13*** (0.0001)	2.18 (0.0704)
F Test on Sector Variables	1.74 (0.1771)	0.18 (0.8317)	2.15 (0.1173)	0.48 (0.6178)

p values in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

The F tests explore more about our primary variables of interest: those related to career experience. The F tests are conducted on the full regressions show above for each of the CVF values. For each CVF value, one F test is run for the joint significance of *all* career experience variables, another just on those variables related to promotional vs. lateral career moves, and a third for those related to sector of previous experience. On the F test for joint significance of all career experience variables, the results are highly statistically significant (p less than or equal to 0.001) in each case. This indicates that career experience on the whole is predicted to have a significant impact on the extent to which executive directors exhibit the four CVF values.

In all but one case, the F tests for joint significance of promotional vs. lateral career variables are insignificant. This statistical insignificance indicates that promotional vs. lateral career variables do not jointly have a statistically significant impact on the extent to which an executive director displays a given CVF value. The one exception is the joint significance test for the promotional vs. lateral variables for the compete value. This is highly statistically significant which implies that promotional vs. lateral values are predicted to have a jointly significant impact on the extent to which an executive director is competitive. In all cases, the tests for joint significance on the variables related to previous sector of experience are insignificant. This indicates that the variables capturing an executive director’s previous sector of experience, when taken together, do not demonstrate a statistically significant impact on the extent to which that leader displays the four CVF values.

***Results with CVF Values as Independent Variables***

*Table 7: Multivariate Regression with CVF Values Utilized as Independent Variables*

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_CONT_OCA	(2) Mean_COMP_OCA	(3) Mean_COLL_OCAI	(4) Mean_CREA_OCA
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	I	I	I
Mean_COLL_OCAI	0.306*** (0.0533)	-0.195*** (0.0515)	0.530*** (0.0460)
Mean_CREA_OCAI	-0.250*** (0.0510)	0.512*** (0.0424)	0.476*** (0.0413)
Mean_COMP_OCAI	0.453*** (0.0482)		-0.180*** (0.0477)
age	0.00291 (0.0298)	-0.0551** (0.0280)	0.528*** (0.0437)
comp	-0.0385 (0.0370)	-0.000585 (0.0271)	-0.0282 (0.0285)
educ	-0.0336 (0.0353)	0.0156 (0.0350)	-0.0528 (0.0335)
female	-0.0336 (0.0353)	0.0105 (0.0322)	0.0187 (0.0339)
fte	0.116** (0.0556)	-0.0512 (0.0528)	0.0232 (0.0508)
rev	0.0663 (0.0678)	-0.0370 (0.0642)	0.0395 (0.0617)
npage	0.0464 (0.0691)	0.0808 (0.0652)	-0.0183 (0.0629)
coo	0.140*** (0.0317)	-0.0493 (0.0306)	-0.00245 (0.0296)
tenure	-0.0385 (0.0560)	0.130** (0.0526)	0.0795 (0.0508)
founder	0.00594 (0.0274)	0.0243 (0.0258)	0.0234 (0.0249)
move	0.245*** (0.0874)	-0.157* (0.0830)	0.00488 (0.0803)
rerank	-0.00626 (0.0558)	0.0531 (0.0527)	0.00772 (0.0507)
tirank	0.105 (0.0642)	0.0433 (0.0608)	-0.00128 (0.0585)
most	-0.0370 (0.0566)	-0.0948* (0.0533)	0.0414 (0.0515)
immed	-0.00476 (0.0243)	0.0359 (0.0229)	0.00521 (0.0221)
title	-0.00919 (0.0287)	-0.0197 (0.0271)	0.0404 (0.0260)
Mean_CONT_OCAI	-0.0116 (0.0243)	-0.0561** (0.0228)	0.0343 (0.0220)
Constant	0.779** (0.353)	0.405*** (0.0431)	0.253*** (0.0441)
		1.296*** (0.330)	0.917*** (0.338)

Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.320	0.464	0.362	0.514

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

The table above contains the results from the regression of one CVF value as the dependent with the remaining three CVF values as independent variables. These regressions are not integral to the question of career experience but are solely meant to demonstrate an additional aspect of the CVF theory: that the four CVF values interact in significant ways in the creation of executive director leadership style. As shown above, all of the CVF values when used as independent variables are highly statistically significant in all four regressions. This indicates that the four CVF values are interacting as they manifest themselves in an individual executive director's leadership style.

## **Chapter V: Discussion and Policy Implications**

### ***General Career Experience***

A primary conclusion one can draw from this study is that career experience does matter for leadership style as represented by the CVF framework. For each of the four CVF values, the joint effect of career experience was significant. This indicates that, on the whole, career experience is an important determinant of the way an executive director chooses to lead their organization. Once one can confidently say that career experience matters for leadership, one can drill down results to make more specific conclusions. In particular, results related to sector of experience and hiring decisions are able to be drawn from this study and as described in the literature review, are hot-button issues in today's nonprofit sector. Finally, tenure is demonstrated to be statistically significant for all CVF values and these implications are explored.

### ***Sector***

Sector is not jointly significant in any case. As described above, in two cases, sector-related variables do show a statistically significant impact. First, in the case of the collaborate value, the extent to which an executive director displayed a given value is impacted statistically by their immediate sector of previous experience. Second, in the case of the compete value, the sector where an executive director spent the majority of their experience has a statistically significant impact on the extent to which they were competitive. In both cases, these impacts are only marginally significant.

There are several implications one can draw about sector from these results. First, one can assume based on the lack of joint significance and the only marginal significance of the sector variables, that sector of experience does not in fact matter for determining the extent to

which an executive director displays CVF values. This conclusion would gain backing from scholars such as LaBelle who found that it was not sector of experience but rather diversity of experience that matters for determining leadership style (LaBelle, 2010). Second, one could assume that the marginal statistical significance of the two sector variables is important in not only statistically but also substantively in determining leadership style. An individual subscribing to this assumption could consider using these variables to make hiring decisions as described below.

### ***Hiring Decisions by CVF Value***

The significance of individual variables in the multivariate regressions can be used to inform certain aspects of hiring decisions for organizations looking to hire executive directors. Because not all of the career experience or demographic variables are significant for every CVF value, this study cannot present a comprehensive picture of hiring decisions. The study can, however, use the significance of certain variables to inform aspects of hiring decisions. Several conclusions can be made.

*Create Value:* First, based on the negative relationship of age with a director's create score, one can infer that organizations looking for a creative leader may want to focus their search on younger individuals as compared to older individuals. Second, based on the negative relationships between the variables related to promotional vs. lateral career moves and an executive director's create score, organizations looking for a creative leader may want to hire individuals who are moving laterally as versus promotionally into the position.

*Compete Value:* First, based on the negative relationship of age with a director's compete score, one can infer that organizations looking for a competitive leader may prefer younger as versus older individuals. Second, given the negative relationship between the promotional vs. lateral

variables and the director's compete score, one can infer that an organization looking for a competitive leader may seek individuals who are being promoted into the executive director position as compared to those moving laterally.

*Control Value:* First, given the positive relationship between female and an executive director's control score, organizations seeking a controlling executive director may seek females as versus males. Second, the relationship between the control score and variables dealing with promotional vs. lateral moves in terms of title and responsibilities demonstrate that organizations seeking a controlling leader may want to hire individuals who are being promoted as versus moving laterally.

*Collaborate Value:* Based on the positive relationship of immediate sector of previous experience and a director's collaborate score, one can infer than organizations looking for a collaborative leader may prefer individuals who have immediate previous experience in the nonprofit sector.

### ***Tenure***

For three out of four of the CVF values, tenure was highly statistically significant in determining the extent to which an executive director displayed a given value. For the remaining CVF value (control), tenure was significant in the partial regression of career experience but not in the full regression. The recurring significance of tenure for the CVF values indicates the potential importance of tenure in leadership style. While tenure may not impact hiring decisions for nonprofits, it is an essential tool as one evaluates the leadership style of a given individual. Tenure may affect an individual's comfort, confidence, and potentially competence in a position. In today's world and in the future, tenure may become an increasingly important aspect of

leadership style given that establishing and leveraging networks are an ever-important part of effective leadership.

## **Areas for Further Research**

Given the dearth of research on nonprofit executive director leadership, there are a variety of areas for further research. This study, however, reveals three areas of particular need. First, quantity of data was a significant challenge to research. The dataset used has just 413 observations and the small sample size makes finding statistically significant results a challenge. The nonprofit organizations in the dataset also have relatively low revenue and so the observations apply broadly to small to medium sized nonprofits but not to larger organizations. It would be valuable to conduct similar studies on larger organizations, especially given that the stakes for leadership in larger organizations with larger budgets may be particularly high.

Second, from this study, one can say that career experience on the whole does have a significant impact on an executive director's leadership style. Given the regression results, however, it is difficult to drill down to how specific characteristics of an executive director's previous career experience impact their leadership for all CVF values. As indicated in the discussion, some implications for hiring can be made but these are not nearly in-depth enough to truly capture all the factors that go into hiring decisions for organizations. This may again be due to the small sample size but could also be an indication that additional constructs are needed to capture the specific aspects of career experience. The original study from which this dataset was drawn paired focus group and interviews with the quantitative research which may have also provided a deeper window, though still not statistically, into the specifics of experience.

Third, although this study has focused on leadership style, executive director skill is another important factor in determining a leader's effectiveness in an organization. While this clearly falls out of the purview of this study, it is important to note that the way in which different skills impact executive director effectiveness are an integral thread in the nonprofit

literature. Some aspects of skills are implied in the variables captured in this study with variables such as education or previous sector of experience but the particulars of skills should also be explored in further research. For example, do executive directors with financial management skills run their organizations more efficiently financially? Or do executive directors with marketing experience show more success in garnering donations or volunteers for their organization?

## **Conclusion**

The conversation about leadership today is certain to continue. The conversation for the foreseeable future will almost certainly focus on leadership *in crisis*. What remains less certain, however, is the way in which that discussion will be framed and the way in which viable solutions to the leadership crisis will be proposed. Leadership discourse needs a common language and framework in order to proceed effectively, but the broad nature of leadership and the newness of the field of study challenge finding a common language.

This study attempts to take a step towards finding a common language for one part of the leadership discourse: nonprofit leadership. By leveraging vetted tools and frameworks, this study works towards a discussion of leadership that is both quantifiable and utilizable for nonprofit organizations looking to make decisions about leadership. This study has focused on a particularly hot-button issue in the nonprofit sector – how previous career experience impacts executive director leadership. Conclusions and implications from this study can be utilized to make hiring decisions for nonprofit organizations as well as to explore the role of sector of experience in leadership. While this study contributes to the literature, it also reveals a number of areas for further research and a need for larger datasets with greater sample sizes of leaders.

Career experience, while both a high-profile and highly-contested leadership issue for nonprofit organizations, is an excellent starting place to explore nonprofit leadership being one of many areas of untapped research potential for nonprofit leadership studies. Although the nonprofit world is growing and diversifying, the research on nonprofit leadership has not kept pace. As the reach of nonprofits themselves increases, so, too, must embrace the field of research on nonprofit leadership if we are to both *define and solve* today's nonprofit leadership crisis.

**Appendix A: Full Regression Results**

Table 2: Multivariate Regressions with Mean Collaborate Score as the Dependent Variable

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Mean COLL OCAI	Mean COLL OCAI	Mean COLL OCAI	Mean COLL OCAI
title			0.0175 (0.0254)	0.0125 (0.0258)
immed			0.0595* (0.0305)	0.0585* (0.0310)
most			0.00611 (0.0259)	0.0109 (0.0262)
tirank			0.0178 (0.0601)	0.00605 (0.0608)
tenure			0.0817*** (0.0256)	0.0880*** (0.0289)
rerank			0.0232 (0.0684)	0.0204 (0.0694)
move			-0.0690 (0.0588)	-0.0557 (0.0602)
founder			0.102 (0.0829)	0.104 (0.0946)
comp			-0.0584 (0.0355)	-0.0455 (0.0398)
coo		0.0743 (0.0609)		0.0704 (0.0602)
npage		0.0230 (0.0300)		0.0180 (0.0343)
rev		-0.0996 (0.0689)		-0.0486 (0.0747)
fte		0.0218 (0.0744)		-0.000112 (0.0733)
female	0.125** (0.0597)			0.0678 (0.0603)
educ	-0.0175 (0.0378)			0.0169 (0.0383)
age	-0.0134 (0.0283)			-0.0360 (0.0318)
Constant	4.141*** (0.177)	4.127*** (0.132)	3.802*** (0.246)	3.795*** (0.298)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.013	0.008	0.072	0.084

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 3: Multivariate Regressions with Mean Create Score as the Dependent Variable

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_CREA_OCA I	(2) Mean_CREA_OCA I	(3) Mean_CREA_OCA I	(4) Mean_CREA_OCA I
title			-0.0545* (0.0306)	-0.0652** (0.0306)
immed			0.0297 (0.0367)	0.0362 (0.0367)
most			0.0142 (0.0312)	0.0229 (0.0311)
tirank			-0.0790 (0.0723)	-0.0930 (0.0720)
tenure			0.0953*** (0.0308)	0.153*** (0.0342)
rerank			0.0317 (0.0824)	0.000985 (0.0821)
move			-0.160** (0.0707)	-0.140** (0.0712)
founder			0.176* (0.0998)	0.0636 (0.112)
comp			0.00363 (0.0428)	0.0550 (0.0471)
coo		0.0515 (0.0734)		0.0105 (0.0713)
npage		-0.0358 (0.0362)		-0.0416 (0.0406)
rev		-0.0400 (0.0831)		-0.0790 (0.0883)
fte		-0.122 (0.0897)		-0.151* (0.0867)
female	0.0428 (0.0723)			0.0242 (0.0713)
educ	-0.0181 (0.0457)			0.0310 (0.0453)
age	-0.0603* (0.0343)			-0.0989*** (0.0377)
Constant	4.019*** (0.215)	4.075*** (0.160)	3.850*** (0.296)	4.358*** (0.353)

Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.010	0.013	0.080	0.122

Standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 4: Multivariate Regressions with Mean Compete Score as the Dependent Variable

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Mean_COMP_OCA I	Mean_COMP_OCA I	Mean_COMP_OCA I	Mean_COMP_OCA I
title			-0.110*** (0.0287)	-0.108*** (0.0287)
immed			-0.0140 (0.0344)	-0.0155 (0.0344)
most			0.0482* (0.0292)	0.0522* (0.0291)
tirank			-0.159** (0.0677)	-0.182*** (0.0676)
tenure			0.0703** (0.0289)	0.102*** (0.0321)
rerank			0.115 (0.0772)	0.104 (0.0771)
move			-0.0389 (0.0663)	-0.00378 (0.0668)
founder			-0.0128 (0.0935)	-0.0482 (0.105)
comp			0.0332 (0.0400)	0.0316 (0.0443)
coo		0.179*** (0.0685)		0.140** (0.0669)
npage		-0.0243 (0.0338)		-0.0137 (0.0381)
rev		0.110 (0.0775)		0.0863 (0.0829)
fte		-0.0826 (0.0838)		-0.0883 (0.0814)
female	-0.0463 (0.0680)			0.00120 (0.0669)
educ	-0.0331 (0.0430)			-0.0117 (0.0425)
age	-0.0428 (0.0323)			-0.113*** (0.0354)
Constant	3.590***	3.219***	3.476***	3.837***

	(0.202)	(0.149)	(0.277)	(0.331)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.007	0.024	0.084	0.122

Standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 5: Multivariate Regressions with Mean Control Score as the Dependent Variable

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_CONT_OCA I	(2) Mean_CONT_OCA I	(3) Mean_CONT_OCA I	(4) Mean_CONT_OCA I
title			-0.0391 (0.0274)	-0.0406 (0.0271)
immed			0.0136 (0.0329)	-0.00736 (0.0325)
most			0.0110 (0.0279)	0.0165 (0.0275)
tirank			-0.0704 (0.0648)	-0.0943 (0.0637)
tenure			0.0909*** (0.0276)	0.0409 (0.0303)
rerank			0.120 (0.0738)	0.158** (0.0727)
move			-0.0239 (0.0634)	0.01000 (0.0630)
founder			0.0230 (0.0894)	0.239** (0.0991)
comp			-0.0216 (0.0383)	-0.0518 (0.0417)
coo		0.0670 (0.0636)		0.0437 (0.0631)
npage		0.110*** (0.0314)		0.149*** (0.0360)
rev		0.0136 (0.0720)		0.0904 (0.0782)
fte		0.0748 (0.0778)		0.0639 (0.0767)
female	0.132** (0.0634)			0.132** (0.0631)
educ	-0.0665* (0.0401)			-0.0414 (0.0401)
age	0.0403			-0.0345

Constant	(0.0301) 3.201*** (0.188)	2.654*** (0.138)	3.011*** (0.265)	(0.0334) 2.590*** (0.312)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.018	0.045	0.050	0.114

Standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Table 6: Multivariate Regressions with Mean Scores as Independent Variables

VARIABLES	(1) Mean_CONT_OCA I	(2) Mean_COMP_OCA I	(3) Mean_COLL_OCAI	(4) Mean_CREA_OCA I
Mean_COLL_OCAI	0.306*** (0.0533)	-0.195*** (0.0515)		0.530*** (0.0460)
Mean_CREA_OCAI	-0.250*** (0.0510)	0.512*** (0.0424)	0.476*** (0.0413)	
Mean_COMP_OCAI	0.453*** (0.0482)		-0.180*** (0.0477)	0.528*** (0.0437)
age	0.00291 (0.0298)	-0.0551** (0.0280)	-0.000585 (0.0271)	-0.0282 (0.0285)
comp	-0.0385 (0.0370)	0.0156 (0.0350)	-0.0528 (0.0335)	0.0504 (0.0354)
educ	-0.0336 (0.0353)	-0.00751 (0.0334)	0.0105 (0.0322)	0.0187 (0.0339)
female	0.116** (0.0556)	-0.0512 (0.0528)	0.0232 (0.0508)	0.0179 (0.0537)
fte	0.0663 (0.0678)	-0.0370 (0.0642)	0.0395 (0.0617)	-0.0893 (0.0650)
rev	0.0464 (0.0691)	0.0808 (0.0652)	-0.0183 (0.0629)	-0.0781 (0.0662)
npage	0.140*** (0.0317)	-0.0493 (0.0306)	-0.00245 (0.0296)	-0.00952 (0.0312)
coo	-0.0385 (0.0560)	0.130** (0.0526)	0.0795 (0.0508)	-0.0904* (0.0536)
tenure	0.00594 (0.0274)	0.0243 (0.0258)	0.0234 (0.0249)	0.0616** (0.0261)
founder	0.245*** (0.0874)	-0.157* (0.0830)	0.00488 (0.0803)	0.0888 (0.0846)
move	-0.00626 (0.0558)	0.0531 (0.0527)	0.00772 (0.0507)	-0.106** (0.0533)
rerank	0.105 (0.0642)	0.0433 (0.0608)	-0.00128 (0.0585)	-0.0283 (0.0618)

tirank	-0.0370 (0.0566)	-0.0948* (0.0533)	0.0414 (0.0515)	-0.0219 (0.0543)
most	-0.00476 (0.0243)	0.0359 (0.0229)	0.00521 (0.0221)	-0.00665 (0.0233)
immed	-0.00919 (0.0287)	-0.0197 (0.0271)	0.0404 (0.0260)	0.0117 (0.0276)
title	-0.0116 (0.0243)	-0.0561** (0.0228)	0.0343 (0.0220)	-0.0239 (0.0233)
Mean_CONT_OCAI		0.405*** (0.0431)	0.253*** (0.0441)	-0.230*** (0.0470)
Constant	0.779** (0.353)	1.296*** (0.330)	1.758*** (0.311)	0.917*** (0.338)
Observations	413	413	413	413
R-squared	0.320	0.464	0.362	0.514

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