CHAPTER 3

Charisma and the “New Leadership”

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Opening Case: A Day in the Life of a Leader

Timo just heard the news that he was going to be promoted to general manager of the new five-star hotel and also have corporate-level responsibilities. This new resort hotel was the flagship of the company. He had a few things to do that were urgent in his current post as general manager: announce the news to his current staff, make a presentation to the board about his vision for the new hotel, and develop a plan to recruit new staff. He had to send a few e-mails as well.

Although he was thrilled about the move, the announcement would be difficult to make—his current staff knew that something major was happening, and there had been rumors about his impending transfer. They did not want to lose “their manager”; whether line employees working in the rooms, the restaurants, or the front desk, whether gardeners, security, or health-spa staff, they and their supervisors all agreed on one thing: Timo was the best manager they had ever had and they did not want to lose him. They simply loved him.

From a young age, Timo appreciated the value of work; he helped his parents manage their shops. He learned much from watching his mother expertly use her charm to manage her staff and customers. He also learned from his father, a gifted orator and community leader who knew how to rouse the crowds. After studying hotel management and business, he started his career in the hotel industry, working
up from assistant food and beverage manager to general manager; he was only 36 years old when he achieved what seems, to many, unachievable. He was a very visible manager; he did frequent rounds, knew all his staff personally, made clear what he expected from them, gave feedback, and coached. Yet he was firm, and he also laid down the law when needed. His staff, particularly the younger ones, saw Timo as a “rock-star manager.” He had a quality, a mystical property that made him likeable and authoritative. There was always a “buzz” and excitement when he was around.

As he sat at his desk, he thought of how he would structure his speech; he’d probably start with a story—his story—of how he had started at the company and how he had grown within it. He had to inspire but also reassure his staff that all would be fine with the new manager. As he jotted down some points, his eye glanced at The Economist magazine on his desk. Greece was on the front cover again. “Darn the uncertainty that the debt crises are causing,” he thought. “Plus the looming elections won’t help.” He had to build these uncertainties into his strategic plan and then make sure that his marketing and sales team had appropriate targets to shoot for.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Timo inspire such loyalty from his staff?
2. Why is Timo so successful?
3. Are the skills and behaviors that Timo has learnable?

Chapter Overview

But all this will avail us little unless we achieve our prime economic objective—the defeat of inflation. Inflation destroys nations and societies as surely as invading armies do. Inflation is the parent of unemployment. It is the unseen robber of those who have saved.

If our people feel that they are part of a great nation and they are prepared to will the means to keep it great, a great nation we shall be, and shall remain. So, what can stop us from achieving this? What then stands in our way? The prospect of another winter of discontent? I suppose it might. But I prefer to believe that certain lessons have been learnt from experience, that we are coming, slowly, painfully, to an autumn of understanding. And I hope that it will be followed by a winter of common sense. If it is not, we shall not be diverted from our course.

To those waiting with bated breath for that favourite media catchphrase, the “U” turn, I have only one thing to say. “You turn if you want to. The
M
ost people have heard of Margaret “Maggie” Thatcher—a towering figure of British politics. Why did she carry so much clout? Most would agree that she had that “something”—a special gift to communicate in very vivid ways, to get people excited and then committed to her course of action. She had charisma. She was adored by her supporters and loathed by her detractors.

Charisma and spinoff perspectives, which I call “neocharismatic” for simplicity, have been intensely studied by researchers. These constructs, though, have been hard to define and operationalize. Research aside, we know in practice that history has been marked by many men and women who have epitomized a potent messianic force capable of doing great deeds; this very force has also brought about destruction on a grand scale. Such is the assumed impact of charismatic leaders on individuals, organizations, and societies that philosophers, historians, psychologists, and other social scientists have taken turns to address what I think is probably one of the most interesting pieces of the leadership puzzle.

Charismatic leadership theory has had a massive impact on leadership as a scientific domain. This leadership approach was characterized by Bryman (1992) as the “new leadership,” such was its break with existing leadership models. In a way, when charismatic leadership theory came along it was, ironically, a savior to leadership research just like charismatic leaders are to their collective (cf. Hunt, 1999). In other words, research on charisma delivered leadership researchers from their plight at a time when there was pessimism and no direction in leadership research, even with calls made to abandon leadership as a research topic (Greene, 1977; Miner, 1975). It is almost surreal to imagine that leadership, as a discipline, was not taken seriously a few decades ago; so when House (1977) first proposed a psychological theory of charismatic leadership, organizational scholars embraced it in full earnest.

Charismatic leadership and its closest cousin, transformational leadership, have been the focus of a great many research inquiries (Yukl, 1999); these approaches have helped shift the leadership paradigm to where it is today (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Hunt, 1999; Lowe & Gardner, 2000). This research stream dominates the leadership landscape—whether deservedly or not—at least in terms of published papers in the premier academic leadership journal, The Leadership Quarterly (Antonakis, Bastardoz, Liu, & Schriesheim, 2014; Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney, & Cogliser, 2010; Lowe & Gardner, 2000).

How did charismatic leadership and related approaches (e.g., transformational, visionary) develop? What gives charismatic leaders so much power? Where is charismatic leadership theory heading? I will try to answer these questions and others in this chapter. To do so, I will review some of the major historical works that
provided the scaffolding for current theories of charisma as well as related forms of leadership. In terms of the contemporary theories, I will focus on the most dominant forms, charisma and transformational leadership. Although my initial work was focused on transformational leadership (Antonakis, 2001; Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003), I will draw on some of my more recent work to critically review these theoretical streams and explain why I am going back to the root construct, charisma (Antonakis, Bastardoz, Jacquart, & Shamir, 2016; Antonakis, Fenley, & Liechti, 2011; Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015). I realize, too, that I would be considered a part of the charisma “mafia,” as Gemmill and Oakley (1992) would say. However, being part of the famiglia gives some credibility to my arguments, on which, as you will see, I do not hold back. I briefly discuss competing “new leadership” theories, and conclude with where this research is heading and what remains to be studied still.

Charisma: A Brief History

Most writers credit Weber (1947) with having coined the term charisma and having provided the first modern theoretical explanation for the impact of charismatic leadership on followers. Evidence of the roots of the word charisma, however, predate Weber and are found in Greek mythology—the graces, or Charites—and the goddess Charis (see Antonakis et al., 2016, for details). Moreover, theoretical explanations of a phenomenon akin to charismatic leadership and the ways in which leaders should go about influencing followers using potent persuasive means are also found in the writings of Aristotle (trans., 1954), appearing in the fourth century BCE. Aristotle first laid the foundations to rhetoric, which is key to inducing the charismatic effect (Antonakis et al., 2011; Antonakis et al., 2016; Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015).

In Rhetoric, Aristotle argued that a leader must gain the confidence of his followers by using creative rhetorical means, which include providing a moral perspective via his personal character (ethos), rousing follower emotions (pathos), and then using reasoned argument (logos)—see Figure 3.1. It will become evident that these three dimensions, of what Aristotle termed the artistic means, as well as other means—including contracts, laws, tortures, witnesses, and oaths—can be seen as a parsimonious version of some contemporary leadership theories. These theories typically contrast (a) charisma and related approaches (e.g., transformational leadership) versus what can be termed (b) transactional leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Downton, 1973). To better understand the startling insights of Aristotle, which touch not only on charismatic leadership but also on affect and cognitive psychology, as well as other areas of science, I quote from Book I, Chapter II, where he refers to the three kinds of rhetorical influencing:

Persuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided. This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what
the speaker says, not by what people think of his character before he begins to speak. It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses. Secondly, persuasion may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions. Our judgments when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile. It is towards producing these effects, as we maintain, that present-day writers on rhetoric direct the whole of their efforts. This subject shall be treated in detail when we come to speak of the emotions. Thirdly, persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question. (p. 7)

Figure 3.1  Leader Persuasion Using the Aristotelian Triad

NOTE: According to Aristotle (trans., 1954, p. 7): “The first kind [of persuasion, the ethos] depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second [the pathos] on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third [the logos] on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself.”

It is a real eye-opener to read classics such as Rhetoric and Plato’s Republic (trans. 1901); these works provided important foundations for Western thought on topics concerning leadership, ethics, and good government. Yet what I also find troubling by reading these works is why humanity is not more sophisticated and responsible than it currently is, when so much was known so long ago. Why do institutions have trouble selecting the best leaders? Why is leader corruption still rife? Why are people so easily duped by slick sales pitches of leaders?

In essence, many of these problems are problems of leadership. These are big questions, which I find fascinating; for this reason, I have been looking at which traits predict effective leadership (Antonakis, House, & Simonton, 2017), how power corrupts (Bendahan, Zehnder, Pralong, & Antonakis, 2015), how leaders are elected (Antonakis & Dalgas, 2009; Antonakis & Eubanks, 2017; Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015), and other interesting questions. Yet it is only recently that these
problems of humanity have been scrutinized scientifically, and the importance of leadership isolated and studied in a causal way (Bertrand & Schoar, 2003; Jones & Olken, 2005). Warren Bennis (this volume), who over the decades has demonstrated remarkable perspicacity about the problems of leadership, reminds us that leaders wield power and that it is important to put more science into understanding how better to manage the leadership production process.

Indeed, the most potent of leaders, charismatic ones, can bring about needed social change; these types of leaders have been capable of dreadful deeds, too, which explains Bennis's concerns. Of course, my chapter does not provide a treatise on issues concerning the selection, development, and outcomes of leadership and related topics; this is the job of the entire volume. I focus on charismatic and neo-charismatic leadership approaches, though I will touch on some of these important issues where relevant. Next, I discuss the most important contributions to this research stream, chronologically, using Weber as the point of departure. For a thorough historical overview, refer to a recent review I undertook with my colleagues (Antonakis et al., 2016).

The Weberian Perspective

Weber (1947) used the term charismatic to describe a type of leader who could bring about social change. These leaders arose "in times of psychic, physical, economic, ethical, religious, [or] political distress" (Weber, 1968). For Weber (1968), charisma in leaders referred to "specific gifts of the body and spirit not accessible to everybody" (p. 19). These leaders were attributed "with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities" (Weber, 1947, p. 358) and could undertake great feats. Obviously, such vague descriptions and appeals to the supernatural do not allow charisma to be scientifically studied (Antonakis et al., 2016). Still, what Weber argued paved the way for other researchers to better see the outcomes of charismatic leadership.

Weber (1968) believed that followers of a charismatic leader willingly place their destiny in their leader's hands and support the leader's mission that may have arisen out of "enthusiasm, or of despair and hope" (p. 49). Weber argued that charismatic authority is different from bureaucratic authority and that at the core of charisma is an emotional appeal whose "attitude is revolutionary and transvalues everything; it makes a sovereign break with all traditional or rational norms" (p. 24). Finally, Weber stated that the charismatic effect and legacy of the leader may continue as artifacts of the organizational or societal culture, but then wane as the organization or society is enveloped in the rational and methodical processes of the bureaucracy.

What is interesting in the Weberian idea of the charismatic leader is the importance of context and the apparent salvationary effects of the charismatic leader. Also important is the notion of charismatic authority as being distinct from other sources of authority. Weber was not very clear on what, specifically, charismatic leaders do, and he was more concerned with ends than with means. Other sociologists continued in this vein (e.g., Shils, 1965). Etzioni's (1964) structuralist
perspective, for instance, focuses on the effect that formal leadership has on individuals and the source of power that is used to exert influence over followers. Symbolic power is what Etzioni (1961) referred to as “charisma” (p. 203). According to Etzioni (1964), greater commitment and less alienation will be displayed in followers when their leaders are using symbolic over material or physical power, and material over physical power. Other sociologists extended Weber’s ideas and tried to make the mystical concept more concrete (Friedland, 1964). Political scientists also became interested in charisma and tried expressly to pin it down (Davies, 1954; Friedrich, 1961; Tucker, 1968). I focus on Downton next, whose theory quietly upstaged some of the most dominant contemporary models of leadership, particularly the transformational-transactional leadership model.

Downton’s Theory of Charisma

In line with the Weberian notion of charisma, Downton (1973) proposed a theory of leadership in the context of the rebel political leader. This theory consisted of three factors: charismatic, inspirational, and transactional leadership. After Aristotle’s work, this was the second theory to pit contractual (transactional) principal-agent type influence processes against charismatic authority. This work predates that of Bass (1985) by more than a decade, and it was not mentioned by Bass in his most famous work, though he does refer to it later (Hater & Bass, 1988).

In discussing the transforming versus transactional leader, Burns (1978), a historian and political scientist, did refer to Downton’s work indirectly and mostly in passing (regarding revolutionary leadership).

For Downton (1973) transactional leadership meant “a process of exchange that is analogous to contractual relations in economic life [and] contingent on the good faith of the participants” (p. 75). Downton believed that the fulfillment of transactional commitments forms the basis of trust among leaders and their followers, strengthens their relationship, and results in a mutually beneficial climate for further transactions to occur. Downton distinguished between positive and negative transactions. Positive transactions occur when followers receive rewards contingent on achieving desired outcomes, whereas negative transactions refer to followers’ noncompliance, resulting in punishment (as discussed later, this precise notion of positive and negative transactional leadership is how Bass [1985] theorized contingent rewards and management-by-exception leader behavior).

Downton argued that charismatic leaders have potent effects on followers because of their transcendental ideals and authority that facilitate the followers’ identification with the leader. In those conditions, trust is solidified as psychological exchanges occur. This commitment and trust is further augmented by inspirational leadership. The inspirational leader is persuasive, and he or she encourages followers to invest in and make sacrifices toward the identified ideals, gives followers a sense of purpose, and creates meaning for actions distinct from the charismatic appeal. Followers relate to these types of leaders, but they do not necessarily revere them. Thus, inspirational leadership is, apparently, independent of charismatic leadership; according to Downton (1973), inspirational leadership does not foster follower dependence in the leader. Rather, “inspirational commitment is
always contingent on the leader’s continuing symbolic presentation of the follower’s world view” (p. 80). Downton argued further that although charismatic relations between leaders and followers will ultimately lead to inspirational relations, not all inspirational relations lead to charismatic relations. Finally, Downton proposed that all sources of leadership, whether transactional, inspirational, or charismatic, should be used in varying degrees (which is in line with the ideas of Bass, 1985). Although Downton set what were the foundations for transformational and charismatic leadership theory, the impact he had on the field was minimal—probably because his work was not picked up by psychologists studying leadership in the 1980s, by which time Bass’s theory was firmly entrenched.

House’s Psychological Theory of Charismatic Theory

House (1977) was the first to present an integrated theoretical framework and testable propositions to explain the behavior of charismatic leaders; he also focused on the psychological impact of charismatic leaders on followers. Also important was that House provided a theoretical explanation regarding the means charismatic leaders use to influence followers (and thus manage the perceptions of followers); importantly, he referred to charismatic leaders as having the necessary persuasive skills to influence others. He also described the personal characteristics of charismatic leaders and suggested that individual-difference predictors of charismatic leaders might be measurable. This theory was perhaps the most important in setting the foundations for how charisma is studied today; although it was “undersold” in being published as a book chapter and not a journal article (thus limiting its impact), this work has been enormously influential and highly cited.

House (1977) proposed that the basis for the charismatic appeal is the emotional interaction that occurs between followers and their leader. Depending on mission requirements, charismatic leaders arouse followers’ motives to accomplish the leader’s ideals and values. Followers in turn display affection and admiration for the leader, and internalize a sense of identification with the leader. House believed that charismatic leaders are those “who by force of their personal abilities are capable of having profound and extra-ordinary effects on followers” (p. 189). According to House, these leaders display confidence in their own abilities and in their followers, set high expectations for themselves and their followers, and show confidence that these expectations can be achieved. As a result of these behaviors, House argued that these leaders become role models and objects of identification of followers, who in turn emulate their leader’s ideals and values and are enthusiastically inspired and motivated to reach outstanding accomplishments. These types of leaders are seen as courageous, because they challenge a status quo that is seen as undesirable. Furthermore, “because of other ‘gifts’ attributed to the leader, such as extraordinary competence, the followers believe that the leader will bring about social change and will thus deliver them from their plight” (p. 204).

House (1977) stated “In actuality, the ‘gift’ is likely to be a complex interaction of personal characteristics, the behavior the leader employs, characteristics of followers, and certain situational factors prevailing at the time of the assumption of
the leadership style” (p. 193). Finally, in focusing on the personal characteristics of charismatic leaders, House argued that they display a high degree of self-confidence, pro-social assertiveness (dominance), and moral conviction. These leaders model what they expect their followers to do, exemplify the struggle by self-sacrifice, and engage in image-building and self-promotion actions to come across as powerful and competent.

The insights of House (1977) were prescient. His theory was beautifully and clearly expressed and shook leadership scholars out of their current ideas of how leadership should be conceived at a time when leadership was not being taken very seriously (Antonakis et al., 2004; Day & Antonakis, 2012). Although House missed some details—for instance, regarding a proper definition of charisma and specific pointers on how to model it—his ideas were the catalyst for a new leadership movement (Antonakis et al., 2016).

Conger and Kanungo’s Attribution (i.e., Inferential) Theory of Charisma

Conger and Kanungo (1998, 1988) proposed a theory of charismatic leadership whereby a leader is legitimized through an attributional process based on the perceptions that followers have of the leader’s behaviors. Although this theory uses the term attribution with respect to ascriptions that followers make about the leader, to be more precise, the psychological processes that are occurring are actually inferential (Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015)—attributions concern understanding causes of effects (Calder, 1977) and inferences pertain to person perception (Erickson & Krull, 1999).

Conger and Kanungo (1998) proposed that individuals are validated as leaders by their followers through a three-stage behavioral process. This process is not necessarily linear, and the stages can occur in any order and may exist concomitantly. First, effective charismatic leaders assess the status quo to determine the needs of followers, evaluate the resources that are available within the constituency, and articulate a compelling argument to arouse follower interest. Second, leaders articulate a vision of the future that will inspire follower action to achieve objectives that are instrumental in fulfilling the vision. The idealized vision creates follower identification and affection for the leader, because the vision embodies a future state of affairs that is valued by followers. Third, leaders create an aura of confidence and competence by demonstrating conviction that the mission is achievable. Leaders use unconventional means and expertise to inspire action and display how objectives can be achieved. In this way, they serve as powerful role models to promote follower action. This three-stage process is hypothesized to engender high trust in the leader and follower performance that enables the organization to reach its goals. This theory has been operationalized via the CKS—the Conger Kanungo Scale (Conger & Kanungo, 1998)—and resulted in a fair amount of empirical work; however, the global factor of the CKS correlates very highly with transformational leadership, \( r = .88 \), uncorrected for measurement error (Rowold & Heinitz, 2007).
Shamir and Colleagues on Charisma

In a refreshing and novel integration of charisma and theories of identity, House and Shamir (1993) proposed an integrative framework to explain how leaders engage the self-concepts of followers (see also Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). In this way, leaders have exceptional effects on followers, who are motivated by increased levels of self-esteem, self-worth, self-efficacy, collective efficacy, identification with the leader, social identification, and value internalization. Shamir et al. (1993) stated that these leaders affect followers as a result of motivational mechanisms that are induced by the leader’s behaviors. These behaviors include providing an ideological explanation for action, emphasizing a collective purpose, referring to historical accounts related to ideals, referring to the self-worth and efficacy of followers, and expressing confidence in followers that they are capable of fulfilling the mission (see also Shamir, Arthur, & House, 1994). As a result of the leader’s behavior, the motivational mechanisms trigger the self-concept effects that lead to personal commitment to the leader’s mission, self-sacrificial behavior, organizational citizenship, and task meaningfulness. These effects are further enhanced by the generation of self-expression and consistency on the part of the followers. As an example of the intricateness of these effects, Shamir et al. (1993) stated that “charismatic leaders . . . increase followers’ self-worth through emphasizing the relationships between efforts and important values. A general sense of self-worth increases general self-efficacy; a sense of moral correctness is a source of strength and confidence. Having complete faith in the moral correctness of one’s convictions gives one the strength and confidence to behave accordingly” (p. 582).

Transformational Leadership

I include here influential models that expressly contrast neocharismatic and transformational leadership with transactional forms of leadership. Those theories that have been operationalized using questionnaires have been enormously influential and have triggered much empirical work.

Burns’s Transforming-Transactional Leadership

Burns (1978), a Pulitzer Prize winner, published his magnum opus on leadership in political settings. His work laid the foundations for Bass (1985), particularly with respect to transformative effects of leaders on followers. Burns defined leadership as “inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers” (p. 19). Although leaders are intricately connected to goals with followers, they act as an independent force in steering followers toward those goals. The leader–follower interaction that could occur was defined as either (a) transactional leadership, which entailed a relationship based on the exchange of valued items, whether political, economic, or emotional, or (b) transforming leadership,
where the motivation, morality, and ethical aspirations of both the leader and followers are raised.

According to Burns (1978), transforming leadership—focused on transcendent and far-reaching goals and ideals—has a greater effect on followers and collectives as compared to transactional leadership, which is focused on promoting self-interest and is thus limited in scope and impact. Transforming leaders raise the consciousness of followers for what is important, especially with regard to moral and ethical implications, and make them transcend their self-interest for that of the greater good. Although both transactional and transforming leadership can contribute to human purpose, Burns saw them as opposing ends of a spectrum. As stated by Burns, "The chief monitors of transactional leadership are modal values, that is, values of means. . . . Transformational leadership is more concerned with end-values" (p. 426). Burns saw these two leadership styles as a trade-off, a zero-sum game.

Bass (1985) directly built on Burns's (1978) theory. Bass extended the model to include subdimensions of what he termed transformational (instead of transforming) leadership. Also, although in Bass's original conceptualization of transformational leadership he was not concerned with moral and ethical overtones, he eventually came around to agreeing with Burns that the likes of Hitler were pseudo-transformational and that at the core of veritable transformational leadership were "good" values (see Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

Bass's Transformational-Transactional Leadership Model

Bass’s (1985) transformational-transactional theory, also called the “full-range” leadership theory, includes both elements of the “new leadership” (i.e., charisma, vision, and the like) and elements of the “old leadership” (i.e., transactional leadership behavior focused on role and task requirements). I mention some elements here because the idea of this theory was to go beyond the behavioral two-factor theories of leadership (see Seltzer & Bass, 1990). These theories (see Fleishman, 1953, 1957; Halpin, 1954; Stogdill & Coons, 1957) conceptualized leadership as being focused on tasks (initiating structure) or people (consideration) and were the dominant leadership paradigm in the 1950s and 1960s. The Bass model misses out, however, on task-related leader behavior, although Bass had suggested otherwise. Antonakis and House (2002) came to this conclusion by comparing and contrasting the Bass theory with other “new” theories. Their suggestion was recently tested, and there is strong evidence showing that the full-range theory is not as full as first purported (Antonakis & House, 2014; Rowold, 2014), particularly with respect to strategic as well as work-facilitation aspects (Hunt, 2004; Yukl, 1999)—what can be termed instrumental leadership (Antonakis & House, 2014).

The Bass theory is probably the best known and most influential contemporary theory—it has a long history of research emanating from the work of Bass, Avolio, and colleagues (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1993, 1994; Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996; Bass, Waldman, Avolio, & Bebb, 1987; Hater & Bass, 1988; Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1990; Yammarino & Bass,
This theory has been operationalized and measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, or MLQ (Antonakis et al., 2003; Antonakis & House, 2014). Although there has been much debate about the factor structure of the MLQ model, there is little or no controversy about the predictive (concurrent) validity of the MLQ factors, which has been supported by numerous meta-analyses (Banks, Engemann, Williams, & Gooty, 2016; DeGroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2000; Dum dum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002; Fuller, Patterson, Hester, & Stringer, 1996; Gasper, 1992; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996; Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011). In its current form, the MLQ measures nine leadership factors. Five factors measure transformational leadership (i.e., idealized influence attributes, idealized influence behaviors, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration); the next three measure transactional leadership (i.e., contingent rewards, management-by-exception active, and management-by-exception passive); and the last factor is concerned with nonleadership (i.e., laissez-faire leadership). This questionnaire measure is the most popular measure of transformational leadership and charisma (Antonakis et al., 2016).

Although Bass considered charisma to be a subcomponent of transformational leadership, his position has been strongly challenged (Yukl, 1999); my colleagues and I agree with Yukl that charisma and transformational leadership are two rather different constructs and that charisma should be untethered from transformational leadership (Antonakis et al., 2016).

Podsakoff’s Transformational-Transactional Leadership Model

This model is conceptually similar to the original Bass (1985) model. After the Bass model, the Podsakoff model is the most widely used transformational-transactional leadership model (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The model that Podsakoff and colleagues proposed (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990) includes both transformational and transactional leadership factors. The transformational factors include identifying and articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, communicating high performance expectations, providing individualized support, and being intellectually stimulating. The Podsakoff model also includes a transactional leader factor, contingent reward leadership. These factors essentially map on the Bass transformational-transactional model, except for the fact that the Podsakoff model does not include management-by-exception active and passive as well as laissez-faire leadership. For those wishing to include similar factors to these omitted styles, contingent and noncontingent punishment scales, also developed by Podsakoff and colleagues, could be useful (see Podsakoff, Todor, Grover, & Huber, 1984; Podsakoff, Todor, & Skov, 1982); these constructs have shown relatively good validities (Podsakoff, Bommer, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). Although the Podsakoff questionnaire measure, the Transformational Leadership Inventory, has not been as closely scrutinized as the MLQ, it is particularly well appreciated by the research community because it is not a proprietary instrument (as is the MLQ).
Other Transformational Leadership Models

Beyond the models that I have reviewed, there are other lesser-known models that are being used. Rafferty and Griffin (2004) proposed a five-factor model of transformational leadership, which looks like it might have had some potential; however, this instrument has not been extensively studied by independent research groups, and it omits important correlates of leader outcomes. Another measure, the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ), has been proposed as an alternative to the United States–centered MLQ-type models (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2001); however, there is not much evidence for the validity of the TLQ, and it has not triggered much research. Other measures have been proposed as well (e.g., De Hoogh, Den Hartog, & Koopman, 2004), but they have not gathered much traction in applied research. One measure, which seems to have had an important impact on practice, is the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), by Kouzes and Posner (1987). Although intuitively appealing and driven by the popularity of their book *The Leadership Challenge*, the validation results reported on the LPI are not impressive and there has been very little research on the psychometric properties of this model.

Spinoffs of the New Leadership: Old Wine in New Bottles?

Recently there have been several spinoff theories that at the outset claim to be quite different from transformational and neocharismatic perspectives: Of these, authentic, ethical, and servant leadership are the best known (Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn, & Wu, 2016). These theories have something in common: They are all “loaded” in terms of how they have been defined; that is, they include the outcome in their definitions, and the very term used to name the theory is positively and morally valenced. Transformational leadership suffers from the same problem. Terms like *transformational, authentic, ethical*, and the like suggest an outcome—that is, that the leader transforms or is morally good. Doing so is problematic from a scientific point of view (van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013) for three reasons: Constructs should not be defined by their outcomes, because doing so leads to tautologies and circular theorizing (MacKenzie, 2003); the nature of what is measured should be exogenous with respect to the outcomes it is supposed to cause (Antonakis et al., 2016); and scientists should separate ideological agendas from accurately describing how the world works (Antonakis, 2017; Eagly, 2016).

Let me be clear about the latter point. Of course, the vast majority of scientists want to ensure that leaders use their power to do good. But doing so depends on institutional constraints and the moral foundations of the leader, which, of course, are important to examine along with leader outcomes in empirical work (Bendahan et al., 2015). However, a leadership definition should be independent of contextual constraints and moral orientations so that its pure form, its defining conceptual bedrock, is identified. The very motivational mechanisms used by leaders to do
good can also be used to do bad (Antonakis et al., 2016); thus, one should not
develop a theoretical proposition (good leadership is authentic) to re-describe a
particular outcome (authentic leaders do good) and hence reify a particular moral
agenda. Moreover, as scientists, it is critical to separate our expectations—what
outcomes we hope to find—from reporting what actually occurs. This separation is
important because if ideology guides what we do, we will construct theories that
might not be counterfactually challenged (Durand & Vaara, 2009; Gerring &
McDermott, 2007); we will also create questionnaire measures that will find what
we seek given that ratings of leadership are prone to many biases including using
outcomes of leadership to fill in the blanks in an intuitive and cognitively consistent
way (Lord, Binning, Rush, & Thomas, 1978; Rush, Thomas, & Lord, 1977). The
rating of leadership thus becomes an outcome and this outcome is used to predict
other outcomes, leading to circular testing and theorizing (Antonakis, 2017;
Antonakis et al., 2016; van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013).

As for the three spinoffs, authentic leadership, as defined by Avolio and Gardner
and colleagues (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, &
May, 2004), has attracted much attention. A sufficient amount of research has been
undertaken to now examine whether this form of leadership is different from estab-
lished forms. Recent meta-analyses have shown that transformational and authentic
leadership are very highly correlated (i.e., \( r = .74 \) to \( .75 \)) and do not explain much in
outcomes beyond each other (Banks, McCauley, Gardner, & Guler, 2016); in par-
ticular, when assessing the incremental validity of authentic leadership over trans-
formational leadership, nothing much is gained (Hoch et al., 2016). There have also
been some strong challenges with respect to the notion that the Authentic Leadership
Questionnaire actually measures a high-order factor (Credé & Harms, 2015).

Ethical leadership has been another theory that has triggered much attention
(Brown & Treviño, 2006; Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). However, similar to
the above results, ethical leadership does not add much in terms of incremental
validity and is highly correlated with transformational leadership at \( r = .70 \) (Hoch
et al., 2016). Only servant leadership has a much lower correlation with transforma-
tional leadership (Hoch et al., 2016). However, it is still problematic, given what I
mentioned above; being a servant leader is still an outcome of some process and
should be modeled as such.

Future Research

Research on the new leadership has been described as being in a mature stage, and
this almost two decades ago (cf. Hunt, 1999). We are discovering more about its
mediators and moderators, but we are not doing enough about rethinking and
trimming the models (Antonakis, 2017). At least work in this area continues at a
brisk pace, not only in the traditional spheres of management, applied psychology,
business, and general and social psychology, but also in other disciplines—
including, nursing, education, political science, public health, public administration,
sociology, ethics, operations research, computer sciences, industrial engineering,
and others. Still, there remains much to be done with respect to identifying
the conceptual cores of theories, refining the theories, measuring and modeling constructs correctly, and developing process theories of leadership (Antonakis, 2017; Fischer, Dietz, & Antonakis, 2016). Also, more needs to be done on understanding how charismatic leadership can be developed, as well as its causal impact on outcomes. Apart from knowing that personality and intelligence—which are genetically determined, stable, and hence exogenous—matter for charisma (Antonakis, House, et al., 2017; Banks, Engemann, et al., 2016), we also know that charisma can be manipulated in the laboratory, whether with actors or normal folk (Frese, Beimel, & Schoenborn, 2003; Howell & Frost, 1989; Towler, 2003), and this in field experiments as well (Antonakis, d’Adda, Weber, & Zehnder, 2015; Antonakis et al., 2011).

Correctly Modeling Leadership Style

Questionnaire measures of leadership can be safely modeled as endogenous variables (i.e., dependent variables). However, if used as predictors they have to be modeled correctly or manipulated, or else the causal effect of the variable on other variables cannot be correctly estimated. Unfortunately, this is an area that is not well understood in our field, and reviews of published outcomes show that much of what is published cannot inform policy (Antonakis, Bastardoz, et al., 2014; Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart, & Lalive, 2010; Fischer et al., 2016).

The discussion here is not only leveled to transformational and charismatic leadership models; it is relevant to all models of leadership, particularly the leader–member exchange construct, which is more of an outcome of leadership than it is a leadership style (House & Aditya, 1997). Briefly, the problem that researchers have when undertaking observational studies, whether cross-sectional or longitudinal research, is that the modeled independent variable—say, transformational leadership (x)—is not manipulated; that is, it is not exogenous with respect to what it is modeled to predict. In experimental research, the experimenter is assured that the effect of x on y is due to the manipulation and nothing else. By randomly assigning the treatment, the error term in the regression model captures no systematic variation that is correlated with the treatment—refer to Chapter 16 of this volume for a basic introduction to this issue (for a more detailed exposé refer to Antonakis et al., 2010; Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart, & Lalive, 2014). However, with nonexperimental research, the modeler has a problem: that x may correlate with unobserved variation affecting y, or that y might simultaneously cause x (this problem is referred to as one of endogeneity). Thus, if x is modeled as an independent variable when it is in fact endogenous, the effect of x on y is biased and uninterpretable.

For instance, if individuals rating a leadership style know of leader outcomes (e.g., how well the leader’s unit has performed), they will be biased when rating the leader due to attribution processes (Lord et al., 1978; Rush et al., 1977). That is, good performance will be associated with prototypically good leadership, and thus raters will “see” the leader being better on aspects of leadership that are implicitly associated with good (or bad) outcomes. Thus, leadership is de facto operationalized in terms of follower perceptions and attributions, which may have little to do with how the leader actually acts and independent of whether the leader is the cause...
of the outcomes; thus, we cannot know anything about how leadership affects outcomes and cannot make any suggestions for policy! Such findings make for a sorry state of affairs in leadership research.

Of course, leaders can affect leader outcomes, too. Yet failure to correctly “lockin” the causal direction, as is usually done by applied researchers, will render estimates suspect. I cannot stress enough the importance of understanding the limitations of using leadership questionnaire measures (like the MLQ and others). Researchers must use the correct design conditions and statistical methods to overcome these limitations. When doing this correctly, for instance, we see that the effects of transformational leadership on outcomes, as usually tested, have been vastly exaggerated (Antonakis & House, 2014). To correctly estimate a model where \( x \), the intended regressor, is potentially endogenous (as in the case of any questionnaire measure of leadership), in the following model \( x \rightarrow y \), an exogenous source of variance must be used to “purge” \( x \) of endogeneity bias. Thus, in this case, the model that must be estimated is \( z \rightarrow x \rightarrow y \) (where \( z \) in this case is referred to as an instrumental variable). The instrumental variable must be exogenous and vary independently of the disturbance of \( y \). Examples of instrumental variables could be individual differences that can be reliably and ideally objectively measured (e.g., IQ, personality), fixed-effects of leaders (i.e., obtaining repeated measures over time or from many raters), contextual factors (e.g., country, industry, firm), or exogenous shocks (for ideas, see Antonakis et al., 2010). Although some research has been undertaken in this area of individual differences (Bono & Judge, 2004; Judge & Bono, 2000), not enough has been done to predict the factors of the full-range model. This is the case considering the full gamut of individual difference predictors, including general intelligence (Antonakis, House, et al., 2017).

Another problem that I often see, which follows from above, is models being estimated in a piecemeal way, having obvious omitted variables. For example, regressing \( y \) only on charismatic leadership (e.g., Keller, 1992; Koene, Vogelaar, & Soeters, 2002) and failing to control for other leadership styles too. If variables are omitted from the regression equation that correlate with \( y \) as well as with other predictors in the regression equation, then omitting them will produce biased estimates (Antonakis et al., 2010; Cameron & Trivedi, 2005). Thus, it is important to control for all theoretical causes of \( y \) (e.g., instrumental leadership, transactional leadership) that may correlate with the modeled independent variables (Antonakis & House, 2014). The full-range leadership theory that is estimated must be truly a full one, though not to the point of bringing in redundant factors.

Thus, to fully understand the leadership phenomenon, it is important to model the full leadership process that produces leadership outcomes (Fischer et al., 2016; Lim & Ployhart, 2004; Zaccaro, Kemp, & Bader, 2004). That is, we must link together leader individual differences, leader styles, and leader outcomes, while also considering level-of-analysis and contextual issues (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Antonakis & House, 2014; Waldman & Yammarino, 1999), as both moderators and predictors (Liden & Antonakis, 2009). Doing so will not only ensure correct estimation of endogenous variables, but also provide us with a better understanding concerning the importance of leadership. More research should move in this direction to provide truly new and important discoveries. If it is too difficult to model
the full process, then more work needs to be done to manipulate the independent variable. As Kurt Lewin has been credited to have said: “The best way to understand something is to try to change it.” Although there have been some experiments done showing charisma can be manipulated, there is a dearth of studies showing that transformational leadership can be trained (for exceptions, see Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002); there are no studies that I am aware of showing that authentic, ethical, or servant leadership can be directly manipulated in realistic and consequential settings (i.e., not “paper people” or hypothetical settings). Much more research needs to be conducted, particularly using field experiments (Eden, 2017), which are very useful for establishing causal relations and in making reliable policy implications.

What Makes Leaders Charismatic?

As mentioned, MLQ-type instruments have not been developed to capture why leaders are charismatic, which means that the variables measured by the questionnaire can only be used as outcomes (else if used as predictors they should be corrected for endogeneity bias). However, much work has been done in understanding why some leaders are able to induce the charismatic effect. Isolating these causes thus makes it useful to study charisma unobtrusively or to manipulate it.

Charismatic leaders use specific communication and image-building strategies to project power and confidence (House, 1977). Researchers have identified some of these strategies with respect to the content of the speech, its framing, and the delivery mode (Den Hartog & Verburg, 1997; Shamir et al., 1993). Essentially, charismatic leaders use a number of tactics, which have been studied both experimentally and in the field, and which show that these tactics are strongly predictive of leader outcomes (Antonakis et al., 2011; Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Frese et al., 2003; Howell & Frost, 1989; Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015; Towler, 2003). These charismatic leadership tactics, or signals, render the elusive charisma factor more tangible and can be used as a basis to measure a more pure and objective form of charisma from speeches of leaders (Antonakis, Tur, & Jacquart, 2017), independent of attributions and inferences of raters. For this reason, my colleagues and I have defined charisma as “values-based, symbolic, and emotion-laden leader signaling” (Antonakis et al., 2016, p. 304); doing so avoids tautologies and helps identify antecedents to the charismatic effect.

With respect to the use of charismatic signaling, my colleagues and I have conceptualized that these tactics fall into three major categories that can be reliably coded (for details and theoretical explanations, see Antonakis et al., 2011; Antonakis, Fenley, & Liechti, 2012; Antonakis, Tur, et al., 2017; Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015). Briefly, charismatic leaders frame to get attention and focus on the key issues, provide the substance to justify the vision and strategic goals, and then deliver the message in a lively way. Framing can be achieved by using (a) stories, to make the message easy to visualize and the moral salient; (b) metaphors, to trigger an image, simplify the message, and make it easy to remember; (c) rhetorical questions, to create a puzzle, an intrigue, where the answer is obvious or will be divulged later; (d) contrasts, to sharply define the leader’s position from an undesirable position;
and (e) three-part lists, to show completeness of argumentation, to boil down the complex matters in fewer key issues, and to aid in recall. The substance is all about justifying the mission by (a) using moral conviction, to communicate important values and what is right to do; (b) expressing the sentiments of the collective, to close the psychological gap between the leader and followers and put into words what followers are thinking and feeling; (c) setting high and ambitious goals, to provide focus and align effort to a target; and (d) communicating confidence that goals can be achieved, which raises self-efficacy belief. Finally, delivery has to do with demonstrating passion and conviction by accurately signaling emotional states, and displaying confidence by use of voice, facial expressions, and body gestures. Note that the verbal aspects of signaling (framing and substance) correlated quite strongly with the nonverbal delivery (Antonakis et al., 2011), presumably because more vivid imagery requires, and more easily goes with, nonverbal signaling (Jacquart & Antonakis, 2015; Towler, 2003).

To the extent that the leader correctly signals, he or she will be seen as charismatic by those who are aligned with the leader’s values; thus, charismatic signaling is necessary but insufficient for the charismatic effect (i.e., the emotional connection) to occur (Antonakis et al., 2016). Of course, charismatic signaling of this sort in no way suggests the leader is effective or good in any way. Thus, such an operationalization of charisma avoids the issues I identified previously with respect to using loaded terms and defining the construct by the outcomes. To better see how to extract these tactics from leader speeches, let us go back to the quotations of Thatcher to see just why she was charismatic (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1  Analysis of Margaret Thatcher’s Use of the Charismatic Leadership Tactics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>CLT 1</th>
<th>CLT 2</th>
<th>CLT 3</th>
<th>CLT 4</th>
<th>CLT 5</th>
<th>CLT 6</th>
<th>CLT 7</th>
<th>CLT 8</th>
<th>CLT 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>But all this will avail us little unless we achieve our prime economic objective—the defeat of inflation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Inflation destroys nations and societies as surely as invading armies do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Inflation is the parent of unemployment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>It is the unseen robber of those who have saved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>If our people feel that they are part of a great nation and they are prepared to will the means to keep it great, a great nation we shall be, and shall remain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>So, what can stop us from achieving this?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>What then stands in our way?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The prospect of another winter of discontent?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
Conclusion

It is clear from this review that charismatic and other neocharismatic forms of leadership have become an integral part of leadership theory and are here to stay. However, I must admit that the field has been a bit carried away by these approaches, particularly regarding the heroic connotations and unrealistic expectations they create for leaders in practice, and the fact that many assume that such leaders do bring about needed change. Some sobering commentaries have been made recently with respect to these issues (Antonakis et al., 2016; Antonakis & House, 2014; Hunt, 2004; Judge, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004; van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013; Yukl, 1999). For instance, House and I threw out a challenge to “new” leadership scholars about a decade ago, and we still have not had any takers. After paying tribute to
We hope to see [causally done] research that establishes that transformational leaders have the ability to actually transform individuals and organizations. This notion implicitly pervades the theories and assumptions of leadership scholars of the new paradigm (Beyer, 1999; House, 1999). We have evidence that behaviors of transformational leaders are associated with improved organizational effectiveness, follower satisfaction, and follower motive arousal, but this evidence does not imply that transformational leaders caused transformations in organizations and followers. Although causal links could be theorized, up to this point, we have seen no empirical evidence to make that deduction. (p. 27)

We continued to wait (Antonakis & House, 2013), and I am still waiting now. To conclude, I trust that my final thoughts do not give readers the impression that I am disillusioned by the state of research in this aspect of the leadership field. I am not. In fact, I am very impressed by how much research has been done and how much our understanding of the phenomenon has improved through the efforts of hundreds of researchers. I am also optimistic that we will learn much more about this research stream in the future. What is clear from my review is that even though research in charismatic leadership and related streams is maturing, there is still much to be done; just like in the medical sciences, where researchers constantly update treatments for diseases, so too must we find better measures and better interventions.

Leadership, particularly its charismatic form, is simply too important to leave to random processes or to weak institutions. Once societies, companies, or teams appoint leaders who have charismatic influence, they might be stuck with them for some time, so it is best to get this appointment right. We must better understand the processes that produce these leaders because history will, again and again, toss up leaders who will wield charismatic power.

Discussion Questions
1. Who is more charismatic, President Barack Obama or President Donald Trump? Who is more transactional? Discuss.
2. Is it morally good for people to fall in behind a leader who is charismatic? Discuss.
3. To be able to produce the charismatic leadership signals, both verbal and nonverbal, what abilities and personality traits do you think leaders should have? Explain.

Recommended Readings


### Recommended Case Studies

- **Film Case**: *Twelve angry men* (1957). Starring Henry Fonda.


### Recommended Video


### References


