A Qualitative Study on Grooming Talent for Higher Education

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A Qualitative Study on Grooming Talent for Higher Education

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Abstract

A vast number of higher education leaders and staff have reached the age and service requirements to be eligible for retirement. In the modern workplace, higher education institutions have become more complex and have to adapt to technological advances. As a result of these occurrences, the skill level of employees must keep pace and continue to evolve. Higher education institutions must prepare and sharpen the skills and competencies of employees through leadership development programs.

In this qualitative case study of 24 participants representing three universities and two search firms, the focus was on designing and implementing succession planning and leadership development programs for administrative leaders and staff who work in 4-year public research institutions. Our findings highlight six key institutional characteristics that are important for leadership development programs: making a commitment, dedicating resources, articulating compelling reasons, creating policies and procedures, identifying positions and addressing barriers to implementation. The participants shared three primary ways to develop competencies: formal learning, learning from others, and on-the-job learning. Our findings highlight several positive outcomes for the individual and the organization of leadership development programs. Individuals learn more about the organization, network with others and learn about promotion opportunities. Organizations can benefit by creating a talent pool and lowering expenses related to hiring searches.

Keywords: leadership development programs, staff development, succession planning, competencies, outcomes
Acknowledgements

I wish to dedicate my dissertation to family members, mentors, good friends and colleagues who have imparted wisdom, offered words of encouragement and challenged me when I needed a boost. A special acknowledgement to my parents, James and Doris Holt, my grandmothers, Neppie Holt and Jessie Mae Bennett, my godmothers, Dora Paige and Edith Summerall, and to my living aunts and uncle, Jeanette Taylor, Christine Fletcher, Richard Holt and Bobbie Walker. Other individuals who deserve special recognition include: Geniene Collins, Felecia Chambers, SeRonne Anderson, Liz Johnson, Juan Roberts, Mable Abernathy, Emily Jones, Ernest Abernathy and Jameson Abernathy and the UMSL DBA Faculty and Staff. I am honored and proud to be the remaining female member of the inaugural cohort and congratulate my fellow DBA students on their accomplishments.

As a woman of faith, two scriptures have served as inspirational anchors throughout this journey, II Chronicles 15:7, “…be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded,” and Philippians 4:13, “I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.”
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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

It was anticipated that higher education would experience a mass exodus in presidents and administrative leaders, but the recession in the late-2000s hampered retirements for many reasons including, “financial inability and concern for loss of leader identity” (Gordon & Overbey, 2018, p. 2). That is some did not want to retire because doing so would lose their identity as a leader. In recent years, baby boomer retirements have begun and will continue for the next fifteen years. According to the U. S. Census Bureau (2008), 13% of the population was projected to reach age 65 and older by 2010, and by 2030 the percentage will likely grow to 19% of the population (Holder & Clark, 2008). According to a 2017, American Council on Education (ACE) study on college presidents, 58% of them were age 60 or older (ACE, 2017). Moreover, about 80 percent of the surveyed presidents (the chief officer of the university or system of universities no matter the person’s actual title) stated that they plan to retire within the next 10 years (ACE, 2017).

In addition to impending retirements of presidents and administrative leaders, higher education needs to plan for departures of staff in essential roles without redundancy or in roles with unique or highly technical skills which are difficult to replace. All organizations seek to maintain their performance when transitions or vacancies occur, but they face challenges that prevent them from maximizing their full potential. These challenges are believed to be exacerbated in higher education because of a distributed decision model known as faculty shared governance (Betts, Urias & Betts,
Increasingly, challenging employee recruitment, retention and an aging workforce can get in the way of an organization meeting its performance goals. Many succession planning and leadership development programs (LDPs) focus on employees: 1) acquiring skills and competencies to perform well in current roles, 2) preparing for advanced roles, and, 3) being able to fill-in on a short-term basis to cover vacancies. Succession planning provides the motivation for leadership development. At the fundamental core of succession planning is leadership development to groom employees to perform at a high level to earn a promotion within the organization (Rothwell, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

Given the anticipated loss of institutional knowledge due to anticipated retirements and other reasons, it is imperative to create succession planning and leadership development programs to develop talent to ensure business continuity, develop “bench strength” of workforce and mitigate risk to 4-year public research higher education institutions during position transitions (Day, 2007). Work is changing at an accelerated pace, due to advances in technology. Higher education institutions are expanding their missions and services in scope and complexity (Fishman & Sledge, 2014). It is important to make sure that administrative leaders are adequately developed to perform their roles, and can adequately develop their direct reports (e.g., staff) to enhance efficiency and productivity to meet organizational goals. Grooming talent through succession planning can have a positive impact on an institution’s performance and strategic priorities (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). Also, by participating in leadership
development programs, administrative leaders can stay abreast of current practices and develop new competencies. Administrative leaders can encompass a wide range of positions and titles, such as manager, director and vice president; serve in functional roles or units (e.g., communications and marketing, human resources, finances, facilities, etc.); and, have supervisory responsibilities of employees within a university.

Four-year public research institutions are at a critical juncture and need to undergo an overhaul in many areas. The changes will require leaders to think and lead differently. In the United States, the perception of the value of higher education has been eroding over the last several years. Part of this erosion stems from the cost of earning a college degree has skyrocketed and has shifted more to students and their families (Balotsky, 2018; Fishman & Sledge, 2014). As an outcome, students and their families are borrowing more (and defaulting more) to pay for a college education (Fishman & Sledge, 2014) and demanding more accountability from higher education institutions, particularly from presidents and administrative leaders. Not only is the perception of the value of a college degree diminishing, so is the population of traditional aged college students, 18-24. More specifically, in the Midwest and other parts of the country, for at least the foreseeable future, the population of traditional age college students will decline in actual numbers, so this will likely lead to a decline in enrollment (Balotsky, 2018). Unless there are radical changes in the industry in coming up with solutions to these challenges, these no growth or shrinkage scenarios will prevail and present formidable challenges for the survivability of many colleges and universities. Leadership
development programs can serve as a catalyst for the needed transformation in creating new types of thinking on leadership to address these daunting challenges (Gmelch, 2013).

There appears to be a dearth of persons of color and women in the roles of president and senior leaders. Given the current climate to promote diversity, hopefully this is changing, albeit slowly changing. According to a 2017, ACE study, college presidents are still predominately white and male. In 2016, 7 out of 10 college presidents were men and less than 1 in 5 represented a racial minority (ACE, 2017). Leadership development programs can groom persons of color and women to assume senior level roles in academia.

In the research, there are not many studies addressing professional development and leadership development programs for staff members at any level. This is a significant gap in the research. Overall, with the ever-increasing number of retirements and the short-sighted pipeline of talent available and willing to assume positions, higher education institutions must assume a more deliberate role in preparing current and successive generations of administrative leaders and staff through succession planning and leadership development programs.

**Theoretical Framework**

Human Capital Theory (HCT) is presented as a theory to provide support for implementing succession planning and leadership development programs in higher education. Also, the theory helped to formulate the semi-structured interview questions,
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but in an inductive study such as this one, theories are not as essential at the beginning of the study as they would be for a deductive study (Myers, 2013).

HCT asserts that a firm’s competitive advantage derives from the available knowledge, skills, abilities, other characteristics (KSAO) and level of efficiency of its workforce (Cragun, Nyberg, & Wright, 2016). Succession planning can be utilized as a tool by higher education institutions in workforce planning. In essence, the board, leaders, managers and supervisors create a strategic and comprehensive plan for recruiting, hiring and training talent with desired traits, skills and competencies. Leadership development and staff development programs are key tenets of succession planning. These programs form the basis for depicting how talent acquire knowledge and hone skills, traits and competencies. According to Day (2007), it is important to integrate succession planning with leadership development for an organization to sustain a competitive advantage.

Significance of Research Study

As the president and senior leaders are planning for the growth and sustainability of their organizations, there appears to be a growing concern about developing talent for current workplace needs and for the next generation of leaders. As a result, many leaders have contemplated the pros and cons of implementing succession planning and leadership development programs. Some have even incorporated these types of programs into their business practices and operations, and others are more skeptical or lack time due to focusing on the day-to-day operations. Given the foreseeability of the continuing
departures of employees at all levels, the demand for greater accountability, and the accelerated pace of change, it is crucial for higher education leaders to transform policies, practices and protocols for identifying, selecting and developing effective leaders and employees. Overall, with this qualitative research study, 4-year public research institutions may gain more confidence that succession planning and leadership development programs are indeed worth the effort for better success in developing and retaining talent to meet individual and organizational goals.
CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of the research study was to gain a better understanding of the institutional characteristics needed for successful implementation of succession planning and leadership development programs to groom talent within the context of 4-year public research institutions. In addition, we wanted to become more knowledgeable about the needed skills and competencies for the contemporary president, administrative leaders and staff, and to become more familiar with effective ways for developing their competencies and skills. Lastly, we desired to assess the positive outcomes of leadership development programs in achieving individual and organizational goals.

In a corporate context, succession planning has been studied from a plethora of perspectives (Carriere, Muise, Cummins, & Newburn-Cook, 2009; Daily, Certo, & Dalton, 2000; Davidson, Nemec, & Worrell, 2001; Groves, 2007; Pynes, 2004; Titzer, Shirey & Hauck, 2014). A review of previous studies indicated that roughly 40% to 60% of corporate organizations have succession plans in place depending on the type of organization, industry, and size of firm (Ip & Jacobs, 2006). Succession planning “is a deliberate and systematic effort by an organization to ensure leadership continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future and encourage individual advancement” (Rothwell, 2016, p. 6). It should be noted that succession planning and leadership development are intertwined. According to Groves (2007), successful companies incorporate leadership development as the foundation for
succession planning. Higher education institutions are using LDPs as a primary vehicle to groom talent as part of the succession planning process for career growth and upward mobility (Bornstein, 2010; Klein & Salk, 2013; Luna, 2012). The original intent of the study was to focus on succession planning in higher education. In our research, a few universities claimed to have succession planning programs. Upon closer examination, we found that while some of the universities had informal succession planning components, the formal programs focused more on professional development for a broad swath of administrative positions. This revelation caused us to broaden our search to include literature on leadership development programs and to focus more directly on higher education staff and not faculty. In practice, the universities modified the definition most commonly used in the literature that describes succession planning as developing a person for a specific role (Day, 2007; Rothwell, 2016). Instead, the refined definition allows employees to possess a vast array of skills to perform in a broad category of positions. In essence, LDPs in higher education is a form of succession planning, and is different than what is described in literature and observed in practice in business and industry.

**Leadership Development and Leadership Development Programs**

In recent history, leadership development has been a ripe topic for research across many disciplines and fields in popular literature and scholarly literature. Every year an exorbitant amount of money is spent on leadership development programs by corporations, government agencies, higher education and other entities for in-house and
external training (Kraimer, Seibert, Wayne, Liden, & Bravo, 2011). With the onset of the pandemic, we speculate many workplaces have halted their investment in external leadership development programs. However, the need to have a competent and trained workforce does not stop. In the coming years, more than ever, corporations, government agencies, higher education and other entities will conduct more leadership development programs in-house to curb cost. It will be important to curb cost but not sacrifice the quality of the leadership development programs to help organizations meet their goals. In this case, it will be crucial to understand institutional characteristics, needed competencies, competency development and positive outcomes of leadership development programs.

Leadership development hones the skills of potential successors to equip them for ease of transition into a new role. It also helps those in current roles to refine their skills, for success in performing their job duties. The underlying purpose of leadership development is to identify high potential talent, identify skills and competencies needed to advance and then develop the talent to assume critical leadership positions in the future (Titzer et al., 2014). High potential talent is defined as individuals having the ability, skills, capabilities and motivation to be developed for an advanced role or a senior level role (Day, 2007). As further refinement, Rothwell (2016) defined high potential talent “as individuals capable of advancing two or more levels beyond their present placement, those who are slated for key positions or those who have not reached a career plateau” (p. 223). For our study, our high potential talent represent staff (such as a content specialist)
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and administrative leaders (such as manager, director, executive vice chancellor) in non-academic or non-teaching functional areas. For example, the staff and administrative leaders are in areas such as communications and marketing, human resources, finance and facilities.

Leader development is broader in scope than traditional training, although the two are often used together or interchangeably (Day, 2011). Specifically, leader development addresses the goal of creating a pipeline of high potential talent for when a vacancy occurs (Day, 2011). For our study, leadership development is defined as increasing a person’s knowledge, skills and capabilities to perform competently, and the knowledge, skills and capabilities are honed through many venues and types of LDPs, such as 1) learning from formal classes, webinars and conferences; 2) learning from other people (mentoring and coaching); and, 3) learning on the job (through cross-functional job assignments and rotational assignments through departments/units) (Day, 2007; Luna, 2012). In a leadership development program, there are several key features, including “that it unfolds over time, is maximized by a variety of experiences that provide challenge, feedback and support and is contingent upon the individual’s ability to learn from the experience” (Day, 2011, p. 38). In this study, leadership development and professional development will be used interchangeably, although professional development is broader in scope and generally includes additional areas other than leadership development. Also, competency development will be used as a synonym for both terms.
Literature on Leadership Development Programs in Higher Education

In reviewing the literature, we searched several databases including ABI/Inform, Business Source Premier, and Google Scholar, using terms such as leadership development, staff development and professional development in higher education; leadership development programs, leadership development programs for higher education, leadership development programs for women and underrepresented groups/individuals. We were able to find more articles on leadership development programs for women than any other group or sub-category in higher education (Knipfer, Shaughnessy, Hentschel & Schmid, 2017; Ngunjiri & Hernandez, 2017; Selzer, Howton & Wallace, 2017; Tindle, 2017; Madsen & Andrade, 2018; Waheeda & Nishan, 2018).

Next, we were able to find articles on developing community college leaders for presidential appointments and the competencies needed for success in those appointments (Forthun & Freeman, 2017). As a rare occurrence, we found an article on preparing individuals with disabilities to assume top management positions (Martin, 2017). In a few instances, we were able to find articles on grooming faculty to assume leadership roles (Williams, 2017). Table 1 highlights the literature on leadership development and leadership development programs in a higher education context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selzer, Howton, and Wallace (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on developing women for leadership roles. Programs must address personal, interpersonal and organizational levels. Relationship building must be an essential facet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waheeda and Nishan (2018)</td>
<td>Focused on developing women for leadership roles in The Republic of Maldives. The challenges women faced include heavy workload, lack</td>
</tr>
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</table>
of career development opportunities, voice not being heard and lack of support. The study recommended that institutions need to offer professional development and training and provide mentorship and support networks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Williams (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on developing individuals to assume leadership roles. Highlighted a two-year leadership development program at Rutgers University for mid-career faculty and staff. It emphasized growing internal talent to assume leadership roles. As a barrier for faculty to move into top management positions, they are entrenched in the mindset of “not going to the dark side.” The study interviewed participants of a leadership program at the University of North Carolina. The participants of the UNC Program appreciated the program was selective. You can be a leader by position, authority and influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghasemy, Hussin, Daud, and Nor (2018)</td>
<td>Focused on leadership gathering data from 2,786 Malaysian academic leaders across 25 institutions across various sectors, public and private to examine priorities, values, challenges and solutions. The categories that emerged fit into five areas: academic core activities, change and leadership, management, relationships and work values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schottlaender (2020)</td>
<td>Focused on the internal and external leadership development programs for academic librarians over the last 40-50 years. Addressed the difference between professional development and leadership development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on developing community college leaders by examining such focal areas as competencies, succession planning and developing women of color. The article highlighted the specific ways to develop high potential talent through leadership development programs and graduate programs. Emphasized the background literature on leadership development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jooste (2016)</td>
<td>Focused on leadership development for academic health care leaders at the University of Western Cape. In the study two themes emerged. The first theme examined the views on developing leaders and the second theme highlighted the essential core components of leadership development programs, such as job shadowing, succession planning, mentoring and coaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bates (2018)</td>
<td>Focused on leadership development by examining the perceptions of academic leaders on the changing environment of higher education and the impact on shared governance. The participants in the study represent small, private four-year religious affiliated institutions. The results noted the importance of philosophies of trust, support, mentoring and decision making in the shared governance structure. Some experts are questioning the relevance of shared governance as outlined by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in the current climate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forthun and Freeman (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on a literature review of the past, present and future of community college graduate leadership development programs. Over the last several years, doctoral degrees have been considered essential credentials to move up the ranks in leadership roles. The article purports there is a need to conduct critical and comprehensive evaluation on how well graduate programs prepare leaders. The article suggests grow-your-own in-house programs should augment the formal learning so prospective leaders can learn from practitioners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton (2016)</td>
<td>Focused on leadership development at a Christian college. Nine themes emerged, including developing future leaders is a clear obligation of the president, culture and religious traditions influence leadership development, purpose of the programs are clearly</td>
</tr>
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</table>
understood by the participants, exposure and interaction with other leaders is valued, participants associate deep value with their engagement with the program, intentional efforts to connect with external community. clarity about future plans is challenging, board prioritizes succession planning, and, deliberately developing leaders for the changing climate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tindle (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on the impact and influence on the American Council of Education (ACE) forums for women on developing women as leaders in higher education. The findings showed the participants experienced an influence of networking, and influence of seeing others career paths. The study recommended that higher education institutions should provide more leadership opportunities for women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on leadership programs for those with disabilities. The study addressed barriers to participation in leadership development programs. The research on leadership programs for those perceived to have a disability was very sparse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knipfer, Shaughnessy, Hentschel, and Schmid (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on developing women for leadership roles in academia. The study identified three type of barriers across internal and external factors. The internal factors are motivation (want-to factors) and abilities (can-do factors), and the external factors address opportunity (permission-and-support factors). The study designed curricula to address the factors and was conducted with women in Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngunjiri and Hernandez (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on leadership development through authentic leadership for women of color, particularly for immigrant women in primarily white institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madsen and Andrade (2018)</td>
<td>Focused on leadership development programs for women. It suggests effective leadership development programs address unconscious bias. The study appears to be a proponent of women-only leadership development programs and such programs should recognize the various roles and identities of women through an unconscious bias and intersectional model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentle and Clifton (2017)</td>
<td>Focused on a leadership development program for entry level and senior level managers to determine the correlation between individual participants and organizational outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dopson, Ferlie, McGivern, Fischer, Mitra, Ledger, and Behrens (2018)</td>
<td>Examined research articles on leadership development programs in higher education to learn about content, processes, outcomes and impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornsby, Morrow-Jones, and Ballam (2012)</td>
<td>The Ohio State University created a best practice model for designing and implementing a leadership development program for women in higher education to ascend to senior level positions (e.g., provost and president).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrett, Gaskins, and Haug (2019)</td>
<td>Focused on four dimensions – physical, social-emotional, spiritual and mental dimensions of implementing a 2-day leadership program for supervisors at a business school (with a control group and an experimental group) and assessed the impact for a year post implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latta (2015)</td>
<td>Focused on the importance of having the dynamics of resistance and facilitation in leadership development programs to aid in organizational change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zuber-Skerritt and Louw (2014)</td>
<td>Used a participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) model in its leadership development program to determine if cascade learning had a multiplier effect on organizational sustainability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the last several years, women have made great strides to enter the professoriate. According to Selzer, Howton and Wallace (2017), the data show that women have secured faculty roles but they have not been promoted at the same pace as their male colleagues. Women face personal and structural barriers and they are often interconnected (Selzer, Howton, & Wallace, 2017). For instance, women still bear the responsibilities of child rearing, so they may need institutional policies that will permit pausing the tenure clock or foster more of a work-life balance (Selzer, Howton, & Wallace, 2017). In Selzer, Howton and Wallace (2017), the researchers at an urban and public research institution with multiple campuses created a leadership development program for women. The program focused on developing mid-career women (from the faculty and staff ranks) for senior leadership positions through a program that met for seven months. The program focused on self-assessment and research-based content in areas such as self-awareness, strategic alignment, finance, negotiation and conflict management (Selzer, Howton, & Wallace, 2017). The program was highly selective and had stipulated criteria: must have earned at least a master’s degree, achieved the rank of at least assistant director (staff) and associate professor (faculty) and been employed for at least three years at the university. The participants were required to submit a resume/CV and a letter of recommendation from a supervisor. If accepted into the program, the home department had to show support through a $100 investment in the
participant. The critical elements of the program included: assigned readings on various topics (such as authentic leadership); university leaders addressed the participants; and, participants were given stretch assignments to foster experiential learning. The participants were enrolled in a Blackboard discussion group to enhance the flow of communication. The articulated goals of the program included: “building critical networks and partnerships, deepening members knowledge of strategy, negotiation, communication and leadership, and maximizing influence with internal and external stakeholders” (Selzer, Howton, & Wallace, 2017, p. 5). After conducting the research, the researchers questioned the value of a women’s only leadership development program. Some were concerned that a women’s only cohort deprives women of the opportunity to interact with men whom they will need to work with to accomplish institutional goals and priorities (Selzer, Howton, & Wallace, 2017).

In the literature, there was a significant gap in finding leadership development programs dedicated to fostering the development of individuals with disabilities. In one of the few studies, Martin (2017), collected qualitative and quantitative data from 90 disabled individuals in the UK, representing a wide array of academic positions. The individuals categorized themselves as current or aspiring leaders. In the study, it noted the individuals had developed desirable competencies and attributes to perform well in their roles. As a barrier to implementation, the participants identified the lack of assistive technology to make participation in leadership development programs more accessible (Martin, 2017). Finally, the study outlined recommendations that emerged under certain
themes to improve leadership development programs: 1) strategic responses, 2) inclusive design, reasonable adjustments and access to work, 3) leadership recruitment and development, and 4) peer support, mentoring and networks (Martin, 2017, p. 2).

In many of the articles, the authors pointed out the need to change the way we groom leaders for roles in higher education. In Gmelch (2013), it was noted a “radical reform” was needed to address the formidable challenges of running and operating a complex organization. Further, in Gmelch (2013), the researchers examined ways to develop department chairs and deans to gain the requisite knowledge and skills. The study cited a 3-pronged approach to developing academic leadership development programs: conceptual understanding, skill development and reflective practice. Conceptual understanding acknowledges the unique challenges faculty encounter moving from faculty roles to administrative leader roles, and it addresses the challenges higher education leaders face, distinct from leaders in other sectors (Gmelch, 2013). Skill development underscores the need to sharpen skills and this can be accomplished through formal or informal means to learn new skills (Gmelch, 2013). For leaders to be successful, they need more than conceptual understanding and skill development, they must have opportunities for reflective practice. Reflective practice encompasses self-awareness, guiding principles and authenticity (Gmelch, 2013).

The literature on leadership development programs for staff positions in higher education was somewhat limited. Administrative staff (non-academic staff) at universities are generally classified as technical, clerical, services and professional staff
with various job titles such as specialists, researchers and advisers in various functional areas (Gander, 2018). Graham (2009) posited that the impact of the work of administrative staff is significant but they are generally not taken seriously. Since there has been little research on the careers of professional staff at universities (Regan, Dollard & Banks, 2014), most strategic initiatives at universities ignore administrative staff as a crucial component of the university workforce (Hunter, 2018). Hunter (2018) argued that administrative staff are important because they are required to adjust to changing institutional priorities, expected to provide topnotch service without much training and are often viewed as invisible. Although some studies claimed to include “staff” positions, many of them highlighted teaching and faculty roles and used terms such as teaching staff, faculty staff, academic staff and general staff. In other cases, we found studies that mentioned staff, but did not specify positions or types of positions, and the wording and the context were ambiguous. Therefore, we could not determine if our study’s definition of staff was analogous to the definitions in those studies (Graham, 2009; Neri and Wilkins 2019). See Table 2 for our research findings on leadership development programs for staff positions. In a few cases, the studies did focus on non-teaching staff. Brandenburg (2016), addressed competencies and career paths for core support staff, such as porters and housekeepers in residence halls. The study suggested that competency development must be incorporated into staff development and should be discussed during the annual review with the employee and supervisor (Brandenburg, 2016). In Erasmus (2020), the study conducted focus groups with 14 alumni of
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leadership development programs for middle level managers (excluding academic roles such as department chairs and deans). Participants had been identified as high potential talent for senior leadership roles. The goal was to understand participants’ perceptions of talent management, promotion opportunities, and succession planning at a South African university. The study noted that the organizational leaders did not do a great job of communicating professional development opportunities, did not provide sufficient guidance on career paths, and, were not focused on retention strategies for keeping middle level administrative managers. For our study, staff positions are defined as non-teaching roles (content specialist, senior project associate and senior planner). More specifically, staff positions are primarily housed in the functional units or relate to business practices within or outside academic divisions, colleges and schools, such as human resources, communications and marketing, finance, law enforcement, facilities, and medical services among others. Administrative staff and staff are terms that are used interchangeably in our study. Administrative leaders are staff at a higher level position (than administrative staff) with supervisory responsibilities.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reetu (2019)</td>
<td>“Teaching staff” meaning teachers</td>
<td>Examined job satisfaction of 70 teaching staff from selected districts in Hayana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerken, Beausaert, and Segers (2016)</td>
<td>“Faculty staff” referred to teacher and teacher education</td>
<td>Investigated the relationship between social informal leaning activities and employability of 209 faculty staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham (2009)</td>
<td>“General staff” did not define or indicate types of positions</td>
<td>Considered the development needs of early career general staff in Australian universities, within the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Definition of Academic Staff or Team</td>
<td>Focus on Professional Development and the Aspirations and Expectations of Generation Y.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baik, Naylor, and Corrin (2018)</td>
<td>“Casual academics” and “Sessional teaching staff” meaning those with teaching responsibilities (adjuncts, lecturers, non-tenure track)</td>
<td>Looked at the support and professional development of those with the bulk of the teaching responsibility for undergraduate students in Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akyol and Tanrisevdi (2018)</td>
<td>“Academicians” highlights academic liberty, autonomy, teaching, research and service</td>
<td>Explained the term academician and the characteristics of academicians in Turkish universities. Addressed barriers faced by academicians, particularly women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amegatsey, Odoom, Arpoh-Baah, and Okyere (2018)</td>
<td>“Teaching staff” meaning lecturers and two administrators</td>
<td>Analyzed factors affecting staff development and retention within the tertiary educational institutions of Ghana using Takoradi Technical University as a case. The sample included 92 teaching staff and two key officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fattah, Sumarto, Abubakar, and Pamungkas (2020).</td>
<td>“Academic staff” meaning lecturer</td>
<td>Focused on output and outcome achievement levels after upgrading the quality and competitiveness of higher education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majeed, Wumbei, and Abdulai (2018)</td>
<td>Included “Management” and “Staff” did not specify positions or types of positions</td>
<td>Assessed the issues and challenges of training as a human resources tool for staff development in higher education institutions. Randomly sampled 27 units, including 512 management and staff positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tepayakul and Rinthaisong (2018)</td>
<td>“HR staff” meaning human resources</td>
<td>Examined the relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement of HR staff in Thailand universities. This study is not analogous to our study because it does not address leadership development or leadership development programs, but it can be instructive because staff members who are more engaged are more likely to participate in leadership development programs which can lead to greater job satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neri and Wilkins (2019)</td>
<td>“Academic staff” was not defined</td>
<td>Investigated the practices of talent management at international branch campuses. Developed 5 case studies to help with training and development of talent at branch campuses in foreign countries. The respondents were senior campus leaders, presidents and deans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Literature Review on Research Questions

In the next section, we will review the relevant literature for each research question:

1. What are the institutional characteristics needed for the creation of leadership development programs (LDPs) at 4-year public research institutions?

2. What are the needed competencies and skills for the president, administrative leaders and staff positions at 4-year public research institutions?

3. How are competencies and skills developed in LDP participants at 4-year public research institutions?

4. What are the positive outcomes on LDP participants and organizations post participation in leadership development programs at 4-year public research institutions?

**RQ1** - What are the institutional characteristics needed for the creation of leadership development programs (LDPs) at 4-year public research institutions?

In the literature, there is no universally accepted framework for creating leadership development programs, particularly in the context of higher education. Notwithstanding a universal framework, in both scholarly publications and popular literature, there is a great deal of research on institutional characteristics. In the literature, institutional characteristics were referred to as core components. In fact, institutional characteristics are comprised of a mix of philosophical principles, conditions that must be satisfied, and core components required for implementation (Gonzalez, 2010; Luna,
We decided to use institutional characteristics rather than core components because institutional characteristics addresses multiple facets. It should be noted, we used the construct “core components” in the interview guide, but after conducting an extensive search of the literature, we broadened the term to “institutional characteristics” in our study. See Table 3 for a list of institutional characteristics identified in the literature review.

Table 3
*Institutional Characteristics for Succession Planning and Leadership Development Programs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework for Planning</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seven-Pointed Star Model</td>
<td>Rothwell (2005)</td>
<td>Make commitment, Assess present work/people requirements, Appraise individual performance, Assess future work/people requirements, Assess future individual potential, Close the developmental gap and Evaluate the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight Phases of Planning</td>
<td>Carriere et al. (2009)</td>
<td>Strategic planning, Identifying desired skills and needs, Identifying key positions, Detecting possible candidates, Mentoring and coaching, Further developmental processes, Resource allocation and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Stages of Planning</td>
<td>Ip and Jacobs (2006) citing Gorden and Rosen (1981)</td>
<td>Antecedents (pre-president departure; measuring objectives, assets, skills and expertise, examining how HRM practices should be merged with succession planning, assessing commitment of the candidates) Events (leadership development – job rotation, talent pools and outsourcing, candidate characteristics – assessing employees leadership qualities – 360 feedback, finding a suitable replacement) Consequences (post-transition, leadership evaluation, assessing the effectiveness of planning and implementation – use of statistical techniques, customer satisfaction, program progress, effective employee placements and organizational results); The study focused on health care and one of the campuses in our study has a health center.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Six Stages of Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic planning</td>
<td>Titzer et al. (2014)</td>
<td>Selection, Curriculum development, Implementation, Evaluation, and, Candidate placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant selection</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td>Candidate placement</td>
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### Five Best Practices

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<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top management team support and involvement</td>
<td>Luna (2012)</td>
<td>Development and nurturing of a culture, Customization to unique organizational needs, mission, and environment. A real time process with continuous evaluation and feedback, and Leadership development as part of comprehensive strategic plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and nurturing of a culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customization to unique organizational needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
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### Ten Core Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong involvement by trustees</td>
<td>Clunies (2007)</td>
<td>Expose vice presidents and vice chancellors to trustees, Expose next generation presidents to gain exposure to outside community, media and alumni, Form executive committees or operating committees to facilitate the development of several administrators, View leadership development as an ongoing and real time process, Take as much human drama out of the process as possible, Link the president’s compensation to the development of leadership development programs, Require the trustees to make a personal commitment to the institution, Periodically calibrate internal candidates against outside ones</td>
</tr>
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<td>Expose vice presidents and vice chancellors to trustees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expose next generation presidents to gain exposure to outside community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media and alumni</td>
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<tr>
<td>Form executive committees or operating committees to facilitate the development of several administrators</td>
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<tr>
<td>View leadership development as an ongoing and real time process</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Take as much human drama out of the process as possible</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Link the president’s compensation to the development of leadership development programs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Require the trustees to make a personal commitment to the institution</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Periodically calibrate internal candidates against outside ones</td>
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Gonzalez (2010) offered insights into two institutional characteristics required for effective leadership development programs: 1) the commitment and attitude of the leadership, and, 2) developing talent through experiential experiences. In Gonzalez (2010), it was reasoned, “few people can develop their potential without organizational support, and that begins at the top” (p. 2). Gordon and Overbey (2018), suggested that the president and senior leaders should support their direct reports in finding, developing and keeping talent for the long-term benefit of the organization. Thus, it is essential to have the commitment of leadership to have quality leadership development programs.
Developing talent through experiential learning is a critical institutional characteristic (Wisniewski, 2004). Gonzalez (2010) asserted that the most successful institutions offer leadership development opportunities through teaching, mentoring and coaching. A purpose of experiential learning is for individuals to learn or acquire skills needed for current or aspirational positions. This can be done via formal or informal programs, or internal or external development opportunities. This characteristic will be further explored later in the section under research question number three.

For many organizations, including higher education institutions, having a diversity of talent reflected in the workplace is an important institutional characteristic. Leadership development programs can be used as a pipeline to groom diverse individuals to assume the roles of president, and senior leaders (Gonzalez, 2010; Gordon & Overbey, 2018; Luna, 2012). An organization must be mindful to continuously monitor itself to ensure there is diversity of talent reflected in staff and leadership roles.

During a College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) webinar, we learned of seven key core components for succession planning as adopted by a 4-year public research system (Alston, & Tredway, 2019). These key core components include “commitment confirmation, key position identification, position competency development/confirmation, identification of potential successors, competency assessment of potential successors, potential successor development program and periodic review of action completion/development of readiness” (Alston, & Tredway, 2019).
RQ2 – What are the needed competencies and skills for the president, administrative leaders and staff positions at 4-year public research institutions?

In the literature, over the last decade, there has been an abundance of research on the competencies and skills required for corporate presidents. There is even a significant amount of research on competencies and skills required for higher education presidents, for the community college sector and private universities (AACC, 2013; Klein & Salk, 2013; McNair, Duree & Ebbers, 2011). In developing competencies as part of leadership development programs, this increases the likelihood of positive outcomes for the organization and individuals. According to Bornstein (2010), the responsibilities of a college president are ever evolving and expanding to include: being an inspirational leader with vision, making sure the institution is achieving its mission, maintaining the academic rigor of the curricula, leading legislative efforts and advancement activities, being fiscally responsible, fostering economic development, forging alliances with compulsory K-12 education, and, participating in engagement and outreach efforts with the community.

Freeman (2013), highlighted the ACE Pathway to the Presidency (2012) study, which identified 17 competencies and 3 types of knowledge required of university presidents. There is much overlap in the competencies from study to study. An entrepreneurial mindset, crisis planning and media relations are modern skillsets needed of today’s leaders. Due to a shortfall in funding from the state, public institutions have had to secure alternate funding sources for operations. This, has required presidents and
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administrative leaders to develop acumen in fundraising (Trevitt, Steed, DuMoulin & Foley 2017). As represented in media outlets, presidents and administrative leaders are losing their positions because of scandalous and unethical behavior. Departures of presidents and administrative leaders have been magnified by social media. So it is important for presidents and administrative leaders to develop skills in crisis planning and media relations to deal with unanticipated events that can damage the reputation of their institutions (Gray, 2004; Paul, 2015). While much of the press has concentrated on presidents, similar issues affect administrative leaders at all levels within higher education.

According to Rothwell (2016), a 2008 World Business Forum survey was conducted with employers and the participants reported, leaders aren’t being rewarded for their most important qualities, their soft skills. These skills are important but difficult to measure. Administrative leaders need skills that address their roles as organizational leaders. In Pynes (2004), it was suggested that administrative leaders need “problem-solving skills, initiative, the ability to function as a team player, interpersonal skills and the creativity to seize opportunities” (p. 402).

**AACC Five Competencies for Community College presidents**

Near the beginning of the 21st century, in 2005, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) commissioned a report to identify key competencies needed for community college presidents (AACC, 2013). Six competencies have been widely accepted by the community college sector. In 2013, the study was updated and
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categorized the competencies based on the tenure of the leader – emerging leader (aspiring and preparing to become president), a new president (first three years in office) and president (three years or greater in office). In the 2013, iteration of the competencies, professionalism has been removed. The five competencies are now organizational strategy, fundraising and resource management, communication skills, collaboration and advocacy (AACC, 2013).

In McNair et al. (2011), the study used the AACC (2005) framework to glean from community college presidents their perceptions on needed competencies to perform as president and addressed their perceptions on how well they had developed those competencies at the beginning of their tenure as president. Overall, the presidents agreed the six competencies of the AACC (2005) report (organizational strategy, fundraising and resource management, communication skills, collaboration, professionalism and advocacy) were essential to their role as president (McNair et al., 2011).

In our research of the literature, it was difficult to find studies that addressed competencies, professional development and career paths for staff members. As an exception, in Erasmus (2020), the study focused on career development for staff positions. The participants noted they were not having conversations with their supervisors and managers about competency development and career growth (Erasmus, 2020). If this is the case at most universities this can explain the lack of empirical data on identifying competencies for staff positions. An even greater problem is the lack of research studies being conducted on staff to address professional development and career
growth. Since there are few studies, it is difficult to even know if a comprehensive list of competencies has been developed for a functional unit and across functional units at similar career levels.

**RQ3 – How are competencies and skills developed in LDP participants at 4-year public research institutions?**

After leaders at 4-year public research institutions identify competencies and skills required of LDP participants, the next step is to assess the gaps between the current skills and the required skills. Then, the next step is planning and implementing leadership development programs to lessen the gap. The purpose of leadership development is “the expansion of a person’s capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes. One way of expanding a person’s leadership capacity includes helping to develop knowledge, skills and abilities that the organization values regarding leadership traits” (Day, 2007, p. 18).

Wisniewski (2004) outlined a way to implement a leadership development program in higher education. In the study, the leadership development program incorporated knowledge about the institutional culture and structure; reviewed various leadership theories; provided opportunities for development to demonstrate mastery of knowledge and competencies; addressed the development of a personal leadership philosophy; and, suggested a variety of directed learning experiences, including small group discussions and role playing (Wisniewski, 2004).
According to the literature, there are a myriad of ways to develop skills and competencies, ranging from formal to informal and internal to external. High potential talent can be developed through coaching, mentoring, experiential learning, classroom learning, and, job assignment rotations (Day, 2007; Luna, 2012; Rothwell, 2016). For example, in Luna (2012), the study addressed leadership planning for mid-level to senior level higher education administrators and concluded the participants appreciated having a wide array of leadership development options to hone their skills. The participants noted external options such as conferences, workshops and seminars, and internal options such as coaching and mentoring. Groves (2007), suggested leadership development programs should be done jointly with succession planning. By using this type of approach, the participants including the managers, supervisors and staff are actively engaged in identifying the skills to be developed and are all responsible for identifying career pathways (Groves, 2007).

Two similar but not identical methods, mentoring and coaching are often used in LDPs. Mentoring and coaching are used to help with competency development. Traditionally, mentoring occurs through formal or informal means when a more senior person or employee assists a junior level person or employee to grow personally and professionally in a role (Day, 2007). According to Groves (2007), a pervasive mentoring relationship includes four things: 1) contributes to the network of mentors across the organization and across units; 2) addresses career planning; 3) identifies strengths and areas of improvement; and, 4) incorporates competency development. In Lankau and
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Scandura (2002), the study addressed antecedents and consequences related to personal learning in mentoring relationships. The consequences addressed job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The study found mentors (through role modeling and providing support) can have a positive impact on helping mentees develop competencies. Coaching is not the same as mentoring. After taking a 360-degree assessment, a coach may be assigned to help the person analyze the results for skill deficits, develop an action plan, identify leadership development programs to hone skills and conduct a follow-up assessment to gauge progress (Day, 2007). A notable difference between mentoring and coaching is that mentoring is usually for a longer term and creates a deeper working relationship between the parties (Chang, Longman & Franco, 2014).

**RQ4 -** What are the positive outcomes on LDP participants and organizations post participation in leadership development programs at 4-year public research institutions?

A primary reason for implementing leadership development programs is to help an institution meet its mission, strategic priorities and organizational goals. Not only does implementation help the organization, but it helps individual employees attain personal goals. In the literature, there are positive outcomes post participation: organizational stability, leadership congruence and the creation of a diverse talent pool (Gordon & Overbey, 2018). Other reasons to implement leadership development programs “include building morale, lowering institutional expenses, increasing employee skills, eliminating confusion and maintaining a competitive edge over other schools, colleges and universities” (Gordon & Overbey, 2018, p. 176). In Groves (2007), it was
noted that leadership development through effective mentorship positively impacts outcomes such as “enhanced job performance, greater promotions and compensation, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and reduces turnover intentions” (p. 244).

Black and Earnest (2009) addressed a gap in the literature by assessing program effectiveness based on positive outcomes. More specifically, the study sought to measure the amount of change in a participant pre-and-post participation. Measuring outcomes is done in a three-fold manner: episodic, developmental or transformative. In episodic, the outcomes are well-defined and bound by time, whereas developmental outcomes occur across time and intervals, and transformative outcomes are sustaining and demonstrate a significant change in behavior (Black & Earnest, 2009). According to Grove et al. (2005), in comparison to organizational outcomes, individual outcomes are “where most of the direct benefits of leadership development occur and where the most program-associated results might be expected” (p. 192). The positive outcomes for the LDP participants were: “increased confidence, increased communications skills, better ability to network, and more awareness of cultural factors” (Black & Earnest, 2009, p. 192). In Black and Earnest (2009), the positive outcomes for the organization were: “improvement in networking, improved understanding of the ‘big picture,’ better communications skills in business, and improved management skills” (p. 194).

If barriers are not identified and addressed, this can inhibit implementation of leadership development programs. If the implementation is hampered, then the anticipated positive outcomes may not be achieved. The barriers include too busy with
day-to-day activities to implement; rapid pace of change makes implementation difficult; too much paperwork; lack of resources (Ip & Jacobs, 2006; Rothwell, 2016); shared governance and the decentralization of schools/colleges which is not conducive to fostering a culture for leadership development programs to thrive (Clunies, 2007; Luna, 2012); and, employees reluctant to change and grow (Pynes, 2004).

Table 4 below highlights some of the ways to identify and assess positive outcomes of LDPs on organizational and individual goals. In our study, we asked the participants for their perceptions on how leadership development programs positively impacted organizational and individual goals.

Table 4

Constructs and Definitions for Outcomes of Leadership Development Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>“…the contentment of the employees because of their jobs.”</td>
<td>Adenike (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover Intentions</td>
<td>Employees who are engaged in helping organizations meet their goals and motivating colleagues are more committed and less likely to leave an organization or to stay and not contribute to meeting goals.</td>
<td>Anitha (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Climate</td>
<td>“…it is a summary perception derived from a body of interconnected experiences with organizational policies, practices and procedures and observations of what is rewarded, supported, and expected in the organization with these summary perceptions becoming meaningful and shared based on the natural interactions of people with each other.”</td>
<td>Schneider, Ostroff, Gonzalez, and West (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Commitment</td>
<td>&quot;An affective or emotional attachment to the organization such that the strongly committed individual with, is included in and enjoys membership in the organization.&quot;</td>
<td>Shore and Wayne (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for Promotion</td>
<td>An opportunity for workers to increase salary or work responsibilities or advancement to more senior roles within the organization or become more proficient in current roles.</td>
<td>Gillespie, Balzer, Brodke, Garza, and Gerbec (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Morale</td>
<td>“…defined as an intangible concept that refers to how positive and supportive a group feels toward the organization to which it belongs; Other aspects on which to focus would be to identify training and development needs.”</td>
<td>Haddock (2010); Ngambi, (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced Institutional Knowledge</td>
<td>“…Institutional knowledge entails understanding the regulative, normative and cultural frameworks that undergird social life and constitute the unnoticed background of social behavior; The theory of knowledge conversion assumes that an organization creates, converts, and transfers knowledge through a spiral process involving four steps, socialization, combination, externalization and internalization; Socialization: the transfer of tacit knowledge through shared experiences such as mentoring and on-the-job training.”</td>
<td>Jaervick-Will and Levitt (2010); Nonaka (1994)</td>
</tr>
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CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

Research Method

In the literature, qualitative research is appropriate for answering how and why questions (Myers, 2013). As a primary benefit, qualitative research allows a researcher to conduct an in-depth study on a narrowly tailored topic within one or a few organizations (Myers, 2013). As a disadvantage, given that the sample size is so small, it is difficult to generalize. It may be challenging to generalize from a sample to a population, but one can generalize from qualitative research to build a descriptive model or to build theory (Myers, 2013). The premise of our qualitative study was for 4-year public research institutions to build descriptive models to identify institutional characteristics, explore needed competencies, address competency development and assess positive outcomes on individual and organizational goals. It is believed by learning how a few 4-year public research institutions have put leadership development programs into practice and the pitfalls they had to avoid, it will help other higher education institutions implement succession planning and leadership development programs to groom talent.

Research Design

For the research study, we used triangulation for greater reliability and validity of the data. Triangulation posits using more than one research method. It allows the researcher to study leadership development programs from multiple vantage points to glean a fuller picture of what is happening (Myers, 2013). In this case, we triangulated the data gleaned from the semi-structured interviews with data obtained from secondary
sources (e.g., documents, websites, forms, etc.) to gain a fuller understanding of the practice of developing talent. For example, we reviewed institutional forms (found on the website) to identify skill and competency requirements that University #1 has for their LDP participants. Moreover, the university has a toolkit on the website for managers containing seven forms to help with succession planning. In talking with the participants, we wanted to know how they used the forms to identify competencies. Most commonly, some of the supervisors and managers used the position competency template form during initial meetings with the LDP participants to create a development plan for skill development. In addition, we reviewed websites to identify the core components of the leadership development programs. We asked the participants to verify the core components of the leadership development programs to ascertain if there was alignment between the information on the website and the responses of the participants. For example, we reviewed the website of each university to learn the details about the selection process. At University #2, the LDP participants had to be nominated by the senior leader in the unit even if that person was not the direct supervisor. The LDP participants corroborated the information on the website about the nomination process.

The HR leaders at one university presented its succession planning process during a webinar for a national HR organization. As a form of triangulation, we watched the webinar, and used it as the basis to ask questions of the participants to see if the process they participated in aligned with the information shared in the webinar.
Semi-Structured Interviews

There are advantages in employing semi-structured interviews. For instance, semi-structured interview questions allow for consistency across multiple interviews. In addition, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to ask probing questions to get more detailed information and the interviews allow for a new line of inquiry (Myers, 2013). In our study, the semi-structured interviews provided structure and allowed for improvisation. We asked semi-structured questions and relevant questions related to the roles and experiences of each participant and about the role of the president, administrative leaders and staff. The individual interviews lasted between 35 and 120 minutes with the participants. For collecting the data, we recorded (via audio or video or both) the interviews and took handwritten notes. For one interview, the recording was interrupted, so we relied solely on the handwritten notes. After conducting the interviews, we organized and categorized the notes to capture emerging themes. Appendix A identifies the semi-structured questions that we developed to gather data about demographics, institutional characteristics, needed competencies, competency development and positive outcomes on individual and organizational goals. It should be noted, we asked similar questions of the search firm consultants to glean their perceptions on demographics, institutional characteristics, needed competencies, competency development and positive outcomes on individual and organizational goals.
Pilot

Pilot studies help researchers to develop relevant questions and clarify conceptual issues related to research design (Yin, 2017). In preparation for the semi-structured interviews, we conducted two pilot interviews with the chair of our dissertation committee (who was a former dean and currently serves as interim dean) and a fellow classmate (who was a former administrative campus leader in HR) to enhance and refine our semi-structured interview questions.

Case Studies

As a way of presenting the findings to scholars and practitioners, we adopted an interpretive case study model. In the literature, an acceptable way of classifying qualitative research falls within three categories: positivist, interpretive and critical (Myers, 2013). Myers (2013) asserted that, “interpretive researchers assume that access to reality is only through social constructions such as language, shared meanings and instruments” (p. 39). Moreover, Myers (2013) contended that “interpretive researchers tend to focus on meaning in context, since the context is what defines the situation and makes it what it is” (p. 39). In studying leadership development programs, we figuratively stood “inside” the organization to understand the context and culture of the organization to foster or prohibit the success of leadership development programs. Case studies were developed from the data we collected to enrich the understanding of scholars and practitioners about leadership development programs at 4-year public research institutions. Also, our case studies highlight examples of succession planning found at
each university. According to Myers (2013), “Case studies can be used in the exploratory phase of a research topic to discover the relevant features, factors or issues that might apply in other similar situations” (p. 75).

Sample

In the study, we interviewed participants who had been involved with leadership development programs so we can gain firsthand information about their perceptions of the programs. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 24 participants, from 3 universities and 2 search firms. We sent emails to request participation. See Appendix B for the recruitment letter.

The three public research institutions were selected because of their reputation within higher education for having formal leadership development programs. Furthermore, we wanted to learn about their implementation processes, and their successes and failures.

University #1- This is a public research university that was founded in the 1700s, and it is comprised of the flagship campus with ten undergraduate colleges and eleven graduate colleges. It hosts almost 28,000 students from all 50 states and more than 100 foreign countries. The head of the university came back from another university to begin his tenure as the head of the university system in 2019. The chief human resources officer at one of the affiliated campuses and an executive director of HR for the system implemented leadership development programs for varying levels of employees under the
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span of their control for the system and for an individual campus. The system level executive leadership program has a nomination process.

University #2 – The institution is designated as a flagship public research university and it was founded in the 1800s and had nearly 25,000 students enrolled last year. The head of the university returned to the school in 2018, after serving for five years as dean at another institution. In 2014, the institution launched a leadership development program. Cohorts are selected annually (through a nomination process) and span the academic enterprise. The program has eleven half-day classroom sessions based on theory application and tools, exposure to leadership, individual mentoring and presentation of a team project at the graduation exercise for the program. The university has a leadership development program for faculty and mid-career (and higher) administrators. The program has a nomination process and meets monthly at a designated off campus location.

University #3 – The system began in the 1930s. The system has a large student enrollment, of nearly 320,000 students, and 48,000 faculty. The system is divided into four categories: research universities, regional comprehensive universities, state universities, and state colleges. The head of the system began her tenure in 2017. The university has a center that is comprised of three leadership development programs, including one for executive leadership. The system emphasizes a skills-based approach to professional development for its leaders. The program contains: a nomination process, 360-degree assessments, cohort meetings, cross mentoring (peer-to-peer across functional
Grooming Talent for Higher Education

areas), job shadowing and reflective learning through journaling. A former head of the system had been a huge proponent of leadership development programs and implemented a program during his tenure.

Throughout the industry and based on our own experience, the two search firms in the study are prominent search firms in hiring presidents and senior leaders within higher education. The first search firm proclaims itself as a global leader in the search industry with more than 50 years of experience. The firm is recognized as an industry leader in higher education recruitment for such positions as dean, vice president, provost and president. The second search firm has been in business since the 1980s and has offices in four locations across the United States. In conducting 300 searches a year, the most comprehensive and largest specialty area (greater than 50% of their business) is in assisting the gamut of higher education institutions find leaders in key positions such as dean, vice president, provost and president. The participant from the first search firm has experience working with higher education institutions to implement succession planning and leadership development programs. The participant from the second search firm has published articles on leadership development and succession planning.

**Qualitative Data Analysis**

In the aggregate, we had twelve (12) members who were LDP participants (those being developed or groomed) and we had twelve (12) participants who were affiliated with the leadership development programs. We had seventeen (17) women and seven (7) men, six (6) Black and eighteen (18) Caucasian, four (4) under age 40 and twenty (20)
Grooming Talent for Higher Education

The 22 participants representing universities had varying degrees of involvement in leadership development programs at their institutions. We had eighteen (18) administrative leaders, four (4) staff and two (2) search firm consultants to participate in the study. Some were supervisors implementing leadership development programs, others, HR/organization and development/provost office representatives assisting the supervisors and employees with implementation, still others were LDP participants being groomed, and a few were mentors or project sponsors for the LDP participants and one (1) was an executive champion of the program. The participants represented a wide range of employees, from those early in their careers to middle level administrative leaders to a few senior administrative leaders. For the universities, the participants represented several functional areas, including human resources, organizational development, marketing, facilities, investigations, parks and recreation, office of the provost, and, architecture. Of the twelve, (12) LDP participants, eight (8) were administrative leaders and four (4) were staff members. Furthermore, of the twelve (12) LDP participants, the three (3) from University #3 had served in faculty roles, two (2) were tenured and one (1) had been an adjunct. Only one (1) participated in the leadership development program as a faculty member and the other two (2) were going through the leadership development program in the current year of the study and were already administrative leaders. University #1 and University #2 did not have LDP participants that came from the faculty ranks. For the two (2) participants representing the search firms, both served as senior partners and had longstanding careers (each
greater than 20 years) conducting searches for leaders in higher education and were knowledgeable about leadership development programs across the sector. One (1) of the search firm participants had been a faculty member before joining the firm. Table 5 highlights the demographic information of each participant.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Position Type</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Age (&lt;or =40 or &gt;40)</th>
<th>Involvement with LD Program</th>
<th>University (1, 2, or 3) or Firm (1 or 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Provost/OD/HR</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barb</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>=40</td>
<td>HR &amp; LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna</td>
<td>Associate Vice Chancellor</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Provost/OD/HR &amp; Supervisor</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurt</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>HR &amp; LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy</td>
<td>Content Specialist</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tara</td>
<td>Assistant Vice Chancellor</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Octavia</td>
<td>Content Specialist</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lance</td>
<td>Executive Vice Chancellor</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Champion</td>
<td>Univ. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chara</td>
<td>Senior Project Associate</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena</td>
<td>Assistant Vice Provost</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Provost/OD/HR</td>
<td>Univ. #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerry</td>
<td>Senior Planner</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>LDP Participant</td>
<td>Univ. #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Admin Leader</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>Univ. #2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Coding

We used coding for analyzing the data to find emerging themes related to institutional characteristics, needed competencies, competency development, and positive outcomes on individual and organizational goals of leadership development programs.

Miles and Huberman (1994), articulated that “codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential data collected during a study” (p. 167). We employed a thematic analysis approach for coding the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). We began by searching for key words, phrases and concepts through reading the transcripts and listening to the recordings to categorize themes across the interviews and triangulate with secondary data sources. The emerging themes identified by the participants were
compared to the results of the literature review. See Appendix D to learn more about the coding approach. In the next chapter, we will reveal the themes for each research question. For inter rater agreement, we had a DBA peer independently code five of the transcripts from the semi-structured interviews. We used Atlas.ti 8 Windows software version 8.4.24.0. to help catalog and ensure a “chain of custody” of the data.

**Ethics in Conducting Research**

It is important to adhere to ethical standards in conducting research. As such, we maintained acceptable practices related to trustworthiness (O’Leary, 2009); credibility (Merriam, 1998); plagiarism, permission to publish and informed consent (Myers, 2013) in conducting the research study. We sent the informed consent form to the participants ahead of the interviews. Because of COVID-19, many of the participants resorted to working from home, so some of the participants did not have access to a scanner to return the endorsed consent form. At the beginning of the interviews, we asked for any questions and obtained oral consent on the recording of the interviews. (See Appendix C for the Informed Consent form.)
CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to explore how succession planning and leadership development programs have been implemented within 4-year public research institutions. We formulated four research questions centered around facets of leadership development programs: institutional characteristics, needed competencies, competency development and positive outcomes.

For context, the section below explains the background and evolution of succession planning and leadership development programs at each university. The data supported that leadership development programs were serving as de facto succession planning programs. The universities described their programs as succession planning, but they were leadership development programs to prepare for career advancement or career enrichment. By making this transition, this enhanced the focus of the study to include leadership development programs and leadership development. In this section, for each university, we provide examples of informal succession planning.

Background of Leadership Development Programs at the Universities

University #1

The university has a cohort based executive leadership development program, and another program for more junior level employees to develop competencies for their current roles and to fill vacancies. As stipulated by the university, both types of programs are referred to as succession planning. The university launched the cohort-based executive leadership program at the system in 2018-19, to focus on developing
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high potential talent for leadership positions. According to the website, the program was designed to create “a comprehensive leadership development institute to prepare internal candidates for succession to senior leadership roles within the University.” The board was very concerned about the looming retirement of some key senior leaders (up to 40%), so requested the president serve as champion and sponsor of succession planning/leadership development. The institution started the process by having the chief human resources officers (representing all of the campuses within the system) take part in training. After the training, the chief human resources officer at one of the campuses, approached the executive vice president at the campus. He endorsed the concept, so it started with his direct reports (in the non-academic units) grooming their direct reports. As part of the process, the chief HR officer provided training and a how-to notebook (complete with forms) to equip the managers and supervisors for implementation in their respective units. At this university, there are pockets of informal and formal leadership development. Parenthetically, succession planning/leadership development, at this university is not meant to groom high potential talent for a specific position but to groom for a broad swath or category of positions. Below illustrates an example of succession planning.

University #1 – Planning to Retire within Three Years

For a small unit at the university, with one manager, an assistant manager and two coordinators, the manager, Kurt is planning to retire within the next three years, so he is grooming his coordinators for future positions and the assistant manager to be prepared to
compete for his role. Initially, when the chief human resources officer discussed the concept of succession planning, he was less than enthusiastic and saw it as another chore to perform, but soon thereafter he saw the benefits for his staff. He commented,

this [can] be something to help them in their professional career at another university and another area. Uh, you know, this isn't just, you're not doing this just for [the university], I guess. See you're doing this also for you and your career and this may help you, even branch out and go into a different area somewhere else. So I think we didn't push it as, Hey, we need you, we need you to do this for [the university]. It's gonna make you more valuable.

The manager expressed the employees were receptive because they saw succession planning as an opportunity to,

develop more professionally... and then I think as they saw the possibility within our institution, that was probably the most motivating because I'll be leaving in approximately three years.

Although he had always been a staunch advocate for developing his staff, succession planning was new, so he relied on consulting with the HR staff to implement the process in his unit. The assistant manager who would be vying for the manager’s position, according to the manager, can be a good fit to assume his role after his departure because she has a master’s degree and has undergone a lot of training inside and outside the university. The manager approached the assistant manager to “get some legitimate things in her corner to move into this position.” If the assistant manager moves into the manager’s role, then it can be the domino effect because her position as assistant manager would be vacant and the other two coordinators can compete for it. The manager implemented a leadership development plan by meeting individually with the assistant
manager and the two coordinators to develop a plan and a timeline to complete the
process within a year. The staff members honed their skills by attending conferences and
webinars, and, participating in online training endorsed by professional associations.
Although the leadership development plan has ended, the manager continues to work on
professional growth with each employee during the annual review and periodically
throughout the year. According to the manager, the three employees have expressed no
intent to leave the unit and have strong job satisfaction. The manager has seen growth in
the employees. For example, the assistant manager went to a conference as part of the
leadership development plan and upon her return she implemented a new program into
their portfolio of activities.

University #2

As part of a former president’s strategic plan, a program was initiated to address
succession planning. Arguably, the program is not succession planning, but instead it is a
leadership development program. A participant noted succession planning was not
intended to groom individuals to assume particular positions, rather its purpose is to
prepare individuals to become better leaders and managers. The university offers at least
two leadership development programs, one under the guidance of human resources, for
staff members identified as high potential employees and one led by the office of the
provost for faculty and middle-level (and higher) administrative leaders. For the study,
most of the participants had some involvement with the program for staff and we
interviewed only two participants in the program for more senior leaders and faculty.
The directors of the two programs meet to discuss common elements and distinctions of their programs. At this university, we identified only informal succession planning where individuals were being groomed to take on part of all of the responsibilities of a role. Leadership development was taking place at multiple levels. Below illustrates examples of succession planning.

University #2 — Three Examples of Succession Planning – Within One Center

The director, Beth, assumed her role after a long-serving director had retired and there was a lapse of about one year between permanent directors. A senior leader responsible for the division and other departments served in the interim role but did not have much time for the day-to-day operations. In a department of almost 20 staff members, there were a few impending retirements because many people had been in the unit for a long time. In relatively short order, Beth put in place three successions within her unit.

Succession Example #1 – Identified, Selected and Groomed for New Role

Shortly after the new director arrived, she had a manager who “started talking about she was getting ready to retire.” The director had assessed the skills of a potential successor to replace the manager. The director approached the potential successor to gauge her interest and encouraged her to apply for the position, she did and was selected for the role. In addition, the successor needed to acquire a professional certification, which she had already begun to work on with her predecessor as her supervisor. It took a while for the successor to get to know and understand the expectations of this new
director and to learn how the director would support the successor in dealing with “bad actors” and under-performing employees. The director was concerned that the successor would move into the new role and continue to do things the way the predecessor had done, but the director pointed out that has not been the case. She has made some changes and improvements and the director agrees and supports the changes.

Succession Example #2 – Identified, Selected and Phased-In Succession over Period of Time

Not long after the first person announced her looming retirement, another person did the same thing in the unit, but this manager wanted to do a phased-in retirement over a couple of years. Similar to the previous case, once the manager announced her intentions to retire, the director started to assess the talent in the unit and thought of a person to groom to succeed the current manager. The director went to her supervisor who had been in the acting role before her arrival and shared her thoughts on a potential successor and her boss agreed with her. She even received permission from the boss to promote the potential successor without a search. Once the incumbent had worked out a timeline for her retirement, she also identified the potential successor as a good replacement. The director approached the potential successor and shared with her in confidence the incumbent’s plan to retire and shared she thought the potential successor would be “a good candidate” to assume the role. To the director’s knowledge, there was one other candidate who was vying for the incumbent’s role, but the director believed that she was over qualified for the position and her personality was not a good fit for the
position. This person has recently found a position better suited for her abilities at another university. For this position, the director modified the job description to better meet the needs of the institution and the skills and interests of the successor, so it is not the same position as the one the incumbent had.

During the transition year, the incumbent mentored the successor and helped her through job shadowing to learn parts of the role that did not change. In the role of mentor, the director only wanted the incumbent to work on the technical skills because the incumbent was not adept at soft skills. In preparation for success in this new role, the successor took classes to learn the systems of the university. At the end of the year, the incumbent stepped down from full time employment and the successor took the reins. The incumbent moved into another role for the remaining year of her tenure to complete assigned projects for the director. The director believes it was difficult for the incumbent to watch the successor move into the role. It should be noted, the director told the successor, “you need to do things, don’t break the rules, but you need to do things the way you need to.” One of the most difficult challenges for the successor has been supervising a former peer, so they are still working out this issue.

Succession Example #3 – Only One Person Can Perform a Specialized Role.

Incumbent needed to be Out and Short Term Replacement

Just recently the director was talking with a colleague in HR and the person coined the term, in organizations we often “choose a single point of failure” because we do not train more than one person to perform a critical function of someone’s role that
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can harm the institution if the person was unable to perform that function. The director highlighted the single point of failure scenario in her own team:

until like two months ago they were literally the only person in the center, who could do a job. And they came to me and said that someone on their team was interested in being trained to do this job, but that someone had spent all of their professional development money already for the year. And there was a training, they can do and it would cost like $300 and I said, send them.

The person took part in the training in February and the incumbent was diagnosed with an illness in mid-March, so the person had received the training just-in-time to step in on a short term basis to perform an essential function for the unit. If the incumbent left the unit, the director is not sure she would name the short term replacement as the permanent successor. The director would need to spend some time with the short term successor to learn more about his “philosophy, perspective and approach and having them match up with the overall needs and mission of the center.” Furthermore, this person is very good at his own role and part of what makes him successful in that role “can be a detriment in a supervisory role.”

University #3

A prior president, who came from the business world, initiated leadership development for executive leaders, those at the level of dean (and higher) at the campuses and the system office. Although he has been gone for several years, as a remnant from his tenure, the leadership development program has remained intact for greater than ten years, and the focus and delivery of the content has remained constant. Recently, the leadership has transitioned from being led by human resources to a newly created unit
(under the learning and organizational development division) with all new staff members. It is being assessed for continuous improvement. At this university, successful participants after completing the leadership development program are placed on a list for “stretch assignments” and interim appointments. Below illustrates an example of succession planning.

University #3 – Leadership Development Program Groomed for Interim Assignments

In her role as a tenured faculty member, Tammy, was nominated and accepted into the leadership development program in 2014. As part of the program, she participated in a job shadowing experience that allowed her to spend 40 hours with someone not from a campus but at a system level so she could glean a better understanding of the role of the system. She cited, “this was kind of a pivotal time for me personally and professionally and that I was ready to try something new.” During her time in the leadership development program at the system, she was running a leadership institute on her campus, a part of the search committee for the new president on her campus and co-leading the reaffirmation process for her campus, so “all of those things expanded my perspective” beyond just a faculty perspective. She increased her knowledge even more by shadowing the vice chancellor for strategy and fiscal affairs to understand system operations. After completing the leadership development program, the vice chancellor whom she had shadowed called her in the spring of 2016 to discuss serving as interim president. During the interim assignment she learned about campus consolidations, and was prepared at the end of her administrative appointment to return to
her tenured faculty position at her home campus, but received a call about serving another campus as interim president, so ended up serving in that role for six months.

After the second tour of duty as interim president, the chancellor (who heads the system) approached her about serving in the lead role for this new unit at the system as the vice chancellor for leadership and institutional development. In this new role, she has inherited oversight responsibility for the executive leadership program that was the impetus for so many professional opportunities afforded to her. In this new unit, she has two direct reports and they were (at the time of the study) current participants in the leadership development program that they help to oversee.

**Results of Research Questions**

**RQ1** – What are the institutional characteristics needed for the creation of leadership development programs (LDPs) at 4-year public research institutions?

We crafted interview questions for the university participants and the search firm participants. In general, the two sets of questions were remarkably similar with minor adaptations to reflect the difference in the audience.

Table 6

*Research Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Sub-Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1 – Institutional Characteristics</td>
<td>Making a commitment</td>
<td>1A. Commitment of board members&lt;br&gt;1B. Commitment of president and senior leaders&lt;br&gt;1C. Commitment of managers and supervisors&lt;br&gt;1D. Commitment of LDP participants and other stakeholders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based upon the role, involvement and vantage point of the participant, each person was asked to identify their perceptions on needed institutional characteristics for the implementation of an effective leadership development program. Our research themes are codified in Table 6 – see above.
Table 7

Institutional Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making a commitment</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicating resources</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulating reasons for the programs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating policies and procedures</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying positions</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=24, 100% participation

**Theme 1 - Making a Commitment**

In the research study, as highlighted in Table 7, 16 of the 24 participants (representing seven LDP participants and nine other participants) identified making a firm commitment as a central institutional characteristic of leadership development programs. Commitment connotes buy-in and support for successful implementation. The participants cited that commitment is required by a number of stakeholders, including board members, the president and senior leaders, managers and supervisors, LDP participants and co-workers of LDP participants.

**Sub-Theme 1A - Commitment of Board Members**

For the position of president, Ed, from Search Firm #2, remarked one of the primary duties of the board is to ensure someone is groomed to take over the role of president because you never know when there will be a vacancy, for voluntary or involuntary reasons. Lance, from University #1, indicated his board was not incredibly
involved, other than to make the initial request of the former president to start a leadership development program. Although the board was not actively engaged, according to Lance, it is important for the board to be involved in leadership development of the president. Lance further stressed the board should be “looking[at] this person and saying, does this person have the character, temperament, organizational credibility to really be the number one person,” and, the board should ensure that the number one person is grooming the second in command or another senior leader to assume his/her duties, if the need should arise.

**Sub-Theme 1B - Commitment of President and Senior Leaders**

As has been mentioned, for all three of the institutions, a former president started a leadership development program to groom talent. At present, there are varying levels of support from the current presidents, from requesting an assessment of the value of the program (University #1) to participating in graduation exercises (University #2) to conducting a session for the participants on the landscape of higher education (University #3) to participating as a participant in a leadership development program (University #3). Of the two universities that have campuses as part of a system, there are campus presidents that are not supportive. Senior leaders have varying levels of support for the programs. For example, Kerry, from University #2, shared that although her boss was very supportive, her boss’s boss (a senior leader) was at best agnostic about her participation, “my boss's boss barely has time to talk to my boss…and I just don't have a lot of, exposure to her.” One of the participants, Leslie, from University #2, reasoned “it
needs to have senior leadership support, it will only thrive in a place where even if it's not like true succession planning, it's just [leadership] development, I mean you're supporting and growing your people you need that level of commitment.”

Sub-Theme 1C - Commitment of Managers and Supervisors

One participant, Barb, from University #1, framed the importance of the involvement of supervisors and managers this way, “if you don't have the support by your supervisor, you're kind of dead in the water. You need to have somebody to help you when you hit that roadblock, someone to be a kind of cheerleader.” Also, one of the managers, Kurt, from University #1, reflected on how important it was for him to assist his direct report to hone her skills and learn more about his role.

Sub-Theme 1D - Commitment of LDP participants and Other Stakeholders

Seven of the 24 participants (representing three LDP participants and four other participants), mentioned for the success of LDPs, it is essential to have the commitment of the LDP participants. The LDP participants must be committed to attend regularly scheduled meetings, read assigned materials, engage in active discussions, and complete projects and assignments. In addition, a few of the participants emphasized it helps if direct reports and co-workers (of the LDP participants) are supportive. Further, one of the participants, an HR expert and LDP participant, Barb, commented HR can aid by “being sure that we’re staying educated so that we can help everyone as best as possible, so [we must] have our eyes open to new trends and new options.”
Theme 2- Dedicating Resources

Many of the participants, 14 of 24 (representing six LDP participants and eight other participants), asserted the implementation of effective leadership development programs requires significant and dedicated institutional resources - human, financial and technology tools (e.g., forms and software). At Universities #1 and #2, HR is primarily responsible for the oversight of implementation. One participant, Leslie, from University #2, cited that HR should be involved in implementation, “I'm really pleased with how I see leadership development has evolved at the university and what the director [has done to] grow her programs, I think [is] really great.” In another example, the participant David, from University #3, mentioned, “I think there's, within our system a lot of [good] training that comes out of HR” and that training helps with implementation. At University #3, HR had been in charge but now a new sub-unit, organizational development is responsible. It should be noted, all three universities contracted with a vendor to provide all or part of the leadership development programs.

David, Sam, Donna, Kerry and Rhonda expressed some concern about the commitment of new leadership to continue support for the programs. Each of the three universities has provided significant financial resources to support leadership development. For example, at University #1, the former president who started the work and is now retired still provides resources through a grant to support leadership development. Also, according to Sam, from University #1, the first cohort collected and
donated $11,000 of their personal funds to show their appreciation and support for the program.

University #1 has developed a how-to notebook and forms to aid supervisors and managers with implementation. During the interviews, three of the supervisors and managers (Donna, Tara and Kurt) indicated they relied on these tools to help them navigate the unchartered waters of implementation with their direct reports. In one case, a supervisor, Kurt talked extensively about the training that he and the other supervisors received from the chief human resources officer to prepare them for execution. He also talked about the forms in the notebook being particularly helpful, “we went through those with each one and that's some of the things that we did individually. And I think that's maybe what made it a little more personalized” for the direct reports.

**Theme 3 – Articulating Reasons for Implementation and Establishing Programs**

Many of the participants, 14 of 24 (representing six LDP participants and eight other participants), discussed the importance of articulating the purpose and reasons for implementing leadership development programs. The participants believed that the reasons for implementation should be widely communicated to the stakeholders. The reasons ranged from having a competent workforce to replacement planning for retirement (from imminent to three years from now) to having someone (or multiple people) to fill-in when an individual is absent.
Theme 4 - Creating Policies, Procedures and Culture

Fourteen participants (representing seven LDP participants and seven other participants) mentioned it is important to create policies, procedures and the right culture as a condition for implementation of leadership development programs. Chad, from Search Firm #1, asserted that for effective programs to thrive, “it is important to provide a culture, environment, policies and procedures where those kind of experiences can occur.” Donna and Sam, both from University #1, developed a comprehensive plan for implementation. The facets of the plan include: 1) identifying a senior leader to serve as a champion, 2) training for HR professionals to guide implementation, and, 3) training for managers and supervisors (with a manual and forms) to equip them for implementation in their departments/units.

Theme 5 - Identifying Positions

Twelve participants (representing five LDP participants and seven other participants) noted that institutions must identify which positions should be groomed. By identifying the positions, the supervisors or leaders of the unit can determine the present and future requirements, key functions and skills required for the positions. In identifying the positions, one of the participants, David, from University #3, cited from his prior work with a four-year private institution, he looked at areas that lacked redundancy (only one person knew how to perform the role or functions) and suggested,

We really identified some core positions that [we] couldn't live without, because we only had so many resources and then to make sure that those positions were going to be valid or, or necessary … and so that was the piece that told us where we may need to invest.
Along a similar vein as redundancy, the chief human resources officer, Donna at University #1, indicated she worked with all of her supervisors and staff positions, particularly the ones which she had very little knowledge about their functions and duties. She identified the top five functions or duties of those roles and that formed the basis of the development plan for the employees. According to Donna, the intent was not for the LDP participants to develop their skills to move into a particular role, rather she was developing her direct reports to fill in on a short term or interim basis.

The purpose of research question one was to examine institutional characteristics to successfully implement leadership development programs. On the other hand, it is also crucial to know what can serve as barriers to successful implementation. In this next section, we address barriers to implementation – see Table 8.

**Table 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of capacity</td>
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<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear talent will depart</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of leadership support</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not foster diversity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation of advancement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N=24, 100% participation*
Theme 6 - Barriers to Implementation

Just as important as it is to know the positive institutional characteristics that are likely to lead to success, it is equally important to know the negative institutional characteristics or barriers that can prevent successful implementation or lessen the impact of implementation. See Appendix E for a comprehensive review of the barriers identified by the participants.

Sub-Theme 6A – Lack of Capacity

The participants cited many barriers and the most prevalent by 8 of 24 participants (representing five LDP participants and three other participants) was a lack of capacity to conduct leadership development programs. A few of the participants, Rhonda, David, Donna, and Tammy, the ones who are responsible for implementation, saw a lack of capacity as a barrier. It requires human resources to operationalize leadership development programs. David, from University #3, offered that “you are mired in the day-to-day functions, that you don’t have time to implement.”

A few of the participants indicated the time commitment (lack of capacity) was a concern for LDP participants. For example, Mary, from University #2, mentioned that for some of the participants, the time commitment to attend the monthly meetings, meet with mentors and complete projects hampered participation. Moreover, Olivia, from University #2, believed that more than two members dropped out of the program because of the time commitment. David, from University #3, cited people will argue they do not have time for leadership development activities, such as coaching. He believes that if
you don’t proactively work to grow your skillset and competencies, “you can be bandaiding, rather than addressing key issues.” He believes this mindset is a huge barrier for would-be participants.

**Sub-Theme 6B – Fear Talent will Depart**

Six of the participants (representing two LDP participants and four other participants) cited fear of talent departure as a barrier to implementation. For some self-serving supervisors, according to Chad and David (from Search Firm #1 and University #3), the supervisor may not want high potential talent to grow because the employees will want to seek new opportunities and the manager or supervisor does not want the talent to leave because they will not be able to make the manager or supervisor look good.

Donna, from University #1, commented that the exorbitant cost for a supervisor to develop talent can be an impediment to implementation. She indicated she spent between $10,000 - $15,000 on certifications and conferences for one employee, so she believes that institutions do not want to or cannot afford to spend that amount of money, particularly in tough economic times. Further, Donna suggested because it takes a lot of money to develop talent, institutions are leery to develop talent because they can leave the organization. David, from University #3, shared a similar concern about losing talent.

**Sub-Theme 6C – Lack of Leadership Support**

Five of the participants (representing two LDP participants and three other participants) mentioned that lack of support serves as a barrier to implementation. Sam, from University #1, voiced that with the presidential transition, “finding sponsorship by
leadership has been an issue.” Donna, from University #1, commented that she has been the catalyst for succession planning at her campus and is concerned that when she leaves no one else at a senior level will embrace and carry on the work. Kerry, from University #2, cited concerns that the new president may not be as committed as the former president, who started the leadership program, but the new leader has shown some level of support by attending the graduation ceremony and giving a short speech.

**Sub-Theme 6D- Does not Foster Diversity**

Per a few of the participants, Lance, Chad, Lena and Rhonda (all four represent other participants), in selecting the candidates, stated that it may lead to more of the same type of leader and not foster diversity in the pool of potential leaders. Lance, from University #1, shared it can be “the good old boy network” which would exclude women and minorities. Similarly, Chad, from Search Firm #1, shared the candidates are sometimes selected based on loyalty to the manager and those who will make the manager look good and not out of concern for grooming talent to get to the next level. This negates searching for talent based on their ability. Moreover, Lance cited we need to be mindful of putting minority candidates in pools without seriously considering them as viable candidates for leadership development opportunities. In a contrasting view, Rhonda, from University #3, shared if done right, leadership development can be an opportunity to look broadly and transparently at high potential talent within an organization, and not result in “preferential treatment for someone who’s been identified for reasons that may not be well founded.”
Sub-Theme 6E – Expectation of Advancement

Three of the participants (representing one LDP participant and two other participants), Sam, Donna and Chara identified the expectation of LDP participants to automatically advance to a higher position (as a result of participation) as being a concern for some supervisors. This concern prevents them from allowing their direct reports to participate in leadership development programs. Sam, from University #1, noted “some faculty members may have a sense of entitlement, if they go through the program, they should be guaranteed a leadership position and they do not have to compete for it.” Donna, from University #1, shared some participants have the expectation they should earn a higher salary even if they stay in their current role to recognize they have acquired a new set of skills and competencies.

Just like the LDP participants expecting a new position, a supervisor may feel the LDP participant is entitled but cannot promise a promotion. According to Donna and Tom, from University #1, from a supervisor’s standpoint, in some cases, even if the employee is not asking for an advanced position or an increase in salary, a supervisor may be reluctant to ask an employee to participate because there is a scarcity of promotion opportunities. Rhonda, from University #3, suggested that as a supervisor, if you help a new employee acquire new skills, then you should find interim assignments or create opportunities to help them use the new skills.
Grooming Talent for Higher Education

Sub-Theme 6F – Other Barriers to Implementation

Chad, from Search Firm #1, asserted that he has worked with some managers and supervisors and they are concerned about investing in leadership development because employees might decide to stay in their current roles and not assume higher level positions with more authority and responsibility. For Beth, from University #2, the supervisor may be seeking a change from the previous leader. Furthermore, as a supervisor, if you have the predecessor train the LDP participant or if the LDP participant worked under the predecessors’s leadership, the LDP participant may lead the unit like the predecessor was still in place. Sam, from University #1, pointed out some supervisors may not want to promote leadership development programs because they fear they will be questioned about the selection process. In other words, the supervisors will have to answer questions about why that person and not me. Per Kurt, from University #1, it is important for supervisors to understand the value of leadership development programs or else it will be hard to implement. He admitted he did not fully understand the concept, but after a few months, he understood the value and offered a lot of support to his employees. Tom, from University #1, mentioned as a supervisor if you are training more than one person, this can create jealousy or stifle if the participants are aware that multiple people are participating in leadership development programs.

As a barrier, some of the participants needed more guidance on completing their projects. For instance, Olivia, from University #2, commented that some LDP participants were struggling, and might have benefited from meeting more frequently
with the sponsors to ask questions and get feedback. For some participants, it was the first time they had worked on an institutional project. Lena, from University #2, voiced a pitfall of succession planning, an institution can become myopic if you only have internal candidates running an institution.

Some of the participants have argued there was too much or too little paperwork to help with implementation. Donna, from University #1, asserted there could have been too much paperwork and suggested it was the role of HR to assist the supervisors and participants to use the forms and resources effectively. On the other hand, according to Donna, for some units, such as law enforcement, they opted not to use the forms, but they still were doing things related to leadership development or they could have been using the forms and not sharing that information with human resources.

Chad, from Search firm #1, asserted that when his search firm helped an institution create a leadership development program, the first year it was not successful because the program lacked criteria and metrics, “anybody who wanted to could sign up.” David and Tammy, from University #3, purported that leadership development at their institution is reactive and not intentional or strategic, looking at long-term needs. David, shared that “if you don’t have retention of leaders, it is hard to have succession planning [leadership development].” According to Tammy, in working in a system, leadership development programs may require uniformity or approval by the system for customization to address the uniqueness of institutions. As an impediment, Betty, from University #1, mentioned sometimes you cannot act as quickly with implementation
Grooming Talent for Higher Education

because you have to wait for the approval of the corporate office but offered she does understand the reasoning.

**RQ2** – What are the needed competencies and skills for the president, administrative leaders and staff positions at 4-year public research institutions?

We crafted interview questions for the university participants and the search firm participants. In general, the two sets of questions were remarkably similar with minor adaptations to reflect the difference in the audience. Based upon the role, involvement and vantage point of the participant, each person was asked to identify their perceptions of the needed competencies for president, administrative leaders and staff. Table 9 highlights the needed competencies for president and administrative leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9</th>
<th>Needed Competencies for President and Administrative Leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big picture/strategic/driving results</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence/interpersonal skills</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embrace diversity</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to build top management team</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamina</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N=24, 100% participation*
Theme 7 – Competencies

Competencies are defined as skills, knowledge, traits and capabilities that are needed to perform work in an effective manner (Bagadiong, 2013). As part of the leadership development program at University #1, there are forms housed on the website for the supervisors and managers to complete and identify core competencies (executive leadership), position-specific competencies and technical competencies (financial, operational, technological, etc.) for leaders and employees.

Sub-Theme 7A - Competencies for President and Administrative Leaders

As part of its leadership center, University #3 has identified needed competencies for its leaders to display in the workplace. As listed on the website, the needed competencies are integrity and ethics (respect, excellence, transparency and accountability); strategy (leads the vision, system thinking and innovative solutions); engagement (effective communication, customer/student focused, politically savvy), collaboration (high performance teams, determination, inclusiveness) and execution (results driven, data driven decisions, time sensitive plans). For University #1, the needed competencies are those skills needed at the enterprise level or for administrative leaders. Sam characterized those skills as “leading change, leading people, driving results, business acumen and building a coalition.” Many participants, including David and Leslie, from University #3 and University #2, stressed the importance of those in administrative leadership positions to be able to think strategically and understand the “big picture.” Tammy added for University #3, they look for leaders “who are obviously
innovative who are willing to make risky tough decisions and at the same time, learn from [their mistakes] and move forward.” Chad, David, Lena, Olivia, Donna, Mary, Zora and Tammy suggested it is important for leaders to show their humanity by displaying humility and emotional intelligence. David, from University #3, shared it would serve a leader well to be inclusive and have the ability to engage stakeholders with diverse backgrounds and interests. Realizing no leader can do all things and certainly not all things well, Lance and Chad, from University #1 and Search Firm #1, cited the importance of having a president who can build an effective senior administrative leadership team. Zora and David, from University #3, after spending the day with a campus president, emphasized the importance of a president or senior leader having the stamina to be on the move from meeting to meeting and from topic to topic all day long.

Sub-Theme 7B - Competencies for Staff Positions

Nine of the participants (representing six LDP participants and three other participants) suggested teamwork and collaboration skills are important for staff. For those in roles that are highly technical and specialized, the participants indicated it is important to be subject matter experts and it is also important to have “soft skills.” In fact, Donna, from University #1, the chief human resources officer who spearheaded succession planning and leadership development for the campus, including her own unit, offered that to be an effective accountant it is not enough to be competent as an accountant, but the accountant needs to have interpersonal skills and display emotional intelligence. Kurt, from University #1, worked on a broad array of competencies and
areas with his team, including “personal and professional qualities, legal risk management, business management, human resources management and facilities management.” Octavia, from University #1, shared that as a younger professional in her first position, she felt it was important for her to learn project management skills and to develop her skills as a leader, so she can advance in her career. Kerry, from University #2, suggested that it is a great benefit for employees and leaders to understand personality types and how to effectively engage different personality types to optimize efficiency and productivity. Table 10 highlights the needed competencies for staff.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork/collaboration</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject matter expert/technical skills</td>
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<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broad knowledge</td>
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<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence/interpersonal skills</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand personality types</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N=24, 100% participation*

**RQ3** – How are competencies and skills developed in LDP participants at 4-year public research institutions?

We crafted interview questions for the university participants and the search firm participants. In general, the two sets of questions were remarkably similar with minor
adaptations to reflect the difference in the audience. Based upon the role, involvement and vantage point of the participant, each person was asked about activities and opportunities they perceived as being helpful in developing the competencies of LDP participants.

**Theme 8 – Developing Competencies**

As pointed out by the participants, a critical component of leadership development programs is the development of skills. In the literature, there are numerous ways to develop skills through internal mechanisms (leadership development programs, job shadowing, assigned projects, etc.) and external mechanisms (online courses/programs, certifications, conferences, etc.). As a precursor to competency development, personality and psychometric assessments were administered at each university to identify skills gaps. Table 11, summarizes the responses of the participants on ways to develop and refine skills and competencies.
Table 11

*Participants Response to Competency Development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Degree/Certificate</th>
<th>Online Job Shadow</th>
<th>360-Degree Conferences</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Mentoring</th>
<th>Coaching</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Kurt</td>
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</table>

Note. N=23, Lance did not participate.

For University #1, all 10 participants had an active role in the leadership development program, either as an executive sponsor and champion, HR implementer, supervisor or manager, or as a LDP participant. As part of the leadership development
program, each LDP participant was exposed to a range of modalities, from formal degree programs to online learning to conferences. For the campus, the program was not a cohort based model rather it took the form of each supervisor or manager working with their direct reports to create appropriate leadership development plans.

For University #2, all of the participants had some affiliation with 1 of 2 leadership development programs, one is for middle managers and one is for more senior leaders and faculty. Most of the participants (7 of the 8) were associated with the leadership development program for middle managers. In the middle management program, it is a yearlong program and has several key core components for developing leadership skills, including monthly meetings led by senior institutional leaders (e.g., president, provost’s office, etc.) on leadership topics, theory and application, mentoring and an assigned project sponsored by units around campus, but the program does not include a personal development plan. The mentors are at least at the level of director or dean and come from various functional areas and many of whom have been participants in the leadership program. In the program for more senior level employees, there are weekly meetings over the course of a semester to discuss substantive higher education topics.

For University #3, 3 of the 4 participants oversaw the program grooming individuals for senior level roles and the fourth participant was not directly responsible but at one time the program was led by her unit. Three of the four participants were participants in the senior level leadership development program. The leadership
development program is personalized based on the competency needs of the group and the individual members. The program has a cross mentoring program (allows leaders from other functional areas to work with the participants) and has a 40 hour job shadowing requirement of a senior leader. Two of the four participants described job shadowing as a pivotal programmatic element of the program. This university offers coaching by internal staff members for employees at the executive dean level or higher.

**Sub-Theme 8A – Formal Learning**

The participants were proponents of using more than one method for competency development based on a number of factors, including level of expertise and preferred learning style. The participants mentioned formal learning as a method for acquiring new skills and competencies. Formal learning encompasses earning degrees, certificates or credentials from a college or university or training entity in a face-to-face or virtual learning environment. Some of the participants (specifically from University #1) favored learning through online short-term courses offered by such platforms as LinkedIn to gain a fundamental understanding of workplace concepts. Before COVID-19, one of the participants at University #1 mentioned she had recently enrolled in an online graduate degree program because she believed she needed an advanced degree to progress in her career. University #1 offers free tuition for degree completion and many of the participants cited it as a perk of employment.
Sub-Theme 8B – Learning from Others

The participants cited learning from others as a great way to refine and develop new competencies. Learning from others encompasses coaching, mentoring and participating in conferences and professional association meetings to learn new skills and competencies by experts in the field or from those in aspirational roles. One of the greatest benefits is having a mentor, according to Mary, from University #2, “it fosters those kind of relationships…it fosters that safe zone where you can go and lean into and be vulnerable.” Similarly, Kerry, from University #2, was new to the organization and did not want her supervisor who evaluates her to be her mentor, so it was appreciated to have a neutral person help her learn the culture. Chara, from University #2, found mentoring to be the most impactful and beneficial part of the leadership and development program for her growth. Mary asserted that her mentor served as a cheerleader and positive influence. Ultimately, the mentor helped to eradicate her “siloed” understanding of the institution. Olivia, from University #2, looked for a mentor that she “can trust and ask awkward questions.”

Sub-Theme 8C – On-the-Job Learning

The participants endorsed on-the-job learning as a way to enhance competency development. Internal leadership development programs, job shadowing, job rotation, projects and stretch assignments fall under the umbrella of on-the-job learning. Terry, from University #2, indicated the project was the most impactful part of the leadership development program. “I think it was the project because those of who worked on it
cared about what we were doing” and because they were able to secure a grant for it, the members felt like their contribution actually made an impact on the institution. For many participants, a 360-degree assessment helped to identify competencies they needed to work on during the leadership development program. The 360-degree assessment was helpful to learn more about the participants’ own and their colleagues’ personality types and work styles. Chara, from University #2, remarked the 360-degree assessment exercise was helpful in working on the team project and in everyday work roles because the participants learned how to work with people. Kerry, from University #2, saw this as one of the most beneficial parts of the program. According to Terry, from University #2, the monthly meetings with the senior leaders helped the participants understand the big picture, the strategic priorities, and how leaders make enterprise level decisions. Chara, from University #2, concurred with this assessment, as a staff member, it was beneficial to hear from the provost office on the role of a faculty member.

**RQ4** - What are the positive outcomes on LDP participants and organizations post participation in leadership development programs at 4-year public research institutions?

After implementing leadership development programs, organizations must determine if the programs have been effective. By examining post completion perceptions of the LDP participants and other stakeholders (e.g., supervisors) on positive outcomes, this is a way to assess effectiveness of leadership development programs. We crafted interview questions for the university participants and the search firm participants. In general, the two sets of questions were remarkably similar with minor adaptations to
reflect the difference in the audience. Based upon the role, involvement and vantage point of the participant, each person was asked to identify their perceptions of the benefits and positive outcomes of instituting leadership development programs. Table 12 shows the outcomes identified by the participants.

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to quantify</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term replacements</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to know others and networking</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to groom others</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=24, 100% participation

**Theme 9 – Positive Outcomes**

We assert we should measure outcomes of leadership development programs through qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative measures include job satisfaction, employee morale and enhanced confidence in performing work duties. Since public higher education is not a for-profit business, quantitative measures are more difficult to identify. However, the participants did cite a few quantitative measures – increase number of promotions, spend less institutional expenses on searches and shorter time to fill vacancies. Future studies should look for other quantitative measures.
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Sub-Theme 9A – Difficult to Quantify Results

Almost all, 19 of the 24, of the participants, including Kathy, Donna and Rhonda mentioned they had a difficult time articulating quantifiable outcomes associated with participation in leadership development programs in higher education. As an exception, Chad and Ed, from Search Firm #1 and Search Firm #2, noted the cost for conducting searches can be significantly reduced by growing your own talent to assume key leadership roles. Sam, from University #1, indicated since they have only been operating a formal leadership development for a short time, it is difficult to calculate a cost savings, but he is starting to collect data from the LDP participants; some participants comment they are able to find collaborators to save time on completing projects and tasks.

Lena, from University #2, has put measures in place to show tangible results and to justify the program’s existence to her leaders. She has begun to survey the participants to gain input for continuous improvement and to gauge their perceptions on new learning and competencies acquired during the year. Although difficult to quantify the benefits and tangible outcomes, Tammy, from University #3, cited she will know their leadership development programs are successful when each institution in the system has a strong leadership team.

Sub-Theme 9B – Short-Term Replacement Assignments for Vacancies

Per eight of the managers and supervisors, including Donna, Tara, Tom, Kurt, Beth and David (representing two LDP participants and six other participants), they were grooming their employees to take on several key functions of their supervisors, so if a
short-term replacement is needed they would have the talent to assume those roles. For instance, Donna, from University #1, examined all of the leadership roles in the department and identified individuals to cross-train for the five essential functions of each role; it may not be one person learning all five essential functions but may spread the essential functions across multiple people within the unit. Beth, from University #2, conducted a similar approach of identifying essential duties and took it a step further by requiring written operating procedures to document the essential duties.

**Sub-Theme 9C – Promotion Opportunities or Increase in Compensation**

Eight of the participants, including Rhonda, Chara, Terry and Olivia (representing four LDP participants and four other participants), as a measurable outcome, gave examples of individuals who had been promoted after participating in a leadership development program. This helps institutions to fill vacancies in less time and at less cost. Leslie, from University #2, asserted an individual (who was a LDP participant) did advance to the assistant director in his department and another person was promoted to the number two position in a newly created school. In another instance, Leslie shared that one of her mentees is starting now to prepare to succeed her boss who plans to retire in the next three years, so in this case it is too premature to see any movement in position. Furthermore, Sam, from University #1, asserted from the first cohort, 3 and soon-to-be 4 out of 18 participants have been promoted. He went on to reason,

*Can you say it was because of this program, I don't think you can say it's because of the program, but I think you can say that those individuals walked into those promotions with a higher level confidence and a higher level of readiness because of the program and a higher level of appreciation for*
[leadership]... I'm confident in saying that I'm absolutely certain that if we asked those three individuals, [they would concur].

For those who embrace and seek opportunities to continue to develop, it may lead to an increase in salary or a promotion, but there is no guarantee. Betty, from University #1, mentioned by completing a certification during the leadership program, she was able to obtain a 9% increase in salary. For Chara, from University #2, by working with her mentor, she gained the confidence to ask her supervisor for a salary increase and the request was granted.

Sub-Theme 9D - Getting to Know Others and Networking

Six of the participants, Chara, Leslie, Kerry, Tammy, Terry and Mary (representing five LDP participants and one other participant), saw getting to work with individuals across many functional areas of the institution as a primary outcome of participation in leadership development programs. Leslie, from University #2, cited “everyone raves about getting to work with people across the institution that you would not normally get a chance to work with…people brought their experiences which led to a different interpretation, a richer interpretation.” Also, by getting to know others, you have allies to help resolve issues and solve problems. Leslie noted that the program exposes participants to senior leaders and the president who are making key institutional decisions. Mary, from University #2, commented that she forged relationships through her project team that have lasted beyond the leadership development program.
Sub-Theme 9E – Ability to Groom Others

Five of the participants (representing three LDPs and two other participants) indicated their participation was simply motivated by a desire to groom others. Two of the supervisors mentioned they wanted to participate to leave a legacy of grooming talent. Kurt, from University #1, shared his motivation for participating, “it’s a good reflection on me” and when he is ready to leave the institution, his involvement in grooming his team will hopefully benefit the institution. Tom, from University #1, appreciated the opportunity to groom two junior level employees to assume some of his responsibilities when he is absent from work. The process helped him understand their views and gave them an appreciation for his role and the way he makes decisions. Lena, from University #2, noted something similar, it gives employees “an appreciation for what leaders are doing and that’s valuable even if they decide to not pursue that type of role.” Some of the LDP participants, including Olivia and David, from University #2 and University #3, indicated they wanted to participate to groom their direct reports and to foster growth in their whole departments. In fact, Olivia is working to get one of her direct reports in the next cohort.

Sub-Theme 9F – Other Things to Note about Outcomes

Barb, from University #1, shared, “I think that it really sparks interest when you show and support your individual employees [and] you let them know that, we want you to say we're interested in investing in your development.” Barb further commented about her own job satisfaction, “I think it is that feeling of support and knowing that I have an
opportunity to continue growing that helped with job satisfaction. I’m not being stagnated in one position and …[can] continue to build on my professional life.” Mary, from University #2, suggested that if institutions do not invest in their employees, then they will start to work slower and be less productive because they will reason what’s the point because [the leaders] are not concerned and not attentive to my development. For some participants, more than we anticipated, they were not seeking a promotion, rather they wanted to acquire new competencies to enhance job satisfaction in their current roles. Leslie, Olivia, Kerry and Mary mentioned this benefit.

A few participants noted leadership development programs can help to achieve goals. Betty, from University #1, commented that she implemented leadership development in alignment with department and university goals. Barb, from University #1, mentioned that after participating in a training session on a topic, she was able to facilitate a similar training to develop others on campus which had been a goal of her manager. Along that same vein, Octavia, from University #1, although not a web developer, took an online course as part of her development plan, and by taking the course she can communicate more effectively with the web team to make decisions and take ownership of functional projects when her supervisor cannot be present. Kurt, from University #1, emphasized he saw the employees in his unit become more comfortable in proposing new ways of doing things which is what he hoped participation would do for his employees.
Lance, from University #1, articulated the importance of the campus president to invest in leaders. The president of a campus should invest in all leaders because it will help to maintain the institution’s standing. By not investing in this group, this can have an adverse impact on reputation and ratings:

Faculty are pissed off, the research expenditures are going down and you go from being number 5 to being number 65 well you haven't done anything. So if you made a little bit of an investment and grooming [this can prevent that from happening]...We know how chancellors and presidents get fired because if the president doesn't make that kind of investment in the campuses, the campus chancellors would not do well. It will ultimately reflect on the president...The chancellor should be making an investment in the deans is true. They have the managerial maturity to run the colleges. There's an upstream benefit to doing [developing] them...because all of a sudden that there's less time and energy you have to spend managing that dean and the department chairs.

Sam, from University #1, remarked that the enterprise skills needed by senior leaders have changed dramatically in the last five years, so by offering leadership development programs, institutions are helping terribly busy leaders stay abreast of best practices. According to Sam, in the leadership development program, “they are bringing leaders together to have conversations with their colleagues in different areas and from different places [campuses], and so they are realizing...there are others out there dealing with the same issues.” The institution benefits from the synergy of bringing a team of leaders together to tackle pervasive issues.

By investing in LDP participants, it is likely to have a favorable impact on gaining the loyalty of high potential talent and they will not leave the institution. Barb, from University #1, offered,
I feel like a lot of younger people really appreciate that help [of leadership development]…some of them have the mentality… I’m going to be in a place that I'm continually being developed and if I'm going to be stagnant, why am I here?

Octavia, from University #1, shared the same sentiment, in her first professional role, she now has an expectation that her employer will invest in her professional growth. For her to leave the institution, the new employer must offer similar perks. The investment in professional growth has increased her job satisfaction, improved employee morale in the unit and reduced her turnover intentions. Tom, Tara and Kathy agreed they have observed improvements in employee morale and productivity in the LDP participants and in the entire department.

Kerry, from University #2, espoused the program, “did a good job of leveling the playing field.” Some people in the program may have been in more senior roles than others, but they did not treat those less senior any differently, and as a new person this gave Kerry the confidence to speak up and articulate ideas. Chara, from University #2, offered a similar view. It was her belief that some of the participants had never worked with individuals across the institution and the leadership development program empowered them and lessened the intimidation factor.

Chara asserted that she appreciated the leadership development program because “it did not directly impact your job, yet it was like being given a blank canvas that you can kind of experiment on…you can just completely go with your imagination.”

According to Sam, from University #1, the ultimate benefit of a leadership development
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program is, “it's just you're more likely to be developed in a focused manner, therefore being better prepared based on having gone through a leadership development program.”
CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

The focus of this exploratory qualitative case study was to address the ways that 4-year public research institutions in the United States implement succession planning and leadership development programs. The study examined four primary research questions.

1. What are the institutional characteristics needed for the creation of leadership development programs (LDPs) at 4-year public research institutions?

2. What are the needed competencies and skills for the president, administrative leaders and staff positions at 4-year public research institutions?

3. How are competencies and skills developed in LDP participants at 4-year public research institutions?

4. What are the positive outcomes on LDP participants and organizations post participation in leadership development programs at 4-year public research institutions?

In this chapter, we present a discussion of our findings based on implications of the research for each research question. Next, we address the contributions of our research in advancing the body of knowledge. Then, we highlight general implications for practice for implementing and enhancing leadership development programs. We conclude the chapter by focusing on limitations, future studies and general conclusions.
Implications of Research

RQ1 – What are the institutional characteristics needed for the creation of leadership development programs (LDPs) at 4-year public research institutions?

In research question one, we sought to identify the institutional characteristics needed for successful implementation. Previous research provided no universally accepted understanding of the institutional characteristics. Rather, there are several identified institutional characteristics mentioned that fit into three broad categories; philosophical principles, conditions that must be satisfied and core components (Daily et al., 2000; Davidson et al., 2001; Gonzalez, 2010; Ip & Jacobs, 2006; Luna, 2012). For our study, although there is overlap of these three broad categories, we used institutional characteristics primarily as conditions that must be satisfied for implementation of leadership development programs. Having the support and commitment of the board, president and senior leaders for effective implementation frequently appeared as an institutional characteristic in the literature (Clunies, 2007; Groves, 2007; Rothwell, 2016). In Clunies (2007), the study emphasized the importance of the board making a commitment to prepare not just for presidential succession but also to prepare for the development of other key leaders, such as provosts and deans. Further, in Gentle and Clifton (2017), the study focused on the role of senior leaders, managers and supervisors in being actively involved in developing their employees in a university setting. It was noted that though the senior leaders (such as vice chancellors and others) serve as sponsors for their employees in leadership development programs, there was little data to
indicate they have reflective discussions with their employees about the knowledge they have acquired by participating in leadership development programs.

Most of the participants, in our study agreed the board and senior leaders need to support leadership development programs. Our study had varying degrees of involvement by senior leaders and managers, ranging from completing 360-degree assessments at the beginning of the program, to meeting one-on-one to gauge progress throughout the program, to a hands-off approach after the nomination process. For University #1, all of the supervisors were actively involved in assisting the LDP participants to further develop their skills. Further studies should be conducted to gauge the longitudinal effects of the supervisor-employee interaction in continuing to develop the employee and creating a career path after completing a leadership development program.

A good number of the participants in our study mentioned the commitment to foster success of leadership development programs goes beyond the commitment of the board members, president, senior leaders and managers, the LDP participants must be committed. Some participants mentioned it is important for direct reports, co-workers and HR to be supportive. More specifically, a few LDP participants expressed that it helps when co-workers are aware of participation and understand when LDP participants might not be available to complete certain work tasks, and by knowing, some co-workers will be more inclined to assist the LDP participants to complete tasks. Future studies should examine if there is an increase in employee morale in the unit and an increase in
collaboration between co-workers to achieve organizational goals when co-workers are supportive of LDP participants’ involvement in leadership development programs.

In many workplaces, including in 4-year public research institutions, fostering diversity is a desired goal. This means creating an inclusive culture for individuals from many backgrounds to enter and compete for top management positions. Creating leadership development programs to promote career advancement for women in higher education is a highly researched area. In many studies, it is well documented that women are not seeing the same level of progress as their male counterparts in rising up the ranks to advanced positions (Waheeda & Nishan, 2018). In Waheeda and Nishan (2018), the focus was on leadership development programs to help women to ascend to senior level positions within higher education. It concluded women are underrepresented in high ranking positions in the Maldives for a number of reasons including a heavy workload due to service commitments, lack of career development opportunities, not being heard and seen at the same level as their male colleagues, and lack of support. The study noted to aid women to make strides in parity, institutions should “offer flexible work schedules, focus on productivity, offer diverse professional development and training opportunities, provide mentorship and support networks, tackle persistent sex-discrimination, and strengthen pay equity” (Waheeda & Nishan, 2018, p. 8). According to Madsen and Andrade (2018), unconscious bias training must be a core element of leadership development programs. With this lens the content of the programs must recognize and validate the many identities of women. In Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017), the study
addressed competencies, instituting succession planning, and the importance of
developing women and people of color. More specifically, the study focused on internal
leadership development programs and external graduate programs to develop leaders for
the community college sector. As far as developing women, a key tenet of the study
indicated women should be intentionally included in leadership development and
succession planning. This inclusion may require a paradigm shift in defining what
constitutes a leader. In Knipfer, Shaughnessy, Hentschel, and Schmid (2017), the study
identified a framework to address the barriers women in higher education face in
advancing their careers to administrative leadership positions. The study identified a 3-
pronged framework to examine internal factors: motivation (want-to-factors, such as
lower levels of self-efficacy and less competitive), abilities (can-do factors, such as
struggle to find authentic leadership style and lower propensity to negotiate), and external
factors (permission-and-support factors, such as limited number of female mentors and
devaluation of female leadership styles). In this study, the researchers used the 3-
pronged framework to create a two-year leadership development program for women in
higher education to address the internal and external factors. In Gentle and Clifton
(2017), the study found that by investing in leadership development programs for women
early in their careers, as they advance in their careers, they will likely bring other women
along with them, so this investment positively affects fostering a climate of inclusion. In
addition, other desired outcomes such as fostering team work and collaboration are likely
to occur. The organization will benefit by having a pipeline of talent to fill vacancies.
In our study, 11 of the 12 LDP participants were women and many of whom were early or at the mid-level in their careers. The female LDP participants highlighted the importance of addressing the internal and external factors examined by Knipfer et al. (2017). More specifically, they acknowledged they wanted to participate in the leadership development program to increase their confidence, to get a mentor to help them navigate their career paths, to foster growth in others, and to learn more about governance and institutional decision making at the highest level. In the future, longitudinal studies can be done after 2 years, 5 years and 10 years (of participation) to track the career progression of the women to see if they are still employed by the institutions, particularly for the women who are early in their careers. Furthermore, the results of the study can be compared against women who have not participated in leadership development programs to identify similarities and differences in career progression. All of the participants, in our study, agreed with the findings of the research studies that having diverse talent in the workplace is not just the right thing to do, but it supports the mission of public research institutions to provide access to all individuals regardless of ethnicity, gender identification, sexual orientation, disability or background to a world class education.

**RQ2 – What are the needed competencies and skills for the president, administrative leaders and staff positions at 4-year public research institutions?**

In the literature, there are many competencies noted for the president, but it was difficult to find competencies needed for staff positions and mid-level administrative
positions. In Dopson Ferlie, McGivern, Fischer, Mitra, Ledger and Behrens (2018), the most common competencies that leaders need are conflict management and having difficult conversations. In Ghasemy, Hussin, Daud and Nor (2018), the Malaysian study of higher education leaders across public and private sectors looked at their perceptions of the top five priorities, values, challenges, and solutions needed for success in roles as administrative leaders. The values address competencies and the challenges address core components to include in leadership development programs. According to the study, the top value that leaders should possess is honesty and integrity across all sectors of higher education. Other noted values include commitment, passion, loyalty; and being hard-working, diligent, and persistent. The challenges that leaders must tackle fit into four broad categories: staff affairs management; finance, budgeting, grants, and fundraising; time management; and, achieving goals, KPIs, and standards.

Our study examined the LDPs through the lens of a blended competency model: from the five competencies highlighted in the AACC 2013 report (organizational strategy; institutional finance, research, fundraising and resource management; communication; collaboration; and, advocacy), the five competencies outlined by University #3 (listed on the website - some are overlapping with the AACC competencies, integrity and ethics, strategy, engagement, collaboration, and execution), and, two of the competencies from the ACE 2012 report (entrepreneurial mindset for fundraising, and crisis planning and media relations). In sum, our participants’ perceptions of needed competencies for administrative roles and staff positions did not
vary much and were consistent with the research literature. The participants in our study acknowledged a few universal competencies needed for all positions. These were transparency, integrity and accountability. For future research, researchers should replicate this study for validity and reliability to see if there is alignment of the skills LDP participants perceive they need with the skills their supervisors believe they need for success in their positions. Further research is needed to identify competencies for the president and other positions in the academy.

**RQ3** – How are competencies and skills developed in LDP participants at 4-year public research institutions?

Although it may be viewed as a tautological statement, the primary purpose of leadership development programs is to develop the skills of the participants. In the research literature, there are numerous ways to develop skills and competencies. For instance, in Barrett, Gaskins and Haug (2019), the study outlined common modalities for incorporating leadership development content and concepts: mentoring, coaching, job roles and assignments, project-based learning, and cross-function networking. In Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017), it was asserted preparing leaders to acquire new skills can be achieved through job rotations and administrative internships.

In our study, consistent with the research, the participants across all three universities cited a plethora of ways to acquire knowledge and new competencies, ranging from formal degree programs, learning from others, and on-the-job learning. Many of the participants at University #1, indicated they frequently used “Linda.com”
affiliated with LinkedIn for short online courses to learn the fundamentals of a topic. Most of our participants cited they learned the most through experiential learning and this is consistent with the literature.

LDP participants can be instrumental in developing and assessing the content for leadership development programs. In Barrett, Gaskins and Haug (2019), the study highlighted the importance of distributed leadership, which allows for a reciprocal flow of ideas between participants and facilitators. Furthermore, it is suggested to have leadership development programs where faculty and staff can participate without an imbalance in power and can be seen as equals. This can create buy-in and a sense of feeling valued by the LDP participants. This can have a positive impact on changing culture. With a modified view of facilitation and resistance, Latta (2015) argued that culture changing processes include dynamics of facilitation and resistance. Facilitators and leaders should encourage resistance and skepticism on the part of the LDP participants for continuous refinement and improvement of the content and its delivery.

In our study, the LDP participants who were working one-on-one with their supervisors and managers had autonomy to help shape the content. For University #3, the design of the program had a cohort component which was designed by the facilitator without much deviation, but it also had a component for the LDP participants to create and shape their own development. For University #2 and University #3, the LDP participants were asked for feedback at the end of the program to help make changes for subsequent years.
Traditionally, higher education has been seen as rigid in adopting best practices adopted by other industries. In Eddy and Garza Mitchell (2017), it was asserted that as the work and mission of community colleges continue to expand in scope, the community college sector should look to the corporate arena to address succession planning and leadership development. By adopting practices from the business community, this can lead to new leadership development programs that build a pipeline for diverse talent. By contrast, in the peer reviewed articles in Dopson et al. (2018), it was noted higher education should not borrow from business disciplines because of the unique nature of academia. Further, it was argued that higher education leaders should retain their distinct identity as academics. According to the article, as an implication, “leadership development models should be designed around sectorally-related characteristics such as academic credibility and visibility rather than by borrowing from other fields, such as Business” (Dopson et al, 2018, p. 10).

Our participants, particularly the HR officials responsible for implementation, did not support this notion of not looking outside of higher education. In fact, at all three universities contracted with vendors to help with planning and implementation. The search consultants confirmed that higher education institutions hire consultants to help with planning and implementation of succession planning and leadership development programs.

In Hornsby, Morrow-Jones and Ballam (2012), the study outlined a best practice approach to developing leadership development programs. The study focused on the
creation of a two-year leadership development program for tenured faculty women at The Ohio State University to encourage women to apply for positions such as provost and president. The design process was comprehensive and entailed a number of steps. As part of the planning and before implementation, a needs assessment was conducted to determine the appropriate content of the leadership development program. Individual interviews were held with deans and department chairs to gain an understanding on the skills and competencies (a) they wish they had before they assumed a formal leadership position, and (b) they would like individuals to possess before appointing them to leadership positions. In addition, to glean similar information, group interviews were held with women faculty who had served as chairs or associate deans or who had participated in a well-established leadership development program (e.g., the Higher Education Resource Services [HERS] Bryn Mawr Summer Institute). The proposed content of the leadership development program was modeled after signature leadership development programs (e.g., HERS) and shared with senior leaders, deans, department chairs and HR representatives. As a result of this widespread vetting process, the leadership program received buy-in and support from across the university. In our study, the leadership development programs were comprehensive, but the Ohio State Program is exemplary in the amount of socialization that had been done before implementation.
RQ4 - What are the positive outcomes on LDP participants and organizations post participation in leadership development programs at 4-year public research institutions?

Leadership development programs are put into place to have an impact on outcomes. In the literature, of the four areas of our study, the assessment of the effectiveness of leadership development programs received the least amount of attention. In turn, more empirical research is needed on measuring the outcomes of leadership development programs on personal and organizational goals. For instance, in Dopson et al. (2018), in its analysis of the scant articles that identified outcomes, it was noted “this literature lacked both consistently defined measures clearly linked with different aspects of leadership development, as well a clear analysis of the timeframes within which different kind of outcomes might best be measured” (p. 11). In Ladyshewsky and Flavell (2011), the study addressed the impact of a leadership development program at an Australian university, six months and twelve months post participation. The study was conducted by interviewing 10 participants and found one key outcome present for twelve months after the conclusion of the leadership development program, an increase in confidence and empowerment. In our study, many of the participants, particularly the women noted an increase in confidence and empowerment.

In the literature, there were few studies that examined medium-term outcomes (two to five years post completion) of leadership development programs in higher education. For example, in Zuber-Skerritt and Louw (2014), the study assessed the outcomes and overall impact at a South African university two years after completion of
the program. In sum, the study found “LDPs are usually based on the traditional model of instructional design and theory/content orientation, rather than on learning and research processes informed by models of experiential, lifelong action learning that foster sustainable outcomes” (Zuber-Skerritt & Louw, 2014, p. 2). The study used a participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) approach. As part of participating in the program, the participants agreed to conduct qualitative workshops to “cascade their learning and skills to colleagues and postgraduate students in the social sciences to achieve an enduring multiplier effect in this university” (Zuber-Skerritt & Louw, 2014, p. 3). After interviewing the LDP participants, it was determined the condition was not met by some of the LDP participants two years after completing the program. Lack of time due to a heavy work load was the primary reason cited for not achieving this outcome. In addition, the study found the LDP participants did not continue their networking with one another after the program ended as had been discussed as a condition of participation. Again, the LDP participants cited issues with time and priorities for not achieving the desired outcome. Overall, the LDP participants offered favorable comments about the design, objectives and content of the leadership development programs.

In our study, many of the LDP participants identified general personal outcomes (e.g., to enhance their skills in performing their duties), but not specific and measurable organizational outcomes as conditions of participation like those emphasized in Zuber-Skerritt and Louw (2014). In contrast to Zuber-Skerritt and Louw (2014), several of our
study’s LDP participants acknowledged they are still networking and engaging with their cohort members (and others affiliated with the program, such as mentors) and recognized this as a positive outcome of the program. Similar to Zuber-Skerritt and Louw (2014), most of the LDP participants in our study offered favorable comments about the design, objectives and content of the leadership development programs.

In Hornsby et al. (2012), after the completion of the fourth cohort, two focus groups were conducted with LDP graduates and alumni and the outcomes were compared with the results of two focus groups after the completion of the second cohort. In addition, the study gathered feedback from department chairs and deans. Overall, nearly all of the LDP participants endorsed the continuation of the program with minor adjustments. The participants identified several positive outcomes, including: ongoing networking with their cohort members, a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of leadership, learned how to more effectively run meetings, and more nuanced conflict management skills. Some of the LDP participants discovered they had no desire or interest in advancing their careers. Many of the LDP participants appreciated the 360-degree assessment because it increased their understanding of self and others to help them work more productively together. The LDP participants seem to value and learn a great deal from their discussions with senior leaders. As an area of improvement, it was recommended that the purpose of the leadership development program should be more clearly defined and articulated to the LDP participants. Specifically, they wanted to
know if the purpose was to develop a pipeline to fill department chair vacancies or was it to develop leaders more broadly regardless of title or position.

Overall, the results of Hornsby et al. (2012), mirror the results of our study. As an example, some of the LDP participants at University #1 were unclear on why they had been selected and did not understand the big picture or the desired outcomes for their participation. It should be noted that 4-year public research institutions can still benefit and grow by having more employees with the mindset of leaders who understand the big picture and the goals of the institution without having a change in position or ascending to a higher position within the institution. Some are leaders because of authority or apparent authority and some are leaders by influence. One of the deans in Hornsby et al. (2012), was disappointed because some LDP participants made the decision to not pursue or assume leadership roles. The dean commented that he would have selected other individuals if he had known that would be the outcome. First, it is difficult to assess who will decide to pursue or not pursue a leadership role without the opportunity to explore. Second, it is a good thing to find out when the stakes are low meaning the person has not been put in the position and there are no turnover implications. In our study, we did have a few participants cite that the lack of desire of LDP participants to assume promotions can pose an issue for some supervisors and managers in allowing their employees to participate in leadership development programs.

In sum, in the literature and in our study, we found similar findings related to institutional characteristics, needed competencies and competency development. More
research is needed to reach valid and empirical conclusions about outcomes of LDPs on personal and organizational goals. In our study, we found the results were consistent across groups (administrative leaders and staff, and LDP participants and other participants) and had no significant differences.

**Contribution to Research**

This study contributes to research by using the Human Resources Based Theory to provide context and relevance for the implementation of leadership development programs in higher education. Human Resource Based Theory also known as the Human Capital Theory (HCT) asserts that a firm's competitive advantage derives from the available knowledge, skills, ability, other characteristics (KSAO) and level of efficiency of its workforce (Cragun et al., 2016). By implementing quality leadership development programs, institutions can aid LDP participants to hone their skills to perform better in their current roles, be ready to replace incumbents and mitigate the perils of risk associated with transition. The programs allow for innovation and creativity to reach new benchmarks. Some of the leadership development programs at the universities were implemented within the last few years, so it is too early to gauge the long term success of the programs. As a way to begin to assess whether the LDP participants have enhanced their competencies and impacted organizational outcomes, the supervisors and managers should discuss with the LDP participants during the annual performance review and periodically throughout the year any noted differences in their performance before, during and after completion of the program. In addition, these discussions can determine
future plans for further development of competencies. Anecdotally, the participants provided positive feedback about their experiences with the programs and anticipated the programs will likely yield positive intrinsic and extrinsic outcomes for years to come. Therefore, more research studies are needed to determine the longitudinal impact of leadership development programs.

Our study advances the body of research in four distinct ways. First, our qualitative study addresses a gap in the lack of empirical studies devoted to professional development and career growth of staff positions. Further, the study begins to address the types of competencies needed in those types of roles. Second, our study revealed, at least within the selected institutions, succession planning is a misnomer and will likely not be realized as a phenomenon in public higher education due to many factors. Moreover, our study found a prevalence of leadership development programs that serve as de facto succession planning programs. Not many other studies have overtly disclosed this revelation. Third, our study has opened the door on examining the merits of offering combined faculty and staff leadership development programs. Some participants expressed reservations about offering a combined program. Further research is needed to determine if participants at other universities would have similar concerns. Fourth, our study highlighted the lack of substantive research on assessing the impact of leadership programs. Although higher education is not in the business of making a profit, it should identify robust quantitative and qualitative measures for assessing the effectiveness of leadership development programs on achieving individual and organizational outcomes.
From the outset, metrics should be established as part of the development plan for employees and progress on the metrics should be examined during and after completion of succession planning and leadership development programs. Future research should focus on whether institutions that invest heavily in succession planning and leadership development perform better than those that do not.

**Implications for Practice (Lessons Learned)**

In our study, our findings reflect a number of implications for higher education practitioners to implement succession planning and leadership development programs or assess existing programs for continuous improvement. The implications are enumerated below, but the numbers are not ranked in order of importance because given the variability of the mission, needs and other factors of institutions, it is difficult to create a ranked model that would fit every institution.

1. Board members, the president, senior leaders, managers, and supervisors at each institution must determine the appropriate institutional characteristics (philosophical principles, conditions and programmatic elements) for implementing leadership development programs.

2. Board members should be actively involved in planning the leadership development of the president and to some extent be involved with planning the leadership development of the senior leaders. The board should define the purpose and set expectations for outcomes of leadership development. In setting expectations, from the beginning, clear metrics and tangible outcomes of success should be established and communicated to the
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president and other stakeholders. The board plays an instrumental role in assessing
talent, identifying gaps and regularly assessing progress of the president.

3. The board members should require the president and senior leaders to regularly plan and
implement leadership development for their direct reports. In general, the president and
senior leaders should actively engage in assessing the competency levels of
administrative leaders and staff. The president and senior leaders should groom
administrative leaders and staff to perform better in current roles and assist high potential
talent to assume more advanced roles within the organization. Grooming talent can be
done through internal or external leadership development programs, and, through formal
or informal mechanisms. Experiential learning (learning from others or learning on the
job) was favored by participants. As a caution, the president and senior leaders should
not just look at current skills needed for positions but project what the positions may
morph into in the future.

4. Due to finite resources, the president, senior leaders, managers and supervisors must
determine the specific positions to include in succession planning. The positions should
be essential, mission critical or specialized (requiring a unique set of skills that are
difficult to find in the marketplace).

5. The successful implementation of quality succession planning and leadership
development programs requires more than a verbal commitment of the president and
senior leaders, it requires recurring annual financial support. In lean economic times and
with a transition in presidential leadership, these types of programs may be in jeopardy of being significantly reduced or eliminated.

6. It should be clearly articulated which person or unit is responsible for implementation. In many cases, HR initiates implementation. It is helpful to provide tools (e.g., how-to-manual, forms and software to track progress) to assist supervisors to work with their direct reports.

7. It is important for managers and supervisors to understand the likely positive outcomes of leadership development programs or else it will be hard to implement. It might help, if managers and supervisors who have allowed their direct reports to participate in leadership development programs would talk with other managers and supervisors about the value of leadership development programs. This type of intentional effort will likely gain their buy-in of the concept.

8. Managers and supervisors must be on board with the participation of their direct reports in leadership development programs to help identify and close skill gaps, allow ample time for professional development, remove barriers, and provide critical feedback on progress. In addition, as a key point for practitioners, by identifying the positions, the managers and supervisors can determine the present and future requirements, key functions and competencies needed for the position.

9. In higher education, it behooves managers and supervisors to be very clear from the outset about the possibility (or not) of promotion opportunities for LDP participants post participation in leadership development programs. The process should clearly outline the
requirements for attaining a promotion within the institution. It is important for leaders, managers and supervisors to be up front with LDP participants in articulating the purpose leadership of development programs.

10. The senior leaders and managers must determine the appropriate role for incumbents to play in the selection and grooming of their successors. Incumbents can be helpful because they have firsthand knowledge of the role and competencies required for the position. In addition, incumbents may have served as supervisor of a potential successor, so can help in assessing the skill level and readiness to assume the role. On the other hand, if the institution is seeking a change in the role or the incumbent has not been successful, then the incumbent should not play a critical role in selecting and grooming the successor.

11. In higher education, by investing in employees, an organization demonstrates to the employees that the employer has a commitment to retaining high potential talent. Per our LDP participants, this positively impacts retention and lessens turnover intentions.

12. Even though an institution might lose an LDP participant post program completion, it should be considered a benefit to the higher education sector. By grooming talent, the institution has helped the industry because another institution will benefit by having high potential talent to help achieve its mission and strategic priorities. In turn, a reciprocal talent exchange might likely occur. For instance, the grooming institution might benefit from another institution investing in talent that comes to the grooming institution.
Almost unanimously, the leaders and managers in the study agreed with this assertion and perceived a talent exchange as a positive outcome rather than a detriment.

13. During this pandemic year the importance of planning for the unexpected (or things out of your control) and having a contingency plan has been underlined. Practitioners should plan for shifting in-person leadership development programs to a virtual platform. With this shift, it is still important to conduct a quality leadership development program that will achieve the intended goals, objectives and learning outcomes.

In sum, in practice, the board, the president, senior leaders, managers and supervisors must invest in their high potential talent through training, professional development and leadership development programs to provide a competitive advantage to the institution.

**Limitations**

Inherent in research studies are limitations and our study is no exception. First, given that the study examined succession planning and leadership development programs with a small sample size of 24 participants representing three 4-year public research institutions and two search firms, it is difficult to generalize the results without conducting further research.

The original purpose of the study was to solely focus on succession planning for senior level positions such as provost, vice president, vice chancellor, chancellor and president. The pandemic may have adversely impacted the participation of senior level leaders. Initially, we planned to secure four universities but was only able to secure three
universities. In March through May, 2020, it was a busy time for many presidents and senior leaders. They were learning to pivot their operations to adjust to the unfolding and unprecedented events. As a result of the pandemic and based on the data we gathered that supported leadership development programs were being used as vehicles for succession planning, we shifted our research to focus more on leadership development programs for administrative leaders and staff.

In some cases, it was challenging for many of our participants to conduct the interviews and return consent forms because of working from home and not having access to equipment and technology. To overcome this challenge, at the beginning of the interviews, we had the participants provide oral consent, so we can have it as part of the transcript and official record.

In an effort to protect the anonymity of the participants, we used pseudonyms to identify the participants, but given there were only three universities and two search firms (one representative per firm), there is a chance the identity of the participants and the institutions/search firms can be discovered. In the written consent form, we disclosed the possibility that identity can be ascertained and assured the participants that we would not disclose names except to the dissertation committee.

In the research design, it could have been enhanced by augmenting the qualitative study with a quantitative component. For instance, a survey could have been incorporated to collect and analyze data on the institutional characteristics, needed competencies, competency development and positive outcomes. It would have been
easier to compile the findings because the responses would have been more uniformed. Furthermore, then the semi-structured interview questions would have been employed as a follow-up to the survey to explain how to implement leadership development programs in higher education.

In the literature, there are several outcomes identified for measuring success of employees: employee morale, lessen turnover intentions, organizational climate, affective commitment and opportunity for promotion. Although we identified those measures as positive outcomes, the participants in our study only cited a few of these outcomes.

In the study, for all three universities, the participants were not randomly selected, rather they were selected by HR officials, so arguably the study could have been influenced by non-random selection bias. It is believed that by ensuring the confidentiality of the participants, this helped to overcome the limitation.

We had an imbalance of women and men participate in the research study. Specifically, we had 17 women and 7 men. Additional studies should be conducted to determine if LDP participants (and other stakeholders – senior leaders, managers and supervisors) perceive the impact of succession and leadership development programs differently based on gender. Moreover, longitudinal studies should track the progression of the LDP participants career paths based on gender and other demographic data (e.g., age, race, etc.).
The purpose of our study was to gain a better understanding of leadership development programs at 4-year public research institutions. The study should be replicated with other American sectors - private institutions, community colleges, for-profit institutions - to compare the findings and assess further implications for practice and research.

Higher education institutions can learn from institutions that failed at succession planning and leadership development programs. Further research should be done to identify those institutions that were not successful to determine pitfalls to avoid. Research can delve into the contributing factors for the lack of success.

For future contributions to research, we need more empirical studies to focus on internal versus external succession of presidents in higher education. Although we did ask questions to elicit the participants’ perceptions on internal versus external candidates, the data were not conclusive and compelling on whether an internal presidential candidate (who knows the organizational climate and culture) can be as effective if not more than an external candidate (with creativity and a fresh perspective) in meeting organizational goals. It is proposed that with a strong commitment by the board, an internal candidate will likely perform as well on achieving established performance measures as an external candidate.
General Conclusions

*Does true succession planning exist in higher education?*

Although many of the participants expressed skepticism about succession planning happening or even the appropriateness of preparing individuals to become the “heir apparent” for specific positions at four-year public research institutions, all of the participants in our study agreed there is a need to develop talent. In our study, there was limited succession planning, in the sense that the employees were being groomed for a specific role. There was no guarantee of promotion for the LDP participants. Nonetheless, there were some examples of succession planning in an informal manner by unit leaders (and not spanning the entire university or system) for replacement planning and to fill short term vacancies. As has been mentioned, for many of the LDP participants who were increasing and advancing their skills, they were not doing so with a particular job in mind, but rather wanted to contribute and add value in their current roles or in an interim role or “stretch assignment.” In sum, for 4-year public research institutions, it is not likely to become an acceptable practice to groom a specific person to assume the role of president or any senior level role, so at best, it is more permissible to hone the skills of high potential talent through leadership development programs for success in any number of advanced roles with a common core of competencies.
How to Implement Leadership Development Programs from one university to another?

How leadership development programs work at one university does not mean that it is a one size fits all approach for every 4-year public research institution. Organizational culture and climate, institutional mission and strategic priorities, and talent pool are factors to consider when developing leadership development programs for each institution. Therefore, it would behoove higher education institutions to invest in leadership development programs to maintain a competitive advantage by staying relevant and innovative. For effective implementation, higher education institutions must become familiar with and request more research studies and consult with practitioners (even in disciplines outside of higher education) on successful approaches and pitfalls to avoid.
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doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.umsl.edu/10.1108/JOCM-11-2013-0224
Appendix A - Semi Structured Interview Guide

- **Introduction**
  - Have been in higher education for several years, most recently at Mizzou in Missouri as associate provost and since April 2018 have served as chief of staff for our president at the University of Missouri System.

- **Introduce topic and why interested – Succession Planning and Management Programs**
  - I have a keen interest in grooming talent to want to stay and assume leadership positions for the future viability of the organization, hence my interest in succession planning. I have some specialized positions where I needed to be more intentional in addressing voluntary or involuntary departures.

- **Overview of the Interview**
  - I sent to you ahead of our interview a copy of the consent form.

    (Highlight items from the form) Unless you authorize otherwise in writing, I will keep your name and the name of your institution confidential, except will share with my dissertation committee. You have the right at any time to not answer a question or to stop the interview. Do you have any questions about the consent form?
  - I have allotted 60-90 minutes for the interview.
- Do I have your permission to record the session via Zoom or audiotape, just to aid in accurately capturing your thoughts for my notes? (Note: Due to COVID-19, many participants were not able to send an endorsed written copy of the consent form because they were working from home and not from an office where they had access to equipment to sign and scan forms, so requested and received approval for the record as part of the recording of the interviews.)

- I will also be taking handwritten notes during the interview.

- If you don’t have any questions, let’s begin.

**Demographic Questions**

1. What is your name?

2. May I ask your age, gender and race identification?

*What is your age? ________

1. 30-39 Years old
2. 40 - 49 Years old
3. 50 - 59 Years old
4. 60 - 69 Years old
5. 70 Years or older
6. Prefer not to answer

*What is your gender? ________

1. Male
2. Female
3. Prefer not to answer

*What is your preferred pronoun? ________________

1. He/Him
2. She/Her
3. Them/Their
4. Prefer not to answer

#What is your race?
1. Asian
2. Black or African American
3. Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin
4. Middle Eastern or North African
5. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
6. Native American
7. White or Caucasian
8. Multiracial or Other
9. Prefer not to answer

3. What is your role? How long have you been in the role? How long have you been at your current institution/organization?

4. What other leadership roles have you held at your current institution? At another institution/organization?

5. What is your educational background and work experienced that developed you for your current role?

Research Q1 - Core Components of a Succession Planning and Management Program

Program

1. Have you participated in a succession planning and management program in the past 5 years? If so, when and where?

2. What was your role?

3. What positions are identified for succession planning? (Is there a process specifically to groom senior administrative leaders [provost, vice president, chancellor, president]?)?
4. How do you identify the specific positions to include in the succession planning process?

5. How is one identified and selected as a potential successor?

6. What is the role of the board of trustees in the process?

7. What is the role of other stakeholders in the process? Faculty? Staff? Students? Alums?

8. How well known is the succession planning and management process throughout the institution? (To potential successor? To faculty and staff?)

9. What are the pros of all employees (including the potential successor) knowing about the succession planning and management program?

10. What are the cons of all employees (including the potential successor) knowing about the succession planning and management program?

11. How would you define a “quality” succession planning and management program?

12. In your experience what are the 5 core components of a quality” succession planning and management program?

   - Of those 5 components are they all equally weighted or are some more important than the others.

   - How would you rank them? In your experience, on a scale from 1 to 5 how would you score the institution on those 5 components?

13. What are the barriers to implementation?
14. How have the policies, systems, practices and protocols at your institution been modified to provide the infrastructure for succession planning to occur?

15. Walk me through the details of the succession planning and management program that you participated in.

- How long did the whole process take?
- What did the communication plan look like?
- When was it considered complete?

**Research Q2 – Competencies Needed for Successors**

1. What are the competencies needed in senior administrative leadership roles (provost, vice president, chancellor, president) at 4-year public research institutions?

2. How does your institution assess the desired skill level of potential successors with the actual skill level of those individuals?

3. How are the competencies developed in senior administrative leadership roles (provost, vice president, chancellor, president) and specialized positions at your institution?

**Research Q3 – Measure Impact of a Succession Planning and Management Program**

**Program**

1. For positions covered in succession, are there metrics and benchmarks to establish a baseline for individual/successor’s performance? If so, how is succession planning contributing to documentable and measurable organizational results?
2. What outcomes/impact have you seen in the institution’s performance after executing the succession process?

- How has culture changed?
- How has employee commitment changed?
- How has employee morale changed?
- How has employee engagement change?
- How has employee attitudes changed?
- How has student success factors, such as persistence, retention, graduation change?
- How has the financial performance or financial stability of the institution changed?

3. What has been the impact on the successors as a result of succession planning?

4. **If you are a successor**, what outcomes/impact have you seen in your performance as a result of being a part of a succession planning and management program?

   In your Job satisfaction?

   Are there additional opportunities for growth/promotion? If so, please expound on those opportunities.

   Did it lessen or reduce turnover intentions?

   Are you committed to staying for the long term with your current institution?
How satisfied are you with the succession planning and management program?

5. What problems or failures have you experienced with the succession planning and management program? Top 3 issues?

6. What has gone well with the implementation of the succession planning and management program and should be continued in the future?

7. How important is diversifying your leadership? If it is important, how has that been factored into succession planning?

8. What trends do you see in succession planning?

9. Is there anything you would have done differently?

10. How often does your institution evaluate the succession process for continuous improvement?

11. Is there a succession program/process for the CEO/president or your immediate superior? If so, how would you rate its effectiveness? How has the program/process enhanced their skills to achieve the strategic priorities of the organization?

**General Questions/Wrap-up**

1. What are your perceptions of selecting an internal candidate for CEO/president?

2. What are your perceptions of selecting an external candidate for CEO/president?

3. Have you participated in a succession process at another institution/organization that prepared you for your current role?

4. What else should I know that I have not asked you about succession planning?
5. Are there others at your institution I should contact to enhance my frame of reference and expand my understanding on succession planning?

6. What are the books, forms, checklists, technology tools that you use that might be helpful?

7. Do you have any questions for me?

**Questions for Search Firms**

**Research Q1 - Core Components of a Succession Planning and Management Program**

1. In your experience, how likely are 4-year public research universities to have formal succession planning and management programs?

2. For what positions are they likely to have succession planning and management programs?

3. Who is involved in implementation?

4. How are successors involved in the process?

5. How are institutions selecting high potential talent as potential successors?

6. How transparent across the institution is the SP&M program?

7. What are the reasons potential successors should be aware they are potential successors?

8. What are the reasons for successors not to know they are potential successors?

9. What are the core components for effective implementation?

10. What are the stated reasons and rewards for establishing such programs?
11. What are the concerns and barriers for implementing such programs?

**Research Q2 – Competencies Needed for Successors**

1. What are the competencies and skills required of senior leaders?
2. How are institutions developing the competencies and skills needed in successors?

**Research Q3 – Measure Impact of a Succession Planning and Management Program**

1. How should organizations assess the success or measure the impact of succession planning?
2. What are the perceptions on selecting internal candidates for the succession of the president/CEO?
3. What are the perceptions on selecting external candidates for the succession of the president/CEO?
4. How are institutions modifying policies, procedures, forms, processes and systems to develop effective succession planning processes?
5. What are the trends we are likely to see in succession planning?

Thank you for your time and increasing my knowledge on the succession planning process at your institution.
Appendix B - Example Recruitment Email and Interview Materials

To: Research Participant (Incumbent, Successor, Direct Report, HR Officer, Search Consultant)
From: Christine Holt
Purpose: Request to Participate in Doctoral Dissertation Research

As a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri – St. Louis, College of Business, I am writing to ask your willingness to participate in my research study on succession planning and management programs within the context of 4-year public research institutions. More specifically, I want to gain a better understanding of the core components of a succession planning and management program. In addition, I want to become more knowledgeable about the competencies needed for the 21st century president/CEO and other senior administrative leaders and the best practices for helping successors develop those competencies. Lastly, I desire to establish a baseline for assessing and measuring the impact of quality succession planning and management programs.

(For Higher Education Participants)
Your institution (where you are employed or have some affiliation) has been identified as currently having a formal succession planning and management program and you have been identified because of your role. You may or may not have been groomed as a successor and you may or may not have been responsible for some portion of implementation of a succession planning and management program. I believe you may have some knowledge that might be beneficial to my research study.

(For Search Firms)
As a well-known search firm with a stellar reputation for your placement of higher education senior leaders and/or for those positions with specialized skills, you have been selected to participate in my research study. Moreover, I believe you may have some knowledge that might be beneficial to my research study.

It is anticipated that the interview will be 60 to 90 minutes in length and would ideally be in person with the researcher (me) travelling to you. If in-person is not possible, then a phone call or Zoom session will be organized. The expected timeframe is January to April, 2020, depending on scheduling. I will record the conversation for transcription of notes. It is possible that there will be a few follow-up questions that may be dealt with by email or phone. It is not expected that there will be any compensation or incurred expense to you. If you agree to participate, I will forward a consent form for signature required by my institution’s Internal Research Board (IRB) prior to the interview.
My email address is holtcj@umystem.edu. A copy of my bio is attached to give some information about my background. Although I am an employee at the University of Missouri System, my research is not related to my status as an employee but is related to my status as a doctoral researcher at the University of Missouri – St. Louis.

Sincerely yours, CH
Appendix C – Consent Form

Informed Consent Form
I am a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) student at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The goal of this interview is to gain information about succession planning and management programs in a higher education context. Your identity and the identity of your organization will remain anonymous unless you give explicit written permission to disclose. The interview is a part of my research dissertation in the UMSL DBA program.

Why am I being asked to participate?
You have been asked to participate in the research study because of your role. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the research. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time.

What is the purpose of this research?
The purpose of this research is for the researcher to gain a better understanding of succession planning and management programs within higher education.

What procedures are involved?
You are being asked to participate in an interview. The interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes. Your participation is voluntary, and you may discontinue involvement in the study at any time. You may refuse to answer any of the questions and you can stop the interview at any time. No one will know or be informed of your refusal to answer.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?
There are minimal risks associated with participation in the study. If some questions cause distress or discomfort, you can refrain from discussing. Again, you can refuse to answer any of the questions and you can stop the interview at any time.

Are there benefits to taking part in the research?
As a research subject, you will not obtain any direct benefit from participating in the research study.

Will I be told about new information that may affect my decision to participate?
During the course of the study, you will be informed of any significant new findings (either good or bad), such as changes in the risks or benefits resulting from participation in the research, or new alternatives to participation, that might cause you to change your mind about continuing in the study. If new information is provided to you, your consent to continue to participate in the study will be re-obtained.
What about privacy and confidentiality?
The only people who will know that you are a research participant are the researcher (Christine Holt) and the faculty dissertation committee (Dr. Keith Womer, Dr. John Meriac and Dr. Ekin Pellegrini) at the University of Missouri – St. Louis. No information about you, or provided by you during the research, will be disclosed to others.

No information about you, or provided by you during the research, will be disclosed to others in an intentionally identifiable manner. However, given the unique demographic of people (i.e., senior level public university administrators) that will participate in the interviews, there is a low-level risk your identity can be ascertained by those who read the dissertation. To minimize this from happening, I will refrain from identifying your specific institution and will handle the responses from the universities (or search firms) as group data. Based on the findings of the data, it can become desirable or essential to handle the data based on unique position (not based on a person) at an unidentified university or search firm, then there is a slight risk of your identity being ascertained.

Just to accentuate, when the results of the research are published or discussed at the university, no information will be included that would reveal your identity, or your organization’s identity. Any information that is obtained in connection with the study, and that can be identified with you as a person, will remain confidential.

Will I be paid for my participation in this research?
There are no monetary costs associated with participation and you will not receive any compensation for the initial interview.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?
You can choose whether to be in the study. If you volunteer to be in the study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You also may refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and remain in the study.

Who should I contact if I have questions?
If you have questions later, you may contact Christine Holt at 703-679-2174.
You will be given a copy of this form for your information and to keep for your records.

I have read the above statement and have been able to express my concerns, to which the investigator has (researcher has) responded satisfactorily. I believe I understand the purpose of the study, as well as the potential benefits and risks that are involved. I give my permission to participate in the research described above.

_____________________________________________
Participant’s Signature                                            Date
Appendix D – Coding: Thematic Analysis

Phase 1: Familiarizing Myself with the Data – We reviewed and read the data (e.g., semi-structured interviews, secondary data, documents, websites, etc.) several times to become well acquainted with the data and make notes (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes – We crafted codes. “Codes are the building block of analysis. Codes are short, succinct, identify and provide a label for a feature of data” (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 61). In our case, the building blocks were institutional characteristics, needed competencies, competency development and positive outcomes (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Phase 3: Searching for Themes – We reviewed the codes to find patterns and similarities to further produce themes and sub-themes, and this effort combined codes to find meaning in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Phase 4: Reviewing Potential Themes – This phase is an iterative process of going over and over the data to combine themes and to find new broader themes (Braun & Clarke, 2012). We conducted this iterative process to find broader themes.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes – A good thematic analysis will have themes that (a) do not try to do too much, as themes should ideally have a singular focus; (b) are related but do not overlap, so they are not repetitive, although they may build on previous themes; and (c) directly address your research question (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 66). We believed we adhered to the guidelines.
Phase 6: Producing the Report – In this last phase, we composed the final research project, the dissertation (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

### Appendix E - Barriers to Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University/Search Firm</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Barrier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Barb</td>
<td>“Their [managers/supervisors] not having those conversations with their employees” about career growth and professional development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Barb</td>
<td>“I think that some [employees] are happy in their role” and have no desire to advance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Donna</td>
<td>Managers are not receptive to implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Donna</td>
<td>Incumbents are worried about job security if they train others how to perform their jobs; “They [incumbents] don't want to give you power. Power is important at the top of the organization and they ain't just sharing it with everybody.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Kurt</td>
<td>Too much paperwork and unfamiliar with the HR terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>It’s not likely to work in my favor. “I haven't been considered for something like this before or I got overlooked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1, University #3, University #2 Search Firm #2</td>
<td>Tom, David, Olivia Chad</td>
<td>The LDP participants are trained but do not stay, even if they go to another unit inside the institution/system, it seems like a loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>It is hard to quantify metrics to correlate with benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #3</td>
<td>Tammy, David</td>
<td>It is hard to stay focused because day-to-day tasks get in the way; Not enough time and resources to implement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #2</td>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>It is difficult for the incumbent to watch the successor assume the vacated role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #3</td>
<td>Rhonda</td>
<td>Too lean and short staffed to implement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #3, University #1</td>
<td>David, Tom, Donna</td>
<td>LDP participant is being developed but has no position to assume.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Sam, Donna, Chara</td>
<td>LDP participant feels entitled to an increase in compensation for being groomed and developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Lance, Rhonda, Chad</td>
<td>Does not allow room for minorities and diverse candidates, “It’s more of the good old boy network.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Betty</td>
<td>The LDP participant is willing to participate, but the supervisor/manager is not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #2</td>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Concerned the LDP participant might exemplify behaviors or characteristics of the incumbent and the organization needs a change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #2</td>
<td>Lena</td>
<td>Not adequate financial resources to support the work.</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University #1</td>
<td>Lance</td>
<td>Overcoming the notion that there has to be a national search to fill an academic position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>