THE PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRANSFERRED FROM ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CLASSES TO THE WORKPLACE: A STUDY OF THE FHSU LEADERSHIP STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

by

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B.S., Kansas State University, 2000
M.S., Texas A&M University, 2001

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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Abstract

Employers want to hire students with the appropriate skill set for the job. These skills include communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills (Billing, 2003; Shivpuri & Kim, 2004). The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether students perceive themselves to be transferring employability skills learned in the Fort Hays State University (FHSU) Leadership Studies Certificate Program to the workplace. The Leadership Studies Certificate Program consists of three academic leadership courses; Introduction to Leadership to Leadership Concepts, Introduction to Leadership Behaviors, and Fieldwork in Leadership Studies. Three groups were created for the purpose of the study. Group one served as a control group and consisted of participants who had not taken a leadership course at FHSU. Group two consisted of a sample of students who had completed one or two courses out of the Leadership Studies Certificate Program. Participants who had completed the entire Leadership Studies Certificate made up group three.

The study sought to evaluate the participants' perceptions with regard to the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as their level of competence in performing each of the employability skills. The study also sought the supervisors' perceptions of the study participants in each of the three groups. Employability skills studied were problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded.

Study participants and their supervisors both perceived the ability to manage self as the most important skill in the workplace. Findings showed no differences between participant groups with respect to the perceived importance and competence levels on

each of the six employability skill constructs. Supervisors of Leadership Studies Certificate recipients deemed communication skills as more important to their employee's job than supervisors who employed students who had never taken an FHSU leadership course. No differences were found between supervisor groups with respect to perceived importance and competence on the remainder of the employability skills. Further research should be conducted on the Leadership Studies Certificate Program to understand its impact on students' development of employability skills. Upon conclusion of this analysis, possible curriculum modifications should be considered.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to nine people who have influenced my life more than I can express in these few words.

To Mike, thank you for your truly unconditional love and for being so incredibly supportive of me as I tackled this endeavor. These few words don't thank you enough. Thank you for being my best friend Mike. I love you more than any words or actions can ever express.

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CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

Background and Rationale for the Study: An Overview

College students are studying to prepare themselves for the changing workforce and are expected to learn content that is relevant to the workplace. This content should be a balance of "hard" technical skills and "soft" interpersonal skills, and are both skills considered as essential to success in the workplace (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Evers, Rush, & Berdrow, 1998; Hofstrand, 1996; Shivpuri & Kim, 2004; Watson, 2003). Employers recognize that "soft" skill development is essential for their employees. These skills are difficult to teach to employees once they are on the job. Therefore, they should be learned through development opportunities such as higher education. Peddle (2000) concluded that college students in entry-level jobs have not acquired the skills necessary for the workforce. Hence, students are not prepared for their career demands. Employers hire college graduates with the hope that they will be productive corporate citizens. These employers have been asked extensively by discipline scholars, faculty members, and career service agencies what skills they are looking for when hiring new employees (Andrews & Wooten, 2005).

Research shows that employers want employees who have interpersonal skills, can communicate effectively, are problem solvers and critical thinkers, and can work well with a team (Billing, 2003). Shivpuri and Kim (2004) reported similar results from a study of employers' needs from new employees in the workplace. Employers want these transferable employability skills in their new hires. It is becoming increasingly important for graduates to be able to apply the knowledge and skills learned in higher education institutions to the workforce (Crebert, Bates, Bell, Patrick, & Cragnolini, 2004; Robinson

& Garton, 2007; Watson, 2003). Employers feel that college students are often ill-equipped to be successful in the workplace because they have not mastered these employability skills. Many sense that college students may focus more heavily on learning the hard, technical skills rather than the aforementioned transferable employability skills (Dunne & Rawlins, 2000; Hindmarch, Warren, & Johnson, 2004; Poole & Zahn, 1993; Tanyel, Mitchell, & McAlum, 1999). "It has to be recognized that the demand for graduates to use their subject knowledge in subsequent employment is minimal, but the opportunity to utilize their employability skills is tremendous" (Fallows & Steven, 2000, p. 82). Students must not only be able to access information, but apply the information through problem solving and teamwork processes.

Employers feel that it is the responsibility of higher education to prepare students with these employability skills. These skills include teamwork, problem solving, leadership and interpersonal skills, and the ability to communicate. Casner-Lotto & Barrington (2006) surveyed 400 employers across the United States and found the most important skills cited for college graduates to possess were professionalism/work ethic, oral and written communications, teamwork, and critical thinking. Graduates are reported to be deficient in applied skills such as written communications and leadership. Unfortunately, according to employers, higher education is not doing an adequate job in developing these employability skills (Banerji, 2007; Peddle, 2000; Shivpuri & Kim, 2004). Candy & Crebert (1991) stated that

> one of the main criticisms that employers make of their new employees is that they tend to emerge from (the) university with their heads full of theories, principles, and information but are often ill-equipped to deal with

aspects of the workplace such as problem-solving, decision-making, working in a team, and learning for themselves" (p. 572).

Yet another argument was made by Evers et al. (1998) noting that the supply and demand of employer needs and what students are contributing on the job do not match. The demand for skills is higher than the current supply. A federal report written by the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education further illustrates this point stating that "employers reported repeatedly that many new graduates they hire are not prepared to work, lacking the critical thinking, writing, and problem-solving skills needed in today's workplaces" (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 3). These arguments make a strong case that students are not adequately prepared to enter the workforce.

Invariably these skills are defined as employability skills, key skills, core skills, soft skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills and/or transferable skills (Fallows & Steven, 2000). The literature uses each of these terms interchangeably. Even though the contrasting semantics of the terms exist, the research is consistent that these skills, no matter how they are labeled, are needed in the workplace. Atkins (1999) stated that "in the past decade there has been a steady stream of reports and papers urging the higher education sector to take key, core, transferable and employability skills into the heart of students' learning experience" (p. 267). The information that employers provide is critical to the role that higher education can and should play in preparing students for the workplace. As costs of training and development opportunities rise, employers are looking to higher education to provide these necessary skills in students before they are hired. Higher education should continually evaluate and assess the needs of the

employers and make adjustments to the curriculum if it is to adequately prepare graduates with skills to be successful in the workplace. Shivpuri and Kim (2004) stated that

> although employment of their graduates is not the only goal of colleges, it is still important for college administrators and employers to strive for open channels of communication and continuous dialogue in order to recognize, discuss, and resolve these outstanding discrepancies and more efficiently serve their common link: the students (p. 44).

Leadership is a relatively new academic field, with its focus in higher education gaining momentum in the past 25 years. Research shows that leadership can be learned (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1997; Brungardt, 1996; Williams, Townsend, & Lindner, 2005). Rost and Barker (2000) stated that "leadership education is aimed at producing citizens for a democratic society" (p. 3). These citizens should contribute their leadership abilities to any aspect of society, whether in the workplace, the home, the community, or any other context. Leadership educators hold a level of responsibility for preparing today's college students for leadership opportunities in the future. Leadership education can assist in supplying students with the demanded employability skills. While the sole responsibility should not be placed with this group of educators, the skills sought by employers fit into the breadth of leadership education and development. Hence, leadership education could be the answer to the void in graduate preparedness for the workplace.

In the last three decades there has been a large growth in the number of leadership programs offered on college campuses. These leadership programs, found in many different areas of higher education institutions, number over 1000. Both curricular and

co-curricular programs are housed in student affairs and academic colleges, departments, and units. The academic programs across the country number nearly 100, with these programs offering undergraduate majors, minors, certificates, as well as graduate degrees (Riggio, Ciulla, & Sorenson, 2003). These leadership programs aim to help lessen the gap between employers' needs and the skill set with which graduates enter their first jobs.

A study conducted by Brungardt, Greenleaf, Brungardt, and Arensdorf (2005) looked in-depth into fifteen academic leadership programs. The core philosophy of these fifteen degree programs was found to be very similar in that students are encouraged to not only learn leadership, but also apply those skills to their classroom, organizations, community, workplace, and beyond. The student outcomes in each program were not identical. However, most programs did include a balance of theory and practice courses, with a majority also including a capstone-type experience. Few empirical studies have reviewed learning goals and objectives of academic leadership programs (Riggio et al., 2003).

As leadership education programs continue to grow rapidly in colleges and universities across the country, the challenge is to develop proper evaluation and assessment measures of these programs. The discipline of leadership is new to academia and because of that, academic rigor and applicability of the degree are questioned. Leadership educators must continue to take opportunities to evaluate and assess leadership education programs. This process will give the discipline much more credibility, which would better equip the workforce if leadership education programs are teaching what they say they are teaching (Brungardt & Crawford, 1996; Riggio et al., 2003).

Studies have aimed at evaluating learning outcomes from leadership programs. However, there is still much work to be done in this area. Dugan and Komives (2007) recently concluded the first round of a multi-institutional study of student and academic affairs driven leadership programs across the country. Using the Social Change Leadership Model (Astin & Astin, 2000) as the framework, students from 52 primarily research-one institutions across the country were asked to evaluate their leadership skills on a survey. The initial findings showed that students who received training were confident in their leadership skills.

Positive leadership development outcomes were found from participants in leadership programs from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation evaluation (Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999). Students who had received some type of leadership training had significantly higher communication and problem-solving skills; and were able to assume more civic responsibility (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999).

Fort Hays State University has been conducting assessment of its leadership program since its creation in 1993 (Brungardt & Crawford, 1996). Results from these assessments reveal that students respond favorably to their overall experience. However, these assessments only included self-report data. More recently, a rigid behavior-based assessment process had been put into place to evaluate student outcomes, but the findings are not yet available (Goertzen, 2008) and will not include employer assessment data.

Leadership education cannot, however, be deemed effective if it does not sufficiently connect students' academic experiences to their future workplace

experiences. Hence, research on the transfer of employability skills taught in leadership programs to the workplace is essential.

Statement of Problem

The call for improving the skills sought by employers is well documented in the literature. Leadership education is seeking to give college students the opportunity to learn and practice these skills in academic leadership programs. Progress is being made in the area of leadership program assessment and evaluation. However, none of the studies have looked at the transferability of skills learned in leadership programs to the workplace. Fort Hays State University students who are receiving the Leadership Studies Certificate are thought to possess the skills needed most by employers. Formal assessment of these students and their employers has not been conducted, so this conclusion cannot yet be drawn. This is an area of research that needs to be conducted so that necessary curriculum or delivery adjustments in the Fort Hays State University Leadership Studies program can be made.

One would not argue that leadership programs seem to teach important skills to be transferred to the workplace. But are we teaching the right skills to students? Are students able to transfer those skills learned in their leadership programs to their workplace? If not, what needs to be done differently in academic leadership programs to better prepare students? Essentially, these questions must be answered so that appropriate changes are made to academic leadership programs in higher education so that students learn and transfer their learning beyond their collegiate experience to the workplace and other contexts.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether students are transferring employability skills learned in the Fort Hays State University (FHSU) Leadership Studies Certificate Program to the workplace. The study sought to evaluate the participants' perceptions with regard to the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as their level of competence in performing each of the employability skills. The study also evaluated the supervisors of the participants. Supervisors evaluated the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as the perceived competence level of the participant performing these skills in the workplace. Both the participant and supervisor data assisted in making inferences about the perceived transfer of employability skills.

Methodology

This study focused on the transfer of employability skills learned from the Fort Hays State University (FHSU) Leadership Studies Certificate program to the workplace. This study was a quasi-experimental research design, consisting of a questionnaire distributed to random stratified samples of FHSU Leadership Studies Certificate participants and non-participants since January of 2002.

Fort Hays State University has been offering leadership courses since the early 1990's, with the program becoming an academic department and offering an undergraduate degree in 2001. The program is designed to give students the opportunity to learn and apply leadership skills through a series of courses. The expectancy then is that students will take the skills they learn in the certificate, minor, or major and apply

them to their workplace, community, or even family. Prior to this study, the program had not done a formal assessment to evaluate whether students are actually transferring the skills learned in the program to the workplace.

The Leadership Studies Certificate Program has been the largest program out of Fort Hays State University's Department of Leadership Studies with hundreds of students from all undergraduate majors participating in and earning a leadership certificate. This certificate program consists of three academic courses for a total of nine hours. After completing the nine hours, students receive a signed certificate saying that they have successfully completed the FHSU Leadership Studies Certificate Program.

The first course in the certificate program, Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300), focuses on the history and evolution of leadership theory. The second course, Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302), gives students the opportunity to hone their collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving, creative thinking, and strategic change making skills. Fieldwork in Leadership Studies (LDRS 310) is the final course in the certificate program. Students in this class learn the leadership process by doing leadership through a semester-long project with a community agency. This class is a service-learning course, which gives students the opportunity to put theory into practice through a service project that impacts the community. Through intense reflection activities during the course, students are able to make connections between the theories learned in previous leadership courses to their actual experience. Service-learning not only enhances the students' understanding of civic responsibility, but also enhances their learning of theories and concepts from their academic courses (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Giles & Eyler, 1994).

The sample was stratified into three groups. The three groups were as follows: group one serving as the control group (participants who had not taken a FHSU leadership courses), group two (participants who had taken only one or two of the courses in the leadership certificate – LDRS 300 and LDRS 302, but not LDRS 310), and group three (participants who had successfully completed all nine hours of the leadership certificate - LDRS 300, LDRS 302, and LDRS 310).

The two-part survey used in this research study was based on the work of Evers, Rush, and Berdrow (1998), Shiarella, McCarthy, and Tucker (2000), and Robinson (2006). Part I was modified from original instruments developed by Evers et al. (1998) and Shiarella et al. (2000). Part I measured both the self-perceived importance and competence levels of six employability skill constructs on a 4 point Likert-type scale. These six constructs consisted of the following: 1) problem-solving skills; 2) communication skills; 3) teamwork skills; 4) change and innovation behaviors; 5) ability to manage self; and 6) being civic-minded.

Part II asked participants questions that pertained to the delivery method of their leadership coursework, as well as questions that related to their occupational and education status. These questions regarded current employment status, current education status, number of hours per week on the job, longevity in the current position by number of months, annual salary/income, gender, age, and ethnicity. Part III asked questions related to participants' experiences in leadership education courses. Concluding the survey in Part IV, participants were asked to provide the name and contact information of their immediate supervisor at their current job. Upon receiving these responses, a separate, but similar survey was sent to the supervisor's contact information provided by

the study participant. The survey for the immediate supervisors consisted of the same six employability skill constructs. The immediate supervisors were asked to rate the level of importance of each skill to their employee's success in the workplace. They also rated their perception of the level of competence of the employee who had completed the first survey.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What employability skills are important in the workplace?
    a. What are participants' perceptions? Are there differences between groups?
    b. What are supervisors' perceptions? Are there differences between groups?
    c. Are there differences in the perceptions between participants and their supervisors?
2. Do participants have meaningful employability skills demanded by the workplace?
    a. Does a leadership certificate program enhance participants' relevant employability skills?
    b. Does the number of academic leadership courses, in an academic leadership program, affect employability skill development?
3. Does a leadership education program deliver necessary employability skills?

Significance of Study

This line of inquiry was significant because evaluating the transfer of leadership skills learned in an academic leadership program can influence leadership education programs in the future. Understanding if participants take what they learn in the classroom and apply it to their jobs can potentially assist in further evaluation of leadership education programs. The results of this study can assist in providing a more complete understanding of both supervisors' needs and whether or not Leadership Studies Certificate participants are helping to meet those needs. Upon conclusion of this study, strengths and limitations can be more confidently shared with supervisors, scholars, students, and other stakeholders.

Definition of Terms

Demographics: Gender, age, ethnicity, current employment status, current academic status, length in current position, current salary, number of hours spent at job per week, and type of leadership course delivery from Fort Hays State University.

Department of Leadership Studies: An academic department at Fort Hays State University that offers an undergraduate major, minor, and certificate in Leadership Studies delivered both on campus and on-line (www.fhsu.edu/leadership).

Employability skills: "Transferable core skill groups that represent essential functional and enabling knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by the 21st century workplace…necessary for career success at all levels of employment and for all levels of education" (Overtoom, 2000, p. 2).

Problem-Solving Skills: "Skills that include the ability to recognize and define problems, invent and implement solutions, and track and evaluate results" (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990, p. 4).

Communication Skills: "Verbal, written, and listening skills that encourage effective interaction with a variety of individuals and groups to facilitate the gathering, integrating, and conveying of information" (Evers et al., 1998, p. 78).

Teamwork Skills: Skills focus on team development and performance. Team development refers to helping the team form and finish a goal. Team performance refers to the team dynamics and working to maintain relationships (Northouse, 2001).

Change and Innovation Behaviors: Behaviors that promote and encourage change. These behaviors include risk taking, creativity, visioning, the ability to conceptualize, and organization (Evers et al., 1998).

Managing Self: The ability and motivation to gain knowledge and develop practices for maximizing one's ability to deal with the uncertainty of a changing environment (Evers et al., 1998).

Civic-Minded: One who is committed to, involved in, and knowledgeable about service. He or she uses these skills to participate as a citizen in solving local problems, which inadvertently betters the community (Siedl, Mulkey, & Blanton, 1999).

Employers: The organizations, companies, and recruiters that make decisions about hiring employees.

FHSU: Fort Hays State University in Hays, KS.

LDRS 300: Introduction to Leadership Concepts course taught in the Department of Leadership Studies at FHSU.

LDRS 302: Introduction to Leadership Behaviors course taught in the Department of Leadership Studies at FHSU.

LDRS 310: Fieldwork in Leadership Studies course taught in the Department of Leadership Studies at FHSU.

Leadership education: "Formal and structured learning activities and educational environments that are intended to enhance and foster leadership abilities" (Brungardt, 1996, p. 83).

Leadership Studies Certificate Program: A nine credit hour program offered on-line and on-campus through the Department of Leadership Studies at FHSU.

Participants: Enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students.

Group One: Enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students that had not taken any leadership courses. This group served as the control group.

Group Two: Enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students who had taken LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302, but not LDRS 310.

Group Three: Enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students who had completed the full Leadership Studies Certificate Program.

Self-assessment of employability skills: The self-perceived competence in each employability skill as evaluated by the participant.

Supervisor perceptions of worker employability skills: The competence level of each employability skill displayed by the participant as perceived by his/her immediate supervisor.

Supervisors: The immediate supervisors of the study participants.

Training transfer: The ability of an employee to learn skills through training and successfully apply them to his/her job (Elangovan & Karakowsky, 1999).

Assumptions

A research assumption is something that is perceived to be true about the study. The following assumptions were made for this study:

1. Participants objectively reported their perceptions of both the importance of and their competence of the employability skills.
2. Participants were willing to provide the name and contact information of their supervisor (current immediate supervisor).
3. Supervisors (participants' supervisors) objectively completed the questionnaire honestly and without bias.

These assumptions were created prior to the data collection and were assumed to be consistent throughout all study participants.

Limitations

The following limitations were identified prior to data collection. Each limitation discussed is related to the sample population, methodology, or possible influences on participants' responses to the questionnaire.

1. The study was limited to students who had participated in the Leadership Studies Certificate Program coursework through the Department of Leadership Studies at Fort Hays State University from January 2002 – December 2007, and students who did not take a course through the Department of Leadership Studies from January 2002 – December 2007, and their immediate supervisors who were reported by the participants.
2. Resources (financial) limited the study to a sample of the population of all participants who had participated in the Leadership Studies Certificate Program coursework through the Department of Leadership Studies at Fort Hays State University.
3. Variables such as maturation, work experiences, training, and coursework in addition to the FHSU leadership coursework completed could not be isolated.
4. Enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students may have had the researcher as their instructor for their leadership coursework. This may have created bias with the research participants and their response to the questionnaire.

Organization of Study

The present study is organized as follows. Chapter one presented an introduction of the study. Chapter two presents the literature review, which serves as a means to inform readers of the reasoning that encourages the development and design of the study. It consists of four sections. The first section discusses the history and importance of employability skill development. Transfer of training research programs is the focus of the second section. The third section traces the history of leadership education programs in higher education. Lastly, the fourth section looks at the FHSU Leadership Certificate Program. Chapter three presents the design of this study, its methodology, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter four provides the results from the data analysis. Lastly, chapters five presents a discussion and summary of study findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2 - Review of Literature

Overview

This chapter provides a foundation for understanding the skills needed by employees entering the workforce and their relationship to leadership education. To begin, the need for employability skill development is explored. Second, employability skills are broken down further and discussed with relation to their applicability to success on the job. To provide a base for the understanding of the transfer of learned employability skills to the workplace, transfer of training research is then explored. Next, the history and emergence of leadership education into higher education are traced, with specific focus on academic leadership programs and their assessment. Finally the Fort Hays State University Certificate Program and the expected student outcomes are discussed.

The Need for Employability Skill Development

Supervisors have long been concerned about the development of workforce skills. In the late 1980's, this concern created a push for intense reflection on the state of workforce development. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), a non-profit professional association, undertook an intensive study to determine what employers deemed as essential skills in America's workforce. Supported by a grant from the Department of Labor, researchers conducted on-site and telephone interviews and consulted experts to find out what skills were needed of employees. As shown in Table 2.1, sixteen skills within seven groups were identified as being important to the success of employees (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990).

Table 2.1 American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) Skills

The Foundation	*Developmental Skills*
Learning How to Learn	Self-Esteem
Basic Competency Skills	Motivation and Goal Setting
Reading	Career Development
Writing	*Group Effectiveness Skills*
Computation	Interpersonal Skills
Communication Skills	Teamwork
Speaking	Negotiation
Listening	*Influencing Skills*
Adaptability Skills	Understanding Organizational Culture
Problem-Solving	Sharing Leadership
Thinking Creatively	

(Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990)

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), appointed by the Secretary of Labor in 1990, published a report to identify which skills were deemed as essential to success in the workplace. The Commission identified three predominant themes serving as a foundation of skills needed for effective job functions: basic skills, thinking skills, and personal qualities (1991). These skills were determined by SCANS members by reviewing research, talking to field experts, and visiting two major manufacturing and sales corporations. Basic skills are those such as reading, writing, and math, as well as communication skills. Thinking creatively, problem-solving, and lifelong learning are those skills and behaviors that were deemed as thinking skills. Finally, personal qualities included taking individual responsibility and functioning with integrity.

Further evaluation resulted in a list of specific competencies that could be taught and were representative of workforce complexities. These competencies were broken into five areas: resources, interpersonal, information, systems, and technology.

Resources involved organizing and allocating resources. Interpersonal skills included the development of teamwork skills, customer service, and working with diversity. Information management dealt with acquiring and sharing information using oral and written communication skills, as well as computer skills. Critical thinking skills and performance monitoring fit into the systems behavior area. Lastly, technology interaction involved the ability to choose appropriate technologies to deliver messages (SCANS, 1991).

In a 2006 collaborative effort, The Conference Board, Corporate Voices for Working Families, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and the Society for Human Resource Management conducted an in-depth study of corporate employers on the workplace readiness of new employees (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006). Over 400 employers across the United States were studied in an effort to understand what skills employees needed to be successful in the "global economic playing field" (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006, p. 9). Skills in basic knowledge were found to be an integral component of workplace success. These skills, writing in English, spoken English language, reading comprehension, mathematics, and science, were ranked as "very important" to four-year college graduates for job success. Applied skills were defined as those employability skills needed for successful entry-level job performance. Table 2.2 illustrates the top five applied skills in rank order according to employers surveyed.

Table 2.2 Applied Skills for Four-Year College Graduates in Rank Order

Rank	Applied Skill	Percent rating as "very important"
1	Oral Communications	95.4%
2	Teamwork/Collaboration	94.4%
3	Professionalism/Work Ethic	93.8%
4	Written Communications	93.1%
5	Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving	92.1%

(Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006)

When combined with the basic knowledge skills, the applied skills were still ranked higher by employers as being "very important". J. Willard Marriott, Jr., Chairman and CEO of Marriott International, Inc. highlighted skills that were imperative to workplace effectiveness stating that not only do young people need basic skills such as reading and math, but also critical thinking, teamwork, and adaptation to change skills (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006).

The theses from these two major studies have a common concern: employee skill development. Subsequently, the findings have given employers and educators insight into the need for skill development before employees enter the workplace.

Skills that Employers Desire in Employees

Countless studies have evaluated exactly what employers are looking for in their new employees. In a 1994 article, Phillipi and Banta stated that the assessment of employer satisfaction in employee preparedness after graduating from institutions of higher education is important. This can assist in providing tangible evidence of the quality of education that students are receiving and its relevance to the workforce. What are the skills that are most desired by employers? Are these the same skills that are being taught in academic classrooms? In a 2003 study, Zinser concluded that communication

and interpersonal relations; teamwork and problem-solving; and managing resources are key elements of employability skills. Robinson (2006) and Robinson and Garton (2007) indicated that leadership skills, communication skills and conflict management skills are some of the employability skills desired by employers.

The National Association of College and Employers (NACE) is a professional association that connects college career services to potential employers. NACE has compiled a list of the top 20 skills requested by employers (2007). These skills in rank order are as follows: (1) analytical skills; (2) communication skills; (3) computer skills; (4) creativity; (5) detail-oriented; (6) risk-taker; (7) flexibility/adaptability; (8) friendly; (9) honesty/integrity; (10) interpersonal skills; (11) leadership and management skills; (12) motivation/initiative; (13) organizational and time management skills; (14) real life experiences; (15) self-confidence; (16) strong work ethic; (17) tactfulness; (18) teamwork skills; (19) technical skills; and (20) well-mannered/polite. These skills are considered to be important for potential employees to possess and apply to their job.

Tanyel, Mitchell, and McAlum (1999) studied business school graduates and their respective employers to determine the desired skills sought by employers. Corporations, both U.S. and foreign owned, and business school faculty members were included in the population sample. Surveys and focus group interviews revealed that the perception of the importance of seven attributes was extremely different. Prospective employers saw greater importance in oral communication, decision-making and analytical ability, written communication, and creativity. Faculty members saw greater importance in ethical values, project management, and persuasive ability. This discrepancy in perspective is not entirely uncommon.

A 2000 study aimed to understand the competences being taught in leadership education programs across the nation and being sought after by employers of graduates of a large, southern land-grant university (Badal, 2000). Employers sought tangible skills such as taking initiative, listening, problem-solving, and being flexible and open to change. However, leadership educators emphasized teambuilding, knowledge of self, and understanding leadership styles in their courses. Agreement was reached on the importance and teaching of decision-making skills and accountability for one's actions. These findings further reveal that there are differences between skills and behaviors being taught and learned in higher education classrooms and those skills and behaviors being sought by potential employers.

Robinson (2005) conducted a study to identify the employability skills deemed most important by agriculture college graduates and their supervisors. Using a survey, the results showed that newly-hired graduates perceived problem-solving and motivation as most important to their jobs. Supervisors felt that working well with fellow employees, motivation, organization, and team management were most important. All 67 skills evaluated by both graduates and their supervisors were perceived to be "moderately important" to workplace success. However, there was a discrepancy between employers and graduates perception of important employability skills. Competence levels of these skills were also studied. Newly hired graduates saw themselves most competent at working independently, while their supervisors perceived motivation to be the newly-hired graduates' strongest skill. Both the graduates and their supervisors perceived "identifying political implications of the decision to be made" as being the weakest skill that new hires possess.

In their 2004 study, Shivpuri and Kim sought to understand the discrepancies between what colleges and employers saw as important employability skills for graduates to possess when entering and succeeding long-term in the workplace. A random sample of university department heads and college recruiters from across the United States were selected to participate in the survey research. Employers rated six of the 12 constructs as "very important" while department heads ranked only two of the 12 same constructs as "very important." The two constructs that were agreed upon were ethics and integrity and knowledge. Employers also stressed the importance of leadership, interpersonal skills, adaptability and life skills, and perseverance. The largest difference in skills ranked was that of leadership. Leadership emerged in the top three of the employer's list, but in the bottom third of the department head's list. This quality of leadership that many employers seek has continued to be largely ignored by college administrators. Coplin (2003) argues that employers want to hire employees who are capable leaders and can motivate their co-workers in the process. Brungardt and Gould (2001) further support this notion stating that employers want employees who are deemed as self-starters and value being empowered in the workplace.

In 2004, Shivpuri and Kim stated that "many feel that there is a skills gap between the manner in which students are prepared for the real world in a university setting and what they will need to be successful in the workplace – and for life in general" (p. 1). This skills gap discussion shifts the focus from workplace preparation to the responsibility of higher education (Cox & King, 2006). Employers want to hire students that are ready for the workplace. This apparent "skills gap" serves as a call to universities to consider incorporating leadership into programs to close the gap.

The Bases of Competence

In their book *The Bases of Competence*, Evers, Rush, and Berdrow (1998) defined eighteen different competencies in which college graduates should be proficient to succeed on the job. "A competency-based approach to college education is necessary and feasible to meet workplace demands" (Evers et al., 1998, p. xix). Two phases of the study resulted in the definition of 18 competencies. Phase one was qualitative in nature, with individual and group interviews being conducted on employers and university graduate employees in the United States and Canada. From these interviews and further literature review, a questionnaire was developed to assess the adequacy of thirteen skills. These skills can be viewed in Table 2.3. Averages of the graduates' and employers' scores showed that the non-technical skills were deemed as the skills that needed to be most improved upon. The technical skills such as administrative and quantitative skills, were scored the highest. In all, 442 graduates and 213 managers participated in phase one of the study.

Phase two of the study was more elaborate in order to allow more extensive comparisons across cohorts (Evers et al., 1998). An additional review of literature that expanded on phase one findings resulted in the expansion from thirteen to eighteen competencies. These eighteen competencies can be viewed in Table 2.3. This list of eighteen skills revealed primarily non-technical transferable skills because earlier work had indicated these skills as being most important, and the biggest problem areas amongst new employees. Upon the expansion of the skill set, employers and graduates were asked again to complete a questionnaire reflecting the perception of the attainment of the competencies. To control for bias that could result from using only self-perception data,

professors and employers of graduates participated in the study by rating the students and new graduate employees respectively. Data from 1610 graduates, students, and employers were retained from only those individuals who had participated in the study for three consecutive years.

Table 2.3 Employability Skills Graduates Need to Possess

	Phase One	*Phase Two*
1	Administrative Skills	Problem-solving/analytic
2	Quantitative and math skills	Decision-making
3	Decision-making skills	Planning and organizing
4	Ability to organize and plan	Personal organization/time management
5	Ability to be creative and innovative	Risk taking skills
6	Oral communication skills	Oral communication
7	Ability to adapt and be flexible	Written communication
8	Leadership skills	Listening
9	Written communication skills	Interpersonal skills
10	Ability to initiate (be a self-starter)	Managing conflict
11	Technical skills	Leadership/influence
12	Problem-solving skills	Coordinating
13	Ability to work independently	Creativity/innovation/change
14		Visioning
15		Ability to conceptualize
16		Learning skills
17		Personal strengths
18		Technical skills

(Evers et al., 1998)

Upon completion of the three year second phase of the study, the eighteen competencies were reduced to four major categories using factor analysis. The four bases of competence were identified as mobilizing innovation and change, managing people and tasks, communicating, and managing self. Mobilizing innovation and change included skills such as risk-taking, creativity, and change competencies. Managing people and tasks included competencies such as decision-making, managing conflict, and planning. Oral and written communication and listening were included in the

communicating base. Finally, managing self consisted of learning and understanding personal strengths. Evers et al. (1998) argue that competence in all four bases is essential for workplace success. The following skill definitions further reflect the competencies addressed in the aforementioned questionnaire, as well as others requested by employers.

Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving skills are those that "include the ability to recognize and define problems, invent and implement solutions, and track and evaluate results" (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990, p. 4). Problem-solving skills are often the most requested from employers (Evers et al., 1998). Although different processes, problem-solving and decision-making both fit into this construct.

Problem-solving and analytic

Problem-solving is a skill that has been identified as a predictor for effectiveness in an organization (DuBrin, 2005; Zaccaro, Mumford, Connelly, Marks, & Gilbert, 2000). Employers seek employees who are problem solvers (Coplin, 2003; DuBrin, 2007). Problem-solving involves identifying the root problem, choosing a solution, and then implementing that solution. This problem-solving process can be learned. Research calls for a deliberate inclusion of problem-solving skills into the undergraduate curriculum (Sproull, 2001).

Pokras (1995) suggests a six step process toward problem-solving. The six steps include: 1) recognizing the problem, 2) labeling the problem, 3) analyzing the cause of the problem, 4) exploring optional solutions to the problem, 5) making a decision to solve

the problem, and 6) creating and following an action plan to implement the solution (p. 31).

DuBrin (2005) further expanded these steps and formulated a nine step process to problem-solving. This systematic approach is more appropriate for complex problems in teams. The steps include the identification and clarification of the problem and cause, as well as searching for solutions and implementing those solutions. The final steps provide the opportunity for evaluation.

Continuous improvement is critical to the success of the problem-solving process (Coplin, 2003). DuBrin (2005) suggested that experience, flexibility, intuition, and ability to take risks are skills required for effective problem-solving. Knowledge and practice in problem-solving is essential to workplace success. "Developing the ability to solve problems well helps employees advance their careers as they are able to contribute more to the team and their company" (DuBrin, 2005, p. 162).

Decision-making

Decision-making is at times considered to be a component of effective problem-solving. Evers et al. (1998) defined decision-making on the basis of analyzing the long and short term effects of decisions, but also recognizing the potential ethical and political implications that occur with the process. Both leader-centered and group-centered decision-making approaches are illustrated in the literature. Leader-centered approaches focus on the leader exercising his or her power to direct, drive, and instruct members; whereas the group-centered approach focuses on empowering group members to make decisions and follow through with the action (Lussier & Achua, 2007).

One of the most noted decision-making models is the normative decision-making model (formerly known as the leader-participation model) based on the work of Vroom (2000). This model encourages leaders to look at situational factors in order to determine an appropriate decision-making style. Situational factors considered are decision significance, importance of commitment, leader expertise, likelihood of commitment, group support, group expertise, and team competence. It has been found that employees who follow these procedures are perceived by their employers and colleagues as effective in the workplace (DuBrin, 2007).

Communication Skills

Communication focuses on the gathering and transfer of information through interaction in many diverse forms (Evers et al., 1998; Lussier & Achua, 2007). Communication involves verbal, written, and listening modes. Research shows that all forms of communication are deemed as priorities in employees. Furthermore, research shows substantial evidence that there is a positive relationship between communication competence and satisfactory performance in an organization (Bass, 1990). Thus communication can assist with collaboration and accountability in the current workplace (Corrado, 1994). "Employers want their employees to be good communicators, which is frequently an unfulfilled desire" (Coplin, 2003, p. 243). Verbal and written communication, as well as listening, are explored as necessary components of communication skills.

Verbal/oral communication

Coplin (2003) argues that effective employees have strong verbal communication skills. This verbal communication can lead to understanding between one another. Deemed as the most direct way of passing information, oral communication is defined by Evers et al. (1998) as "the ability to present information verbally to others, either one-to-one or in groups" (p. 85). Coplin (2003) suggests that this communication can happen both through verbal and non-verbal modes. To be effective, employees must be consistent with verbal and non-verbal mode usage (DuBrin, 2007). Verbal modes include things such as formal and informal presentations, one-on-one conversations, and story-telling (Coplin, 2003; Daft, 2005). Non-verbal modes accompany verbal messages, hereby impacting the message received. "Physical stance; eye contact; fluctuations in the voice, tone, and volume of the voice; hand gestures; speed of talking; and the number of pauses" (p. 85) are identified as the most prominent non-verbal modes of communicating (Evers et al., 1998).

At its foundational core, communication requires a sender and a receiver. Oral communication provides opportunities for adaptation of the message and feedback to occur between the sender and receiver (Evers et al., 1998). Lussier & Achua (2007) offer the following steps for improvement in sending an oral message:

1. Develop rapport; know your audience; and put the receiver at ease.
2. State your communication objective; influence, inform, and express feelings.
3. Transmit your message; tell people what you want them to do; and set deadlines for completing the task.

4. Check the receiver's understanding; ask direct questions; and use feedback.
5. Get a commitment and follow up; give deadlines; and make sure employees can do the task (p. 200-201).

Coplin (2003) stressed the importance of individuals becoming proficient in the use of visual displays. Employees need to master the use of presentation aids, whether simple or complex. Organizing and presenting content in a professional manner should be mastered in order to assist in communicating a message consistently and accurately (Coplin, 2003).

Written communication

Contrasted with oral communication, written communication is defined by Evers et al. (1998) as "the effective transfer of written information, either formally (through reports and business correspondence) or informally (through notes and memos)" (p. 86). Written communication is more structured than oral communication, with opportunities for both the sender and receiver to re-read a message (Evers et al., 1998). Coplin (2003) illustrates that work writing is designed to assist in communicating with others about problems and possible solutions.

DuBrin (2007) offers suggestions that impact both oral and written communication:

1. Be credible.
2. Gear your message to your listener.
3. Sell group members on the benefits of your suggestions.
4. Use heavy-impact and emotion-provoking words.

5. Use anecdotes and metaphors to communicate meaning.
6. Back up conclusions with data.
7. Minimize language errors, junk words, and vocalized pauses.
8. Write crisp, clear memos, letters, and reports, including a front loaded message (p. 359).

In addition, Coplin (2003) stresses the importance of editing and proofing skills to being an effective written communicator. Editing and proofreading skills refer to revising documents, making sure text is understandable and interesting, and eliminating grammatical errors and mistakes. Coplin (2003) argues that college students have poor editing and proofing skills because of their last minute writing practices. Successful employees can and should maximize their written communication skills to benefit their organization (DuBrin, 2007).

Listening

Listening is one of the most important communication tools (Lussier & Achua, 2007). It involves "the skill of grasping and interpreting a message's genuine meaning" (Daft, 2005, p. 349). Individuals must be effective listeners and presenters of information. Rampersad (2001) states that "when someone listens, the words are actively registered and processed in the brain and then used. Listening can thus be seen as, hearing, remembering, and using it [communication]" (p. 63).

Effective listening includes the following ten keys: 1) listen actively, 2) find areas of interest, (3) resist distractions, (4) capitalize on the fact that thought is faster than speech, (5) be responsive, (6) judge content, not delivery, (7) hold one's fire, (8) listen for ideas, (9) work at listening, and (10) exercise one's mind (Daft, 2005, p. 350). Effective

listening can also provide opportunities for constructive feedback to be given to the sender of the message (Corrado, 1994).

Lussier and Achua (2007) stated that listening "is the process of giving your undivided attention to the speaker" (p. 204). Effective listening should entail: (1) paying attention, (2) avoiding distractions, (3) staying tuned in, (4) not assuming and interrupting, (5) watching non-verbal cues, (6) asking questions, (7) taking notes, and (8) conveying meaning (p. 204-205).

Teamwork Skills

The use of teams in the workplace is becoming more and more prevalent. Teamwork is an essential organizational device in that it promotes the understanding of goals, makes efficient use of time, and can result in a higher quality product (Dunne & Rawlins, 2000). Daft argues that companies realize that highly functional teams help deliver quality products, excellent service and customer satisfaction (2005). Teamwork involves interpersonal relations, coordinating, and managing conflict (Evers et al., 1998).

Interpersonal relations

Evers et al. (1998) defined interpersonal skills as "working well with others (superiors, subordinates, and peers), understanding their needs, and being sympathetic to them" (p. 82). These skills relate to those involving interaction with others, which is similar to teamwork. Stech (1983) suggests that interpersonal relations include skills such as "soliciting opinions of others; recognizes the positions, ideas, and feelings of others; makes requests; engages in flexible, open communication; and focuses on feelings, emotions, and attitudes as they relate to personal needs" (Chapter four).

Teamwork can be defined as a commitment to common goals among all team members (Lussier & Achua, 2007). According to Dunne and Rawlins (2000) "teamwork is becoming increasingly important within higher education, not only because of employer demands but also a consequence of pragmatic requirements for change due to the increase in intake of students" (p. 361). Experiences like this in the classroom can foster the development of transferable skills (Dunne & Rawlins, 2000).

Coordinating

Coordinating refers to the skill of working with colleagues and encouraging positive collaborative relationships among one another (Evers et al., 1998). This skill relates to the ability of employees to take organizational resources, ideas, and people and connect them to a common goal. With coordinating being a shared responsibility, employees must take ownership of themselves, but also enable others at all levels to fulfill their individual roles. This coordination can encourage positive relationships (Evers et al., 1998).

Managing conflict

Evers et al. (1998) defines managing conflict as the "ability to identify sources of conflict between oneself and others, or between other people, and to take steps to overcome disharmony" (p. 101). Employees spend considerable time resolving conflict in the workplace. However, conflict can be positive and healthy for the organization (DuBrin, 2007; Evers et al., 1998). As organizations become more global, the ability to manage conflict effectively is ever apparent. Daft (2005) also states that high functioning teams often have conflict; however, it is more associated with tasks rather than relationships. This type of conflict can enhance "critical thinking skills, serve as an

impetus of change, and result in better decision-making" (Hughes, Ginnett, & Curphy, 2009, p. 673).

Change and Innovation Behaviors

Employers want workers who view change as being positive to the organization (Coplin, 2003). Past ratings of students and employers in this area indicate that certain education and workplace environments seem to dampen these change and innovation behaviors. However, change and innovation behaviors are in great demand. The supply is not meeting that demand (Evers et al., 1998). Crebert, Bates, Bell, Patrick, and Cragnolini (2004) echo these findings stating that "the new graduate is often unable to choose the best option, or, indeed, identify more than one" (p. 57). Risk taking; creativity, innovation, and change; the ability to conceptualize; visioning; organization and time management; and persistence are skills that tie soundly with change and innovation behaviors.

Risk taking

Risk taking is "taking reasonable job-related risks by recognizing alternative or different ways of meeting objectives while recognizing the potential negative outcomes and monitoring progress toward the set objectives" (Evers et al., 1998, p. 125). To bring about constructive change, an employee must take risks and be willing to implement the decisions associated with those risks (DuBrin, 2007). A tolerance of ambiguity and ability to deal with potentially negative repercussions are components of risk taking as well (Evers et al., 1998).

Kindler (1990) offers four principles to consider when contemplating a risk: "1) learning and personal growth require taking risks, 2) take only those risks where you can handle the loss, 3) adjust risks that are too much of a gamble, and 4) accept that the price of risking is occasional failure" (p. 3). Growth in an organization would not be possible if risks were not taken. Sharing risk is critical to a team in an organization. The employee should gain buy-in and support from the team in an effort to share the benefits and risks of the goal (Evers et al., 1998). "The will to stabilize no longer guarantees growth, success, or even survival. The will to change has become the answer (for organizations)" (Brungardt & Crawford, 1999, p. 20). Learning to take risks is essential for the development of positive, relevant organizations.

Creativity, innovation, and change

Creativity in organizations leads to change and innovation. An environment to promote these changes is necessary in the workplace (Evers et al., 1998). Creativity, innovation, and change is "the ability to adapt to situations of change. At times it involves the ability to initiate change and provide novel solutions to problems. It also involves the ability to reconceptualize roles in response to changing demands related to success" (Evers et al., 1998, p. 121). The creative process is generally thought to involve a pattern of stages. These five stages of creativity are as follows:

1. Opportunity or problem recognition – Discovering that there is a problem or opportunity deserving of a creative solution.
2. Immersion – Concentrating on the problem or opportunity.
3. Incubation – Subconsciously thinking about the problem or opportunity.

4. Insight – A solution to the problem or opportunity flashes into a person's mind.
5. Verification and application – Gathering data and support material for the solution. Applying the solution to the problem or opportunity (DuBrin, 2007).

Evers et al. (1998) argue that creativity is needed in environments that demand and foster innovation. When managing change it is imperative that the reason for change is clear in order to get buy-in from the employees. Innovation and change must balance vision and enthusiasm, as well as benefits and costs (Evers et al., 1998). "Leading change is perhaps the most difficult challenge facing any leader, yet it may be that this skill is the best differentiator between mediocre and exceptional leaders" (Hughes et al., 2009, p. 610).

Ability to conceptualize

The ability to conceptualize involves an understanding of organizational goals and how interrelated tasks fit into those goals. Evers et al. (1998) define it as "being able to combine relevant information from a number of sources, integrate information into more general frameworks, and apply information to new or broader contexts" (p. 120-121). Conceptualizing involves understanding and synthesizing a current situation and relating in to a larger context (Evers et al., 1998). Watson (2003) illustrated the need for this skill when he stated that "companies value employees who understand how their work fits into the bigger picture" (p. 211).

Visioning

Visioning involves the ability to move toward the future and create what ought to be. Evers et al. (1998) define visioning as "the ability to conceptualize the future of the company and provide innovative paths for the company to follow" (p. 126). A vision links to organizational change and garners commitment from employees within the organization. Visionaries must be creative and have the ability to communicate their vision within and outside the organization (Evers et al., 1998).

Organization and time management

Organization and time management involves setting priorities and then organizing and planning around those priorities. According to Evers et al. (1998), organization and time management involves multi-tasking, setting priorities, and managing time effectively in order to meet deadlines. This process is personal and must fit with the situation and organization. Coplin (2003) states that an effective employee should start organizing and managing time by making lists and determining a sequence of events for task completion, while being cognizant of time constraints.

Researchers have indicated ten keys to managing time (Fritz, Brown, Lunde, & Banset, 2005):

1. Run a time log to help you pinpoint and eliminate one time-consumer each month.
2. Identify priorities each day.
3. Set realistic goals.
4. Use some system for planning.
5. Establish deadlines for yourself.

6. Delegate, when feasible.
7. Plan meetings carefully.
8. Develop procedures for gathering data.
9. Group similar work tasks during uninterrupted time blocks.
10. Schedule some personal time each day (p. 146).

Coplin (2003) stated that "the ability to handle multiple assignments over a two or three week period, as well as to not miss highly routine activities, such as submitting weekly reports, is key to every professional job" (p. 15).

Persistence

Employers deem persistence as a beneficial characteristic for potential employees to have (Henry, 2005). Persistence is the "continued, steadfast pursuit of an objective despite some form of opposition or impediment" (Henry, 1995, p. 1). Having the mental capacity and will to overcome obstacles and other frustrating situations can heed success in employment. "Unfortunately for employers, people with a strong will to do what it takes to achieve are in short supply" (Coplin, 2003, p. 11). Employers want employees who are persistent and maintain a commitment to a goal through obstacles (Coplin, 2003).

Managing Self

Employees must have the ability to deal with uncertainty in a changing environment. This behavior exemplifies the need for employees to incorporate strategies to ensure growth and development within their careers. This self-improvement can lead to both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Managing self includes ensuring that one has the

necessary skills to do the job, can apply those skills, and has the ability to reflect. Self management focuses not only the organizational benefits, but also the employee's individual benefits. To do this, individuals must be constantly learning and understand their personal strengths (Evers et al., 1998).

Lifelong learning

Employers have specified that lifelong learning is essential to becoming employed (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Evers et al., 1998). Lifelong learners take full responsibility for their learning and solicit feedback from mentors, supervisors, or peers. These learners understand that learning can lead to skills, values, attitudes, and even self-awareness (Honey, 2001). Carnevale, Gainer, and Meltzer (1990) argue that the skill of learning is fundamental to acquiring other job related skills. Being a lifelong learner "opens the door to all other learning and facilitates the acquisition of other skills from literacy to leadership" (p. 17). This learning can occur through training seminars, workshops, formal education, or through in-formal conversations with others about experiences.

Candy and Crebert (1990) argue that higher education has somewhat failed in fostering an environment that encourages self-directed, lifelong learning. A far greater emphasis on lifelong learning should be placed in higher education institutions because "the kind of knowledge acquired would be more suited to their future in the workplace" (Candy & Crebert, 1990, p. 585). Evers et al. (1998) state that this emphasis on lifelong learning has begun as higher education programs are being developed on this notion of learning beyond the academic classroom and collegiate experience. College students who develop a love of learning will take that skill into the workplace. The lifelong

learner is more empowered and flexible, having a higher sense of identity in the organization (Evers et al., 1998).

Personal strengths

Evers et al. (1998) define personal strengths as traits that aid in dealing with daily work experiences and situations. These traits could be those such as

> maintaining a high energy level, motivating oneself to function at an optimal level of performance, functioning in stressful situations, maintaining a positive attitude, being able to work independently, and responding appropriately to constructive criticism (p. 63).

Understanding one's personal strengths can aid in both personal and organizational functions. Timm (1993) outlines five self-management skills that contribute to the understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses:

1. Understanding Perspective - The amount of control in our lives.
2. Understanding Purpose – The amount of focus in our lives.
3. Understanding Your Personality – The amount of assertiveness and receptiveness in our lives.
4. Understanding Planning – The use of planning tools and priority lists.
5. Understanding Productivity – The understanding of items that impede productivity (p. 7).

These skills can enhance employees' motivation to impact their organization. Focusing a portion of time on understanding and developing personal strengths can lead

to higher levels of autonomy and "valuable contributions toward the organizational goals" (Evers et al., 1998, p. 61).

Civic-minded

Students need to feel that their education will prepare them to work in their organization and their community (Evers et al., 1998). Being civic-minded includes both an understanding and commitment to service as a citizen (Siedl, Mulkey, & Blanton, 1999). According to researchers, educators, and policy makers community service experiences are valuable for students (Shiarella, McCarthy, & Tucker, 2000). One of the primary missions of higher education is to educate students to that they are equipped to address the needs of the community and organizations (Boyer, 1996; Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003). Specifically through experiential education, problem-based learning, and service-learning opportunities, students can develop teamwork, leadership, conflict resolution, communication, organization, presentation and time management skills (Tucker, McCarthy, Hoxmeier, & Lenk, 1998). Along with these skills, students are exposed to the notion of corporate social responsibility, which ties service and organizational strategy together.

In a 2005 survey of 77 multinational companies, Hyatt (2006) found that two-thirds of companies said that volunteerism and community involvement has grown in importance as a management priority. A comprehensive view of corporate citizenship and civic engagement will continue to be adopted by companies and other organizations. It is imperative that students learn the importance of "giving back" and being civic minded, as this skill is critical to success as an employee and corporate citizen (Colby et al., 2003; Tucker et al., 1998; Zlotkowski, 1996). Students become in touch with the

needs of the community and expand their attention to the world beyond school or their employer.

Preparing students to be productive in the working world, as well as preparing them to be socially responsible citizens are very compatible goals (O'Hara, 2001). Service-learning and other service oriented classroom projects in higher education curriculum can enhance students' understanding of community, but can also help to build other necessary employability skills (Evers et al., 1998). However, Zlotkowski (1996) argues that higher education institutions are not doing enough to prepare students for this understanding.

> One cannot unreasonably conclude that the kind of insularity that has come to characterize not just education institutions but even individuals departments and disciplines may well be preparing students less to overcome than to perpetuate the social and professional fragmentation from which we suffer (p. 6).

In the 21st century, an opportunity exists for academia to aggressively address this opportunity to engage students in learning opportunities to foster civic-will. Being connected to the community will better organizations, companies, and communities alike.

Transfer of Training Research

Educational and training programs are based upon the notion that what is taught will be transferred to the appropriate organizational context. Transferability or transfer of training has been a dominate line of inquiry amongst organizational development and training scholars for years (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Employers want to ensure that they are investing in training and development opportunities that not only benefit the job performance of the individual employee, but the entire organization.

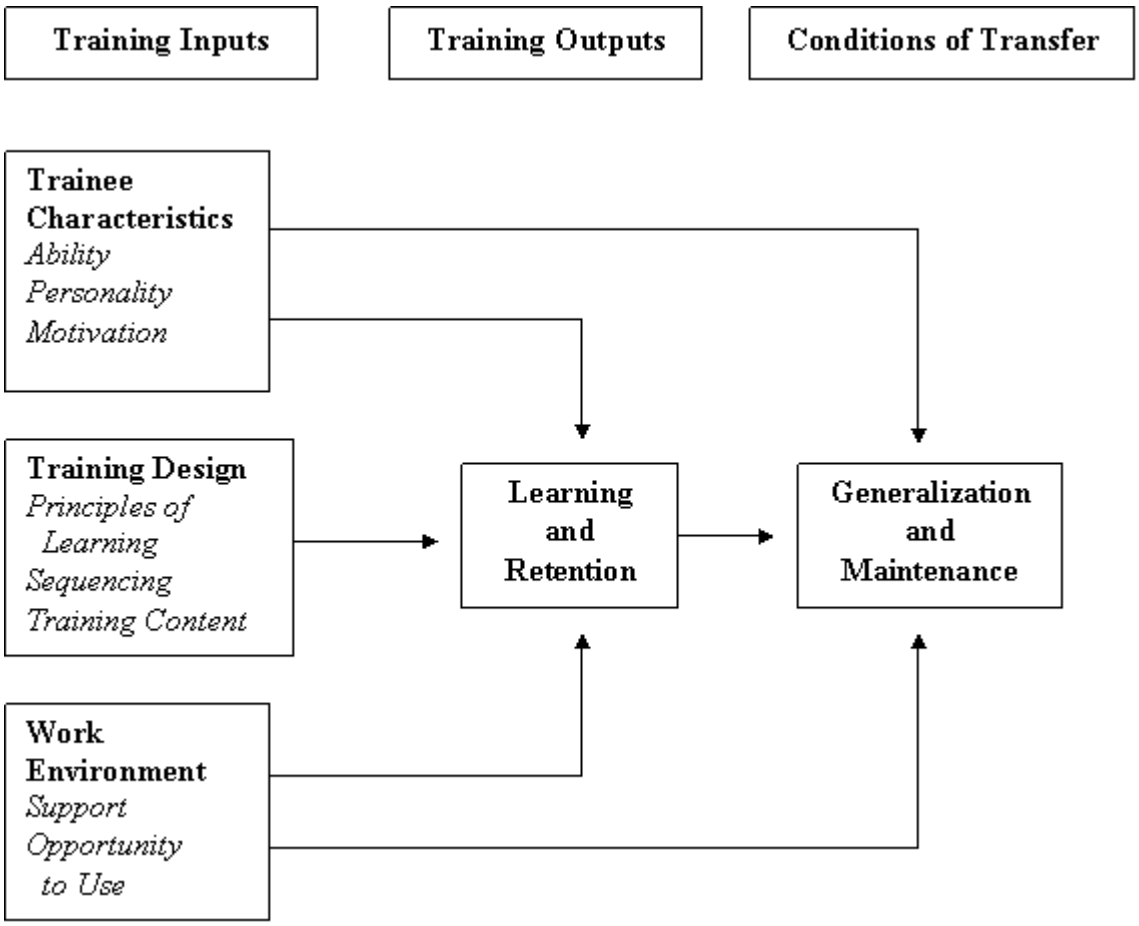
Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999) defined training transfer as the ability of an employee to learn skills through training and successfully apply them to their job. Further, they defined the positive transfer of training as the extent to which trainees apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in the training context to the job. This learned behavior must also be maintained and applied long term (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Elagovan & Karakowsky, 1999). By evaluating transfer of training, one can demonstrate how training improves an organization and employee efficiency, as well as verifying training effectiveness. This in turn will lead to more positive organizational outcomes (Garavaglia, 1993).

Much of the research conducted on training transfer has been driven by a framework created by Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999). They divide training transfer into two categories: motivation and ability. Motivation is defined as the employees' desire to apply skills learned during training. This motivation relates to the confidence the employee has in himself or herself and whether or not the training was a choice or was forced. These factors directly impact the motivation an employee has to transfer what they learned to their job. Ability is defined as the confidence that the employee has

to do his or her assigned job and further apply skills learned through a training experience. These two factors give a framework for understanding the transfer of training (Noe & Schmitt, 1986). Further examination of the research reveals a framework for examining training transfer.

Figure 2.1 illustrates a model of the transfer process (Baldwin & Ford, 1988, p. 65). The model suggests that both training-input factors and training outcomes have direct and indirect effects on conditions of transfer. For trained skills to transfer, the material must be learned and retained as indicated by the model. Trainee characteristics (e.g. motivation) and work environment (e.g. support) have a direct effect on the conditions of transfer. Training outputs (learning and retention) are directly affected by trainee characteristics, training design (e.g. principles of learning), and work environment.

Figure 2.1 A Model of Transfer Process



(Baldwin & Ford, 1988)

According to Stephens (1963) positive transfer occurs when the learner can work on a set of complex problems. Predifferentiation happens when learning is gained from preliminary practice on a similar task. Transfer results from this can occur after this practice and training experience. The amount of transfer that occurs depends heavily on the amount of practice involved on the task or skill. When teaching concepts to transfer, five major elements must be facilitated: (a) bring out the feature to be transferred, (b) develop meaningful generalizations, (c) provide a variety of experiences, (d) practice in application to other fields, and (e) practice in transfer (Stephens, 1963).

In the education realm, Ellis (1965) contends that "education should take stock of the known variables which do influence transfer rather than (to) debate more speculative points of view" (p. 64). One of these known variables is learner characteristics, specifically learner motivation. Methods, attitudes, and approaches during learning, such as group interaction and understanding information rather than memorizing, impact transfer.

One final factor to be considered when discussing transfer is the variety of tasks. More task variety yielded greater ability to transfer training (Ellis, 1965). These factors can be incorporated into guidelines for teaching: (a) maximize the similarity between teaching and the ultimate testing situation, (b) provide adequate experience with the original task, (c) provide for a variety of examples when teaching concepts and principles, (d) label or identify features of a task, and (e) make sure that general principles are understood before expecting much transfer (Ellis, 1965, p. 71). The leadership scholar Bass (1990) provides an argument that illustrates the notion that many factors impact training effectiveness.

> Research indicates, not unexpectedly, that the effectiveness of training depends on the trainee, the trainer, the composition of the training group, follow-up reinforcement and feedback, and particularly whether there is congruence between the training and the organizational environment for which the trainee is being prepared. In all, meta-analyses of available evaluative studies have provided evidence that leadership and management training, education, and development are usually effective (p. 856).

One additional scholar has created a program evaluation model, which includes a training transfer component. Kirkpatrick's model of evaluation (1998) uses four levels to evaluate the training and its impact on the organization. Level one (reaction) encourages participants to react to how they felt about the training. This includes the evaluation of training format and delivery. Level two (learning) focuses on what participants actually learn from their training experience. This aspect of the evaluation focuses heavily on content. The third level of Kirkpatrick's model focuses on the transfer of training (behavior). The evaluation of the ability to transfer skills learned is triangulated by participant self-evaluation, subordinate/peer feedback, supervisor feedback or observations. Finally, level four (results) focuses on organizational outcomes as a result of the training. This level answers the question about how the entire organization has benefited from the participant taking part in the training (Kirkpatrick, 1998). This four level framework served as the assessment framework for this study.

More recently a study was conducted that looked at the transfer of skills upon completion of a State 4-H Council leadership training. Researchers used the Elangovan

and Karakowsky (1999) framework to evaluate the transfer of training. This training was an intense leadership training in which communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills were discussed. Findings showed that the officers were able to transfer the skills learned. This transfer was attributed to the training (Bruce, Boyd, & Dooley, 2005).

A majority of the research conducted on training transfer has been tied to human resource development functions and on-the-job training. Training is traditionally viewed as a seminar, workshop, or retreat, rather than a lengthy learning experience such as pursuing an undergraduate degree. To date, there is limited research on the transferability of leadership training learned by students during their collegiate academic leadership experience to the workplace. Marini and Genereux (1995) suggest that educators understand the actions that are being transferred, individual's ability to cope with change, and social and organizational dynamics of the setting. Guskey (2000) furthers these notions by providing a framework for determining five levels of impact with respect to transfer. These notions are explored through a series of five reflective levels: participants' reactions, participants' learning, organization support and change, participants' use of new knowledge and skills, and student learning outcomes. This framework models that of Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation (1998). Evaluating this information will assist university faculty in learning more about the transference of learning from academic programs to the workplace.

Although knowledge transfer and training transfer have differences, no major distinction for the purpose of this study was made. In this study, training transfer referred to the application of learned skills to the job (Baldwin & Force, 1998; Noe & Schmitt,

1986). The training referred to the education received through academic courses. Training characteristics and training design may influence the effectiveness of students' ability to transfer what they have learned in their leadership courses to the workplace. Developing a curriculum that is closely matched between the training and job setting will best facilitate learning and the transfer of learning (Barnett, 2005; Jacobs & Jones, 1995). Understanding and evaluating transfer of training from the classroom to the workplace will give incredible relevance and credibility to leadership academic programs.

History of Leadership Education in Higher Education

The current leadership education, development, and training movement in American higher education institutions can be traced back to the 1600's when Harvard college men were prepared for civic leadership roles (Jones, 1938). University mission statements often include leadership development as being an integral part of a student's experience while attending the University (Clark, 1985; Roberts, 1997). "Education for leadership has been a direct or indirect purpose of education" (Clark & Clark, 1994, p. 103). A call for leadership has been prominent in government, health-care, corporations, education, and other contexts (Chrislip & Larson, 1994).

Higher education has heard this call and has responded with leadership programs numbering over 1000 (Riggio, Ciulla, & Sorenson, 2003). In the last twenty-five years, the explosive growth in leadership education and development in the United States can be found in both co-curricular and curricular programs on campuses. Spitzberg (1986) suggested that the "the emergence of campus-based leadership programs was part of a larger phenomenon that could be characterized as a social movement" (p. 29). Today's

colleges and universities play an integral role in the development of future leaders (Astin & Astin, 2000).

The first undergraduate degree in leadership at The University of Richmond (Jepson School of Leadership) was created in 1992. Soon to follow was the Marietta College McDonough Leadership Center located in Ohio. In the state of Kansas, the Fort Hays State University and Kansas State University Leadership Programs were also created in the 1990's. Leadership education was becoming more prevalent in higher education institutions across the nation. To serve as a clearinghouse for leadership materials and research, the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs at the University of Maryland-College Park was created. Leadership centers focusing on student development, academic coursework, and outreach activities grew across the nation. Some of these centers include The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, The James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, The Center for Civic Leadership, The Depree Leadership Center and The Center for Creative Leadership.

Professional organizations for leadership development academicians and practitioners, such as the Association of Leadership Educators and International Leadership Association, arose expanding the notion of leadership development globally. Finally, professional journals such as *Leadership Quarterly, The Journal of Leadership Studies*, *Journal of Leadership Educators* and *The Leadership Review* have catapulted leadership research across many disciplines. Most recently the International Leadership Association has formed the Guidelines for Leadership Education Programs Learning Community, whose aim is to develop curriculum guidelines for leadership education

programs (Ritch, 2007). These efforts contribute to leadership education, development, and training, showing a concentrated effort in higher education institutions.

Leadership development, education, and training are used interchangeably in the literature. However, they all contribute differently to the leadership phenomenon (Brungardt, 1996). Leadership development is a broad term that refers to a person's growth in leadership over their lifespan. Through childhood development, education, and adult life experiences, a person grows and learns from both structured and unstructured activities. Roberts (1981) defines leadership development as "those activities designed to provide an interactionist environment which encourages development in an ordered hierarchical sequence of increasing complexity" (p. 22). Thus, leadership development is viewed as an entire life span process, allowing for continuous personal growth.

Leadership education is defined as "formal and structured learning activities and educational environments that are intended to enhance and foster leadership abilities" (Brungardt, 1996, p. 83). One component of one's leadership development is offered through undergraduate double degrees, leadership majors, minors, certificate, as well as graduate programs. Riggio, Ciulla, and Sorenson (2003) outline three basic philosophies of leadership education programs. One philosophy is one in which leadership education programs rely heavily on management theories and business models. The second philosophy approaches leadership education as a multi-disciplinary concept, focusing on social responsibility and action (Rost & Barker, 2000). To teach these concepts, civic engagement and experiential learning are a primary teaching pedagogy. A third type of leadership education uses a broad, liberal arts model aiming to prepare students to be leaders in many different contexts.

Finally, leadership training can be defined as short-term learning activities that can be applied to a role, position, or job. Again, considered as one component of leadership development, training "involves those activities directed at helping the individual being trained to translate some newly learned skill, or piece of information, to a real, immediate situation" (Roberts, 1981, p. 19).

Leadership development, education, and training all serve as foundational principles of leadership programming. The fabric of each is interweaved and equally important in the growth of one's leadership capacity. Understanding the common terminology can help further the framework of leadership programs.

Academic Leadership Programs

A university setting gives the opportunity to combine theory and practice into a comprehensive leadership curriculum. Due to the growing complexity of teaching leadership in a structured program, Roberts and Ullom (1989) offer a Student Leadership Program Model for both the development and implementation of a comprehensive leadership program.

1. A broad range of faculty, student affairs staff, and students should be involved in the planning and delivery of the various components of the leadership programs.
2. The needs of the recipients of the leadership program should be assessed and considered carefully in the design of programs offerings.
3. Leadership programs should be carefully evaluated on an ongoing basis. Areas which might be included are satisfaction, outcomes to

participants, organizational productivity/effectiveness, and overall contribution to learning environment.

4. Leadership training, education, and development have different purposes, which are important to a successful comprehensive leadership program. A comprehensive program continues to offer activities which represent each element.
5. Multiple strategies for implementation should be used in order to respond to the diverse needs of recipients and the complexity of the multiple purposes of the leadership programs.
6. The leadership program should be designed and directed to meet the needs of the various special populations which exist in the specific higher education institutions.
7. The leadership program should advocate consistency between what is taught through the program and the process by which institutional decisions affecting students are made (p. 69).

In alignment with Roberts and Ullom's Student Leadership Program Model, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) added student leadership programs to its book of professional standards in higher education (1996). Thirteen guidelines are given to develop a comprehensive program.

1. Student leadership programs (SLP) must incorporate student learning and student development in its mission (p. 198).

2. The formal education of students consists of curricular and co-curricular events that promote student learning and development (p. 198).
3. Ethical and effective administrative leadership is essential (p. 200).
4. Programs must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve planned outcomes (p. 201).
5. Programs should be staffed with qualified professionals (p. 201).
6. Financial resources must be adequate for specified objectives (p 202).
7. SLP must have adequate facilities, technology, and equipment (p. 202).
8. SLP staff members must be knowledgeable about laws and regulations relating to their responsibilities (p. 202).
9. Services and programs must be provided on a fair and equitable basis (p. 203).
10. Effective relationships must be created and maintained with relevant stakeholders, both on and off campus (p. 203).
11. SLP should nurture environments where commonalities and differences are recognized, honored, and celebrated (p. 203).
12. Person involved in SLP must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior (p. 203).

These two models were critical in beginning to unify and give structure to collegiate leadership programs worldwide.

Within an institutional setting, leadership education is delivered through both co-curricular and curricular methods. Co-curricular programs are typically delivered through student affairs divisions and include workshops, trainings, and retreats for student leaders. Curricular programs involve the acquisition of knowledge, skill building, and application opportunities through academic, semester-long courses. By enrolling in these courses, students have the opportunity to learn theory and implement that theory through certificates, minors, and majors. Cronin (1995) explains the breadth of student learning through the academic leadership program.

> Students can learn to discern and define situations and contexts within which leadership has flourished. Students can learn about the fallibility of the trait theory. Students can learn about the contextual problems of leadership, of why and when leadership is sometimes transferable, and sometimes not. Students can learn about the crucial role that advisors and supports play in the leadership equation. Students can also learn about countless problem-solving strategies and theories, and participate in role playing exercises that sharpen their own skills in such undertakings (p. 31).

Furthermore academic leadership programs can give students the opportunity to connect their theoretical learning to life experiences (Burns, 1995).

The question then becomes, what content should be taught to students? In a 2000 article Welch wrote that leadership education should train students to solve problems, communicate both written and orally, work effectively in teams, and work with people of diverse backgrounds. Students should also be motivated to set and achieve goals through

their leadership education. This material can be applied across many contexts. Hashem (1997) also noted that, "One of the most important roles of faculty is the ability to explain to students and the public at large that everyone has the capacity to assume one or more aspects of leadership in the life we live, the type of work we do, and the way we deal with one another in various contexts" (p. 91). Wren (1994) further illustrates that point by clarifying that learning about leadership as a process can be applied to improve our communities and beyond.

Leadership Program Evaluation and Assessment

"Perhaps more than in any other discipline, there is intense skepticism about the ability to teach leadership…therefore, it is critical that leadership studies programs conduct outcomes assessment" (Riggio et al., 2003, p. 231). Chambers (1994) revealed that instead of evaluating leadership programs, leadership educators were most concerned with program structure, administration, consequences, and methodology. Evaluation of student outcomes is not only beneficial for the program, but involves program graduates in the lifelong learning process. Well-designed leadership program evaluation and assessment studies will add tremendous value to the credibility of programs, but also demonstrate the value of leadership studies to students' academic and life experience (Badal, 2000; Riggio et al., 2003).

Burke and Day (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of leadership training and revealed that both training content and delivery method impact the effectiveness of the training. Further analysis indicated that programs that focused on increasing motivation or improving values were effective. Daugherty & Williams (1997) studied the long-term impact of a state-wide leadership program and determined that leadership development

training in conflict management, decision-making, delegation, team-building, and parliamentary procedure were still needed. These program evaluations were aimed at leadership development programming, not focusing specifically on academic programs.

Although academic leadership education programs are beginning to see the value of assessment and evaluation, there is still much work to be done, specifically in higher education academic programs.

Between 1990 and 1998, one of the most comprehensive efforts to evaluate leadership development programs was organized by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Thirty-one leadership programs, funded by Kellogg Foundation grants, served as the sample. The investigation focused only on the 22 leadership programs that were housed in colleges and universities. Methods of data collection were triangulated by using panel discussions, surveys, one-on-one interviews, conference discussions, a short and long term outcomes study, and site visits. The data reported by the grantees supported positive individual outcomes in civic awareness, commitment to service, improved communication skills, improved self-esteem, and problem-solving ability. Only slight benefits for institution and community outcomes were reported; however, no negative outcomes were reported (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999).

When comparing non-participants to participants, students who had participated in the funded leadership programs reported significant changes in increased self-understanding, ability to set goals, sense of ethics, willingness to take risks, civic responsibility, multicultural awareness, community orientation, and leadership skills. Additionally, students who had participated in leadership courses reported a significantly

increased understanding of the theoretical background of leadership and a desire to instill leadership in others (Cress et al., 2001; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999).

Further, Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt (2000) suggested four hallmarks that were critical to leadership program development.

1. Context – There is a strong connection between the mission of the institution and the mission of the leadership program. The program should be supported across the institution and have an academic home (p. 15).
2. Philosophy – Individuals should have a strong commitment to teaching leadership to young people, with knowledge of the literature and a working definition of leadership. Experiential learning opportunities should supplement this theory base (p. 16).
3. Sustainability – Faculty and administration across the institution are involved and commitment in creating objectives, evaluation procedures, capacity building, and sustainability (p. 16).
4. Common practices – Activities and common pedagogical practices in the program could include self-assessment and reflection, skill building, intercultural issues, service-learning, mentoring, and others (p. 17).

These hallmarks can serve as a foundational tool rooted in research for not only program development, but also the creation of assessment and evaluation measures.

On a smaller scale, Brungardt and Crawford (1996) attempted to measure student learning in an academic leadership program at a mid-sized liberal arts university. The

assessment and evaluation system was designed to monitor the design elements and learning outcomes of the curriculum. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected during both pre/post tests to make comparisons and generalizations. Findings revealed that leadership program participants had a good experience in their courses. There were significant differences in leadership knowledge between those students who had just begun the program and those who had just finished. As a result of the leadership program, students saw themselves "as more successful in leadership roles" (p. 46).

Blackwell, Cummins, Townsend, and Cummings (2007) conducted leadership evaluation research on students who had gone through a semester-long, multidisciplinary academic leadership course at a large, southern land grant institution. The course involved a service research project. Using a post-then format, participants were asked to reflect on their self-perceived leadership abilities prior to and after their program participation upon completion of the course. Rather than using a pre-post design, the post-then self-report format asked participants in the study to report twice to each item on the survey during the post treatment session. The first asked participants to report their behavior after the treatment (post). The second asked participants to report their behavior before the treatment (then). This format results in lower response-shift bias (Rohs, 1999). Significant differences were found on all eight constructs (problem definition, discovery of research alternatives, delegation/teamwork, achievable challenge, focusing on an issue, direct attention to detail, managing time and resources, and persistence) as a result of the leadership program (Blackwell et al., 2007).

The most recent comprehensive leadership program study has been The Multi-Institutional Study for Leadership, a project of the National Clearinghouse for Leadership

Programs (Dugan & Komives, 2007). The study included findings from 50,000 students across 52 higher education institution campuses. Using the Social Change Leadership Model (Astin & Astin, 2000) as a framework, the study resulted in the following findings. Experiences in college accounted for up to 14% of the overall variance in leadership outcomes. Those students involved in mentoring, campus activities, community service, positional leadership opportunities, and formal leadership programs each had a positive influence on their leadership efficacy or ability to "do" leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

This study has contributed much to the current leadership assessment and evaluation research. One portion of the study examined findings about students' participation in curricular leadership experiences. Further analysis of the data sought to examine the differences in impact on students with respect to the length of their formal leadership program. Only 18.9% of the study participants reported having taken one or more leadership courses, with less than 3% of participants reporting having taken three or more leadership courses. One item to note is that a majority of the leadership programming experienced by participants in the study was actually co-curricular, rather than curricular (Owen & Komives, 2007).

In their study on student leadership development, Kezar and Moriarty (2000) discovered that "participation in a leadership class was one of the strongest predictors of self-rating on leadership ability" (p. 59). Research indicates that college students can and do increase their leadership abilities during their college years (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Assessment and evaluations have shown us that. Still, these program evaluations have relied heavily on self-perceived data from students currently in the program. There

still remains a gap in the research that looks at students taking skills learned and applying them to the workplace. This does not indicate lack of program success; however, it does limit the amount of influence leadership programs have on the transfer of critical employability skills to the workplace.

The FHSU Certificate Program

The Fort Hays State University Leadership Studies Program began in 1993 with academic courses being offered to undergraduate students for a specialization in leadership. By 2001, the program became the Department of Leadership Studies and began to offer a certificate, minor and an undergraduate major. All leadership courses and programs are offered on campus and on-line. The mission of the department is "to educate and nurture citizens to lead our organizations, communities, state, nation, and beyond" (Department of Leadership Studies, 2008). The department's programs have been defined using the components of Rost's (1993) seminal work on post-industrial leadership. Components of his post-industrial definition include the belief that leadership is a relationship amongst people who share mutual interests in the creating change for the collective good (Rost, 1993). These components are the foundation of leadership for the Department of Leadership Studies (Brungardt & Gould, 2001). Guiding principles of the Department of Leadership Studies programs (2004) assist in the carrying out of the mission statement.

1. Need for leadership – With the complex problems and challenges of our changing world, the need for leadership is greater than ever before.
2. Teaching leadership – Leadership can be taught.

3. Leadership for all – Leadership education is not for a select few, but rather, all individuals can and should benefit from leadership development activities.
4. Theoretical foundation – This academic program is based on an extensive theoretical foundation in the field of Organizational Behavior and Leadership Studies (p. 1).

The Leadership Studies Certificate Program, a comprehensive educational experience, is attachable to any major (Department of Leadership Studies, 2008). The Leadership Studies Certificate Program is comprised of three courses, Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300), Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302), and Fieldwork in Leadership Studies (LDRS 310). These nine credit hours integrate three major themes: creating change (what is leadership), collaboration (how you do leadership), and collective and common purposes (why you do leadership).

In the first course (LDRS 300), students are given the opportunity to learn about the depth and breadth of leadership theory. The initial task of leadership programs should be to introduce students to the notion of leadership (Wren, 1994). LDRS 300 does just this. Upon studying and understanding the history and origins, theoretical approaches, and contemporary themes of leadership, students are encouraged to find real-life applications. Course objectives for LDRS 300 include:

1. The student will *recognize the importance* leadership plays in groups, organizations, communities, and societies.

2. The student will *understand* and *be able to distinguish* between the historical views of leadership and the contemporary post-industrial leadership paradigm.
3. The student will *appreciate* the complexities of the leadership process.
4. The student will *become familiar with* the concept of change and how it is essential to the process of leadership.
5. The student will *be able to understand and integrate* the Leadership Studies themes: creating change, collaborative leadership, and civic leadership.
6. The student will be able to *recognize, identify and explain* the key concepts, elements, and purposes of the leadership process.
7. The student will *become knowledgeable and be able to analyze* the various theoretical approaches to the study of leadership.
8. The student will *be able* to *reflect on* and *recognize* their own views and perceptions of leaders and the leadership process (Department of Leadership Studies, 2002, p. 1).

LDRS 300 helps students understand that leadership is about creating purposeful change (Rost, 1993), the first organizing theme of the certificate program.

LDRS 302 is the second course of the Leadership Studies Certificate Program. This interdisciplinary course introduces students to the behaviors and skills needed to be involved in the leadership process. With a strong emphasis on collaboration, students are exposed to activities that encourage the practical application of the skills taught. Other

skills and behaviors taught in this course are teamwork, creative thinking, problem-solving, conflict management and resolution, communication, and strategic planning. Each of the skills is taught with a foundation in the collaborative leadership process. Course objectives for LDRS 302 include:

1. The student will be able to *recall* the major concepts and principles discussed in LDRS 300 (first leadership course) and *demonstrate* an understanding of those concepts and principles through classroom activities.
2. The student will *understand* the basic components of the change process and be able to *practice* change through a collaborative approach.
3. The student will *recognize* the role both personal and collaboration skills play in the change process.
4. The student will be able to *recognize* and *understand* the key components of the collaboration process.
5. The student will be able to *demonstrate* and *perform* personal leadership skills and capabilities, including the ability to think critically, make decisions, and solve problems.
6. The student will be able to *demonstrate* and *perform* collaborative leadership skills and capabilities, including the ability to successfully communicate and work with others in group settings.
7. The student will be able to *develop* a strategic plan to implement change (Department of Leadership Studies, 2002, p. 1).

The final course in Leadership Studies Certificate Program is LDRS 310. This course gives students the opportunity to practice what they have learned in LDRS 300 and LDRS 302 by working with a team, identify an issue, and create a change in the local community to solve that issue. This service-learning course serves as a culminating experience in the certificate program and gives students the opportunity to understand the community or social change context of leadership. It is the belief of the Department of Leadership Studies faculty members that if students can create change in a community setting, they can create it any many other contexts. The theme of collective and common purposes encourages students to "take action on behalf of the larger good" (Department of Leadership Studies, 2004, p.1). Course objectives for LDRS 310 include:

1. Engage in a collaborative project involving the implementation and practice of civic leadership in the local area, putting into practice the principles of collaborative leadership covered in LDRS 302.
2. Increase understanding of leadership theories and concepts.
3. Increase students' abilities to work in teams.
4. Explore personal values with respect to leadership and service.
5. Articulate an understanding of community service and service-learning.
6. Utilize community service as an introduction to service, civic responsibility, and leadership.
7. Provide opportunities and methods for reflection.
8. Discuss critical issues of diversity, social justice, community, and civic responsibility with leadership and service.

9. Develop a personal philosophy of service and leadership through critical analysis of social issues, reflection, and practice.
10. Be encouraged to be life-long learners and advocates for social change (Department of Leadership Studies, 2002, p. 1).

It is the aim of the department to impact students through the Leadership Studies Certificate Program in a way that they will serve as architects and catalysts for change. The Certificate Program hopes to produce students with the following characteristics: 1) knowledgeable and self-reflective; 2) civic-minded; 3) collaborative; 4) creative/innovative; 5) credible; 6) critical thinkers; 7) problem-solvers; 8) risk takers; 9) persistent; 10) can see multiple perspectives; 11) effective communicators; and 12) have the ability to pursue social justice (Department of Leadership Studies, 2004). Although assessment efforts are implemented to evaluate departmental student outcomes, these assessment efforts do not currently involve those students' employers. Without these measures one cannot confidently say that the program is meeting employers' needs with the Leadership Studies Certificate Program.

Summary

Research indicates that a plethora of different skills are needed in the workplace, from technical to the "softer" employability skills. Developing these skills in employees has been a concern of employers, as many new employees are entering their jobs without these skills. The most prominent skills in the literature are problem-solving, communication, teamwork, change and innovative behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded.

A number of studies indicate that training interventions can promote the development of problem-solving and other employability skills (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000). The transfer of that training is impacted by many factors stated in the literature.

Leadership development programs stress the importance of developing the skills and abilities that are needed in the contemporary workplace. We know that leadership programs have a positive impact on the students' self-perceived ability to lead. One component of these programs is leadership education, which focuses specifically on academic coursework. Academic leadership education programs have also grown in number over the past few years. One of those programs is the FHSU Leadership Certificate Program, which is designed to allow students to gain practical skills through an experiential and interdisciplinary nine hour course curriculum. Students have the opportunity to learn employability skills through courses that focus on the theory, behaviors, and application of those into a real-life setting.

CHAPTER 3 - Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether students are transferring employability skills learned in the Fort Hays State University (FHSU) Leadership Studies Certificate Program to the workplace. The study sought to evaluate the participants' perceptions with regard to the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as their self-perceived level of competence in performing each of the employability skills. The study also sought the supervisors' perceptions of the study participants. Supervisors evaluated the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as the perceived competence level of the participant performing these skills in the workplace. Both the participant and supervisor data assisted in making inferences about the transfer of employability skills.

Research Questions

1. What employability skills are important in the workplace?
    a. What are participants' perceptions? Are there differences between groups?
    b. What are supervisors' perceptions? Are there differences between groups?
    c. Are there differences in the perceptions between participants and their supervisors?
2. Do participants have meaningful employability skills demanded by the workplace?

a. Does a leadership certificate program enhance participants' relevant employability skills?

b. Does the number of academic leadership courses, in an academic leadership program, affect employability skill development?

3. Does a leadership education program deliver necessary employability skills?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were addressed in this study:

H_{01}: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of study participants.

H_{02}: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of supervisors of study participants.

H_{03}: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between participants and their supervisors.

H_{04}: There is a statistically significant difference in the self-perceived competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of study participants.

H_{05}: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of supervisors of the study participants.

H_{06}: Differences between supervisor importance and competency levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three will be statistically significant.

H_{07}: Differences between participant importance and self-perceived competency levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three will be statistically significant.

H_{08}: Differences between supervisor importance and participant self-perceived competence levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to

manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three will be statistically significant.

Research Design

The design of this study was a quasi-experiment. The participants in the study had received different treatments, but were naturally occurring rather than randomly assigned for the study. The quasi-experiment aims at uncovering a causal relationship, even though the researcher cannot control all the factors that might affect the outcome (Keppel & Wickens, 2004). These experiments are natural "in that the treatment or the effect of some variable occurs naturally and the effect is observed either after the fact, or as it occurs" (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 537).

A survey was used to detect differences among the natural groups. According to Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) "the purpose of a survey is to use questionnaires or interviews to collect data from participants in a sample about their characteristics, experiences, and opinions in order to generalize the findings to a population that the sample is intended to represent" (p. 289). A survey or questionnaire provides structure and standardization in the research design. It also provides the opportunity to gather large amounts of data from many respondents (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; Krathwohl, 1998).

The present study used one independent variable and six dependent variables. The independent variable for the study was the number of leadership courses taken in the Leadership Certificate Program at FHSU. The dependent variables for the study were the scores in the employability skills constructs from the questionnaire: 1) problem-solving skills; 2) communication skills; 3) teamwork skills; 4) change and innovation behaviors; 5) ability to manage self; and 6) being civic-minded.

Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation model served as the framework for this study. The following table (Table 3.1) illustrates how each component of the model was implemented throughout the study.

Table 3.1 Use of Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation in Data Collection

Level	From whom data is gathered	Implementation Method
Reaction	Participants	Part IV - Questions regarding experience in FHSU leadership courses (qualitative)
Learning	Participants	Part I – Response to competence levels on constructs (quantitative)
Behavior	Participants' supervisors	Part I – Response to participants' competence levels on constructs (quantitative)
Evaluating	Participants' supervisors	Part I - Evaluate gap between importance and competence levels (quantitative) -Response to qualitative questions regarding strengths, weaknesses, and contributions from the participant (qualitative)

Population and Sample

Demographic information for domestic students at Fort Hays State University assists in understanding the target population of the study. In the Fall of 2007, there were 5,727 domestic students pursuing undergraduate degrees at FHSU. Of those students, 51% were female and 49% were male. A majority of these students (88%) reported white as their ethnicity. Hispanics made up 2.8% of the undergraduate domestic population, while African American/Black students made up 3.9% of the domestic population. Less than 1% of the domestic student population were either Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. The mean age of current

undergraduate students at Fort Hays State University was 23.85 years, with 24% of undergraduates 25 years or older (Fort Hays State University, 2008).

The target population for this study was Fort Hays State University students from January 2002 through December 2007. This population was non-proportionally stratified into three groups for the quasi-experimental design (Gall et al., 1996). The first group (control) was enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students who had not taken any leadership courses from the Department of Leadership Studies at Fort Hays State University. Subjects in group two were enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students who had taken Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300) and/or Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302), but not Fieldwork in Leadership Studies (LDRS 310). Subjects in group three were enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students who had completed the Leadership Studies Certificate Program, which consisted of Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300), Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302), and Fieldwork in Leadership Studies (LDRS 310). Students who had completed the Leadership Studies Certificate Program and the entire Organizational Leadership Degree Program were excluded from the sample. Students who were taking classes overseas through the Fort Hays State University China partnerships were also excluded from the population sample.

The group information was obtained from the Fort Hays State University Computing and Telecommunication Center. A database contained the information from which each strata was created. Group one contained 15,417 participants ($N = 15, 417$). The group two strata contained 1360 participants ($N = 1360$), while group three had 464 participants ($N = 464$) in the strata. The database also contained years in which the

students took each respective leadership class, student name, permanent address, e-mail address (for some), major(s), and minor(s) pursued at FHSU, and FHSU graduation date (if applicable).

A simple random sample was selected from each of these stratified groups resulting in a stratified random sample. This helped to ensure representativeness (Krathwohl, 1998). The main advantage of the random sample was that it can "yield research data that can be generalized to a larger population within margins of error that can be determined by statistical formulas" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 223). Cohen (1992) recommended that when conducting a study comparing three groups using a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA), that the population upon completion of data collection be 52 per group or strata. To control for coverage error resulting from incorrect addresses and non-respondents, the researcher over sampled with 208 participants in each sample strata.

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from both the Kansas State University Institutional Review Board and the Fort Hays State University Institutional Review Board. The Fort Hays State University Department of Leadership Studies also reviewed and approved the study.

Instrument

A questionnaire was developed by the researcher to assess the employability skills of participants in the study to the workplace. "A questionnaire gathers large amounts of data from many respondents very inexpensively" (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 361).

The questionnaire used in this research study consisted of four parts (Appendix A). Part I was modified from an original instrument constructed by Evers, Rush, &

Berdrow (1998) and updated by Robinson (2005). The civic-minded portion of the questionnaire was added from the Community Service Attitudes Scale constructed by Shiarella, McCarthy, and Tucker (2000). Written permission was obtained from both Evers et al. (1998), Robinson (2005), and Shiarella et al. (2000) to use these respective instruments. Part I of the instrument measured the self-perceived importance and competence levels on 69 statements divided among six major employability skill constructs identified by employers as critical skills. These constructs were problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded. The response scale used was a Likert scale: 0 = no importance (and competence), 1 = minor importance (and competence), 2 = moderate importance (and competence), and 3 = major importance (and competence).

Part II of the questionnaire contained demographic questions for the participants. These questions pertained to their gender, ethnicity, age, current employment status, current academic status, time they have worked in their current position by month, annual salary, and number of hours per week they spend on the job.

Part III of the questionnaire contained open-ended questions regarding the participants' experience in FHSU leadership courses. The questions included the delivery method of their leadership coursework, identifying topics that they felt were most valuable, and identifying topics that they wished they had learned. These open-ended questions allowed for qualitative data to be collected. In Part IV, the participants were asked to identify the name and contact information of their current supervisor, as well as the number of months for which they had worked for their current supervisor.

In addition to collecting participant data, data from the immediate supervisor of each participant was also collected from those whose information was available. A three year study by Phillippi and Banta (1994) revealed that surveying employers or supervisors to gather opinions and suggestions regarding student preparation for the workplace is becoming more common. Asking study participants to provide the name and contact information of their immediate supervisor is appropriate. Phillippi & Banta (1994) stated that there is

> evidence that a mailed survey methodology for graduates and their employers can be effective if the graduate's permission is obtained on the initial questionnaire and if employers are forced by the survey instrument's format to differentiate among listed job characteristics and performance ratings (p. 123).

Further research reveals that a high percentage of employers respond to surveys initiated by colleges and universities (Phillippi & Banta, 1994). Thus, a mailed questionnaire along with a cover letter printed on university letterhead was used for this study.

Using these recommendations, participants were asked to provide the name and contact information of their immediate supervisor. A separate, but similar questionnaire was created for the immediate supervisors (Appendix B). Upon receiving participants' responses, the questionnaire was sent to the supervisors.

Immediate supervisors were asked to assess the level of importance of each construct to one's success on the job. The Likert scale used for importance was as follows: 0 = no importance, 1 = minor importance, 2 = moderate importance, and 3 = major importance.

Each supervisor was also asked to rate the participant's level of competence in each construct using this Likert scale: 0 = no competence, 1 = minor competence, 2 = moderate competence, and 3 = major competence.

The supervisor questionnaire included four open-ended questions pertaining to skills that they perceived as being important to the participants' job that were not included in the study, strengths and weaknesses of the participant in their current job, as well as how the participant contributed to the overall goals of the organization.

Validity and Reliability

Validity is defined as "evidence based judgment that a test measures what it is intended to measure" (Krathwohl, 1998, p. 694). Three Fort Hays State University faculty members who had expertise in the field of leadership and survey research reviewed the questionnaire for face and content validity. Modifications were made as suggested.

Reliability refers to whether an instrument or questionnaire is consistent and accurate in its measurement (Krathwohl, 1998). Overall reliability for the instrument's constructs were estimated by Evers et al. (1998) and Shiarella et al. (2000) by calculating a Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each construct. Evers et al. (1998) and Shiarella et al. (2000) reported these coefficients as seen in Table 3.2. Problem-solving skills scale item alpha coefficients ranged from $\alpha = .755 - .833$, while communication skills scale items ranged from $\alpha = .781 - .905$. Teamwork skills scale item alpha coefficients ranged from $\alpha = .781 - .845$. Alpha coefficients for change and innovation behavior scale items ranged from $\alpha = .796 - .911$, while managing self scale items ranged from $\alpha = .699 - .802$. Finally, the alpha coefficient for the civic-minded scale items was $\alpha = .900$.

Table 3.2 Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Scale Items

Construct *Skill*	α	Items
Problem-Solving Skills		
problem-solving and analytic	.833	Identifying problems. Prioritizing problems. Solving problems. Contributing to group problem-solving. Identifying essential components of the problem. Sorting out the relevant data to solve the problem.
decision- making	.755	Making decisions in a short time period. Assessing long-term effects of decision. Making decisions on the basis of thorough analysis of the situation. Identifying political implications of the decision to be made. Knowing ethical implications of decisions. Recognizing the effects of decisions to be made.
Communication Skills		
oral communication	.831	Conveying information one-to-one. Communicating ideas verbally to groups. Making effective business presentations. Making impromptu presentations.
written communication	.905	Writing reports. Writing external business communication. Writing internal business communication. Using proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
listening	.781	Listening attentively. Responding to others' comments during a conversation.
Teamwork Skills		
interpersonal relations	.845	Working well with fellow employees. Relating well with supervisors. Establishing good rapport with subordinates. Empathizing with others. Understanding the needs of others.
coordinating	.802	Coordinating the work of peers. Coordinating the work of subordinates.
managing conflict	.781	Identifying sources of conflict among people. Resolving conflicts.

Table 3.2 continued Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Scale Items

Change and Innovation Behaviors		
risk taking	.796	Taking reasonable job-related risks. Identifying potential negative outcomes when considering a risky venture. Monitoring progress toward objectives in risky ventures. Recognizing alternative routes in meeting objectives.
creativity, innovation, and change	.822	Providing novel solutions to problems. Adapting to situations of change. Initiating change to enhance productivity. Keeping up-to-date with external realities related to your company's success. Reconceptualizing your role in response to changing corporate realities.
visioning	.881	Conceptualizing a future for the company. Providing innovative paths for the company to follow for future development.
ability to conceptualize	.911	Combining relevant information from a number of sources. Applying information to new or broader contexts. Integrating information into more general contexts.
organization and time management	.840	Establishing the critical events to be completed. Assigning/delegating responsibility. Monitoring progress against the plan. Integrating strategic considerations in the plans made. Revising plans to include new information. Setting priorities. Allocating time efficiently. Managing/overseeing several tasks at once. Meeting deadlines.
Managing Self		
lifelong learning	.699	Keeping up-to-date on developments in the field. Gaining new knowledge in areas outside the immediate job. Gaining new knowledge from everyday experiences.
personal strengths	.802	Maintaining a high energy level. Functioning at an optimal level of performance. Responding positively to constructive criticism. Maintaining a positive attitude. Functioning well in stressful situations. Ability to work independently.

Table 3.2 continued Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Scale Items

Civic-minded	.900	Responsible for doing something about improving the community in which you reside. Taking real measures to help others in need. Sense of contribution and helpfulness through participating in community service activities. Gaining an increased sense of responsibility from participating in service. Feeling an obligation to contribute to community. Other people deserve help.

Robinson (2005) also calculated a Cronbach's alpha coefficient on Part I of this instrument with the civic-minded scale, resulting in $\alpha = .94$. This coefficient indicated that the instrument possessed internal consistency in measuring the variables of interest. Upon conclusion of the data collection, reliability estimates were calculated once again on both the participant and supervisor questionnaires. Table 3.3 reports the alpha coefficients by each construct and is further broken down by the perceived importance and competence categories for study participants. Alpha coefficients for the participant importance constructs ranged from $\alpha = .813 - .894$, while alpha coefficients for the participant competence constructs ranged from $\alpha = .800 - .923$.

Table 3.3 Cronbach Alpha Coefficients upon Study Completion on Participants

Construct	*N* = 237	α
Problem-Solving Skills	*Importance*	.813
	Competence	.822
Communication Skills	*Importance*	.840
	Competence	.800
Teamwork Skills	*Importance*	.867
	Competence	.852
Change and Innovation Behaviors	*Importance*	.894
	Competence	.923
Managing Self	*Importance*	.854
	Competence	.842
Civic-Minded	*Importance*	.892
	Competence	.887

Table 3.4 reports the alpha coefficients for the supervisor questionnaire by each construct. Alpha coefficients for the supervisor importance constructs ranged from α = .799 - .915, while alpha coefficients for the supervisor competence constructs ranged from α = .829 - .938. Upon analyzing the participant and supervisor data sets, the alpha coefficients indicate the instrument possessed internal consistency and accuracy in its measurement of each construct. Hence, the questionnaire possesses strong reliability.

Table 3.4 Cronbach Alpha Coefficients upon Study Completion on Supervisors

Construct	$N = 53$	α
Problem-Solving Skills	*Importance*	.816
	Competence	.875
Communication Skills	*Importance*	.799
	Competence	.877
Teamwork Skills	*Importance*	.816
	Competence	.903
Change and Innovation Behaviors	*Importance*	.915
	Competence	.938
Managing Self	*Importance*	.714
	Competence	.829
Civic-Minded	*Importance*	.885
	Competence	.927

Data Collection and Response Rate

Data collection took place during the Summer and Fall of 2008. "Multiple contacts have been shown to be more effective than any other technique for increasing response to surveys in the mail" (Dillman, 2007, p. 149). Therefore, the Dillman Tailored Design Method (2007) was used to collect data. This method outlined five elements needed for achieving high response rates: 1) respondent-friendly questionnaire; 2) four contacts by mail, with an additional special contact if needed; 3) return envelopes with paid postage; 4) personalization of correspondence; and 5) token prepaid financial incentives (Dillman, 2007). The data collection occurred in two separate phases.

Phase I involved the study participants. Randomly selected individuals in the stratified samples ($n^1 = 208$, $n^2 = 208$, $n^3 = 208$) were sent an initial postcard on August 4, 2008. The postcard let the participant know that a questionnaire was arriving and that the

individual's response was appreciated (Appendix C). The postcard informed the participants that they were randomly selected to participate in this study in an effort to assess the employability skills being transferred from their college experiences to the workplace. An email address was provided to participants so that they could ask questions. This postcard also gave the researcher the opportunity to verify accurate contact information. Research has shown that this step assists in reducing non-response error (Dillman, 2007).

Upon mailing the initial postcards, 35 were returned undeliverable with invalid addresses ($n^1 = 13$, $n^2 = 12$, $n^3 = 10$). This resulted in frame error. Frame error is an error that occurs when contact information for study participants is incorrect or incomplete (Lessler & Kalsbeek, 1992). Attempts were then made to find correct information for these 35 participants. A contact was made to both the Fort Hays State University Alumni Association, and the FHSU database administrator for correct addresses. Personal searches on whitepages.com, local phone books, and Facebook were also made by the researcher. These searches resulted in no new information; therefore, the sample size was reduced for each group based on their respective numbers ($n^1 = 195$, $n^2 = 196$, $n^3 = 198$) with a total sample of 589 ($N = 589$).

The second contact with the participants was the mailing of the actual questionnaire. In the packet mailed to each participant on August 18, 2008 was the questionnaire (Appendix A), cover letter (Appendix D), and a pre-addressed, postage paid envelope. The cover letter informed the participants of the purpose of the study and the need for honest responses by Friday, September 5, 2008. Attached to the questionnaire was a $1.00 bill. This small financial incentive was included for

participants to enjoy a treat of their choice as they completed the questionnaire. The use of small financial incentives sent with the request to respond was proven to be effective in encouraging participation (Dillman, 2007).

Approximately three weeks after the questionnaire was sent to the participants a thank you postcard (Appendix E) was sent to each participant on September 8, 2008. This thank you expressed appreciation for responding and kindly asked that participants complete and return the survey soon if they had not done so already. As of this date, 154 participants had responded to the questionnaire, resulting in a 26.1% return rate.

Non-respondents were sent a replacement questionnaire on September 22, 2008. This indicated that the participants' completed questionnaire had not been received and urged the participant to respond (Appendix F) by October 13, 2008. As a final contact to participants, an email was sent to participants on November 10, 2008 whose questionnaires had not been received (Appendix G). The email address available to the researcher was the participants' Fort Hays State University scatcat email address, which students can use during and after they complete their FHSU coursework. The email reminded participants about the importance of the research and asked that they submit their questionnaire. As recommended by Dillman (2004), this special email contact was the final contact to each participant. Upon completion of the postcard and four follow up procedures, 226 usable questionnaires ($n^1 = 63$, $n^2 = 63$, $n^3 = 100$) were received from participants resulting in a 38.3% response rate.

Out of concern with the response rate, a third packet with a coded questionnaire, cover letter (Appendix H), and pre-addressed, postage paid envelope was mailed to the non-respondents of each of the three groups on January 6, 2009. This sixth contact was

conducted in an effort to raise the response rate to reduce the impact on the study's validity due to non-response error. This sixth contact yielded an additional 11 questionnaires being received ($n^1 = 6, n^2 = 4, n^3 = 1$), resulting in 237 usable questionnaires ($n^1 = 69, n^2 = 67, n^3 = 101$) and a final response rate of 40.2%.

Phase II of the study involved assessing the participants' employability skills from their supervisors' perceptions. Upon receiving responses from the study participants, Phase II began. An initial postcard (Appendix I) was sent to 116 participants' supervisors ($n^1 = 25, n^2 = 34, n^3 = 57$) as made available by the participants' responses in Phase I. The postcard, sent on October 17, 2008, informed the supervisors that the purpose of the study being conducted was to assess the employability skills possessed by the study participants who were enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students. As part of the study, one of their current employees had been randomly selected to participate and therefore, their input was also needed. The postcard iterated that the study would only be solidified upon their assessment of their current employee's employability skills. The postcard indicated that a questionnaire would be forthcoming in the mail and asked that they return it in the enclosed pre-addressed, postage paid envelope.

On October 24, 2008 the questionnaire (Appendix B), cover letter (Appendix J), and pre-addressed postage paid envelope were mailed to the supervisors. The cover letter informed the participants of the purpose of the study and the need for honest responses. After the questionnaire was sent to the supervisors, a thank you postcard was sent (Appendix K) to supervisors on November 11, 2008. This thank you expressed

appreciation for responding and kindly asked that each supervisor complete and return the survey if they have not done so already.

Non-respondents were then sent a replacement questionnaire on November 21, 2008 after the previous questionnaire mailing. This packet including a cover letter (Appendix L), replacement questionnaire (Appendix B), and a postage paid return envelope, indicated that the supervisors' completed questionnaire had not been received and urged the supervisor to respond. This was the final contact to each supervisor resulting in a total sample of $N = 53$ ($n^1 = 14$, $n^2 = 14$, $n^3 = 25$) and response rate of 45.6%. A subsequent email was not sent to supervisors due to email addresses not being available for a majority of the supervisors provided by the participants.

Participant and supervisor questionnaires were coded so that the researcher could match the participant to his or her respective supervisor. This assisted in follow-up communication during the data collection and the data analysis processes.

Non-Response Error Control

External validity is threatened by non-response error. Non-response error is "the result of people who respond to a survey being different from sampled individuals who did not respond, in a way relevant to the study" (Dillman, 2007, p. 11). Eliminating non-response error can ensure that valid results are produced through the questionnaire (Miller and Smith, 1983). One way to control for non-response error is a method of comparing early to late respondents (Lindner, Murphy, & Briers, 2001; Miller & Smith, 1983). This is based on the concept that late responders are similar to non-responders (Lindner et al., 2001). Lindner et al. (2001) recommend that late responders be defined as those "who respond in the last wave of respondents in successive follow-ups to a

questionnaire, in response to the last stimulus" (p. 52). If no differences are found between early and late responders on primary constructs the results of the study can be generalized to the population.

Late responders were categorized as those who responded after the final questionnaire packet was sent out on September 22, 2008 (n = 83). This group was compared to the first 83 respondents using independent sample t-tests on each of the six constructs. The confidence level of 0.05 was set *a priori*. The data showed no statistical difference of means between questionnaires received early in the study and those received after the second questionnaire packet and subsequent reminders were sent. These non-significant findings indicate that the study findings are generalizable to the remainder of the sample population. Table 3.5 shows the summary of the non-response error tests for each construct.

Table 3.5 Comparison of Early and Late Respondents for Non-Response Error

Constructs	N	M	SD	t	p
Problem-Solving Importance				.894	.373
Early Respondents	83	2.463	.352		
Late Respondents	83	2.411	.399		
Problem-Solving Competence				-1.67	.097
Early Respondents	83	2.319	.347		
Late Respondents	83	2.414	.379		
Communication Importance				.343	.742
Early Respondents	83	2.212	.551		
Late Respondents	83	2.182	.580		
Communication Competence				-.853	.395
Early Respondents	83	2.208	.445		
Late Respondents	83	2.268	.446		
Teamwork Importance				.228	.820
Early Respondents	83	2.491	.508		
Late Respondents	83	2.473	.551		
Teamwork Competence				-.521	.603
Early Respondents	83	2.422	.410		
Late Respondents	83	2.459	.511		
Change and Innovation Importance				-.110	.913
Early Respondents	83	2.349	.461		
Late Respondents	83	2.358	.563		
Change and Innovation Competence				-.869	.386
Early Respondents	83	2.169	.435		
Late Respondents	83	2.234	.514		
Managing Self Importance				.080	.936
Early Respondents	83	2.579	.424		
Late Respondents	83	2.573	.474		
Managing Self Competence				-.830	.190
Early Respondents	83	2.382	.423		
Late Respondents	83	2.442	.497		
Civic-Minded Importance				1.316	.190
Early Respondents	83	2.250	.622		
Late Respondents	83	2.102	.806		
Civic-Minded Competence				-.057	.955
Early Respondents	83	2.161	.693		
Late Respondents	83	2.167	.680		

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using Fort Hays State University's Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 12.0 for Windows. Confidence intervals for statistical significance were set at the .05 level *a priori*. Descriptive statistics generated by SPSS were used to describe the population of the study by personal characteristics. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe each of the groups based on these characteristics.

The first research question related to identifying the employability skills important in the workplace. To determine the employability skills by importance, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations were used. To test hypotheses one and two, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on each of the three groups. A Gabriel post hoc test was conducted using SPSS 12.0 to determine how the three groups were statistically different. This post hoc test was chosen because the study resulted in unequal groups. The Gabriel post hoc test is recommended for these situations when groups are unequal. Research hypothesis three was tested using an independent t-test.

Research question two addressed the notion of differences between groups according to participants' competence in each employability skill construct. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine if differences existed between participants and participants' supervisors in group one, group two, and group three on each of the research hypotheses four and five.

Research question three asked whether a leadership education program delivered employability skills. To analyze this question, hypotheses six through eight were tested using an analysis of variance (ANOVA).

CHAPTER 4 - Results

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether students are transferring employability skills learned in the Fort Hays State University (FHSU) Leadership Studies Certificate Program to the workplace. The study sought to evaluate the participants' perceptions with regard to the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as their level of competence in performing each of the employability skills. Statistical analysis was conducted to determine if differences occurred between groups in the perceived levels of importance and competence. The study also sought the supervisors' perceptions of the study participants. Supervisors evaluated the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as the perceived competence level of the participant performing these skills in the workplace. Statistical analysis was conducted to determine if differences existed between participants who had completed the leadership certificate and those who had not.

This chapter is organized into five main sections. The first section describes the demographics of the participant respondents. Research question one and hypotheses one through three are then discussed in section two. The third section describes research question two, as well as hypotheses four and five. The final research question and hypotheses six through eight are discussed in the fourth section. Discussion of additional findings and a summary of findings conclude this chapter.

Demographics

The study's target population was students who had taken coursework at Fort Hays State University from January 2002 through December 2007. These students were stratified into three groups. Group one contained students who were enrolled or previously enrolled at Fort Hays State University, but had not taken any courses from the Department of Leadership Studies (N = 15, 417). Group two was made up of students who were enrolled or previously enrolled at Fort Hays State University, and had taken Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300) and/or Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302), (N = 1360). The final group, group three, was comprised of students who were enrolled or previously enrolled at Fort Hays State University and had completed the nine hour Leadership Studies Certificate Program (N = 464). Upon completion of a simple random sampling of each strata (Cohen, 1992), 208 participants from each strata were randomly selected for the study. After receiving 35 undeliverable packets, the sample size was reduced for each participant group based on their respective numbers (n^1 = 195, n^2 = 196, n^3 = 198). Responses were received from 69 participants in group one, 67 participants in group two, and 101 participants in group three yielding a 40.2% response rate.

Although not used for data analysis in this study, demographic information was collected on the questionnaire from each participant response. This demographic information included the following categories: current employment status, current academic status, annual salary/income, gender, age, ethnicity, and delivery method of their leadership courses. Participant respondents also reported the number of hours per week spent at their current job and the number of months they had spent in their current

position. In order to understand the sample population based on demographics, Tables 4.1 through 4.11 summarize this data by group.

Participants ($N = 237$) self reported their current employment status. Table 4.1 is an illustration of this data. A majority of the participants, 172 (76.2%), reported currently working full time, while 41 (17.3%) reported working part time. In addition, eight (3.4%) care for their families full time, two (0.8%) serve in the military, 2 (0.8%) responded as being unemployed, and 12 (5.1%) reported "other" as their employment status.

Table 4.1 Demographics of Participant Respondents – Current Employment Status

	Full time		Part time		Family full time		Military		Unemployed		Other	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	42	60.9	15	21.7	4	5.8	0	0	1	1.4	7	10.1
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	53	79.1	10	14.9	1	1.5	1	1.5	0	0	2	3.0
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	77	76.2	16	15.8	3	3.0	1	1.0	1	1.0	3	3.0
TOTAL	172	76.2	41	17.3	8	3.4	2	0.8	2	0.8	12	5.1

Table 4.2 depicts the current academic status of the participants who responded to the questionnaire. Of the 237 participant respondents, 144 (60.8%) reported that they were currently not in school. However, 32 (13.5%) were full time undergraduate students and 23 (9.7%) were part time undergraduate students. Of the participant respondents, ten

(4.2%) were part time graduate students while 15 (6.3%) were full time graduate students. In addition, twelve (5.1%) respondents reported "other" as their current academic status.

Table 4.2 Demographics of Participant Respondents – Current Academic Status

	Full time undergrad		Part time undergrad		Full time grad		Part time grad		Not in school		Other	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	12	17.4	7	10.1	2	2.9	2	2.9	40	58.0	6	8.7
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	11	16.4	9	13.4	4	6.0	4	6.0	34	50.7	4	6.0
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	9	8.9	7	6.9	9	8.9	4	4.0	70	69.3	2	2.0
TOTAL	32	13.5	23	9.7	15	6.3	10	4.2	144	60.8	12	5.1

The number of hours at their job per week were reported by participant respondents. Means and standard deviations of these hours, broken down by group, are illustrated in Table 4.3. Group two reported the highest number of hours at their job per week ($M = 43.33$, $SD = 15.711$). Group three reported the next highest number of hours spent at their job per week ($M = 42.51$, $SD = 11.472$). The fewest number of hours at their job per week were reported by group one ($M = 38.16$, $SD = 14.409$).

Table 4.3 Demographics of Participant Respondents – Number of hours at job per week

Treatment Group	M	SD
Group One (Control)	38.16	14.409
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	43.33	15.711
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	42.51	11.472
TOTAL	41.47	13.765

The number of months the participant respondents' had spent in their current position is displayed in Table 4.4. Means and standards deviations by groups are reported. Group one reported the highest longevity in their current position ($M = 48.64$, $SD = 71.543$), while group three reported fewer months ($M = 30.34$, $SD = 49.464$). Group two reported being in their current positions for an average of almost three years ($M = 35.45$, $SD = 46.445$).

Table 4.4 Demographics of Participant Respondents – Average number of months in current position

Treatment Group	M	SD
Group One (Control)	48.64	71.543
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	35.45	46.445
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	30.34	49.464
TOTAL	37.06	56.216

Categorical variables were used for participants to report their annual salary/income. A summary of those variables by respondent groups is reported in Table 4.5. A wide range of annual salaries/income were reported; however, of the respondents, 135 (57.7%) have an annual income between $0 and $35,000. Interestingly, 50 (21.4%) respondents reported their annual salary/income to be $50,000 or greater.

Table 4.5 Demographics of Participant Respondents – Annual Salary/Income

	Less than $20,000		$20,000-$24,999		$25,000-$29,999		$30,000-$34,999		$35,000-$39,999		$40,000-$44,999		$45,000-$49,999		$50,000 or greater	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	26	39.4	6	9.1	1	1.5	4	6.1	10	15.2	4	6.1	2	3.0	13	19.7
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	16	23.9	10	14.9	2	3.0	9	13.4	7	10.4	2	3.0	1	1.5	20	29.9
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	26	25.7	6	5.9	19	18.8	10	9.9	4	4.0	13	12.9	6	5.9	17	16.8
TOTAL	68	29.1	22	9.4	22	9.4	23	9.8	21	9.0	19	8.1	9	3.8	50	21.4

Table 4.6 shows a snapshot of the gender breakdown of the three participant groups. Of group one respondents, 45 (65.2%) were female and 24 (34.8%) were male. Group two had 36 (53.7%) females respond and 31 (46.3%) males respond. Lastly, 59 (58.4%) of group three respondents were females, while 42 (41.6%) were males. The female population in this study was slightly higher than Fort Hays State University's female population, with the male population being lower than the FHSU's population (Fort Hays State University, 2008).

Table 4.6 Demographics of Participant Respondents - Gender

	Female		Male	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	45	65.2	24	34.8
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	36	53.7	31	46.3
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	59	58.4	42	41.6
TOTAL	140	59.1	97	40.9

Categorical variables were also used for respondents to report their age. A summary of participant respondent ages are reported in Table 4.7. A majority of respondents (65.3%) reported being between the ages of 20 and 29. In addition, 30 (12.7%) reported being between 40 and 49, 23 (9.7%) reported being between 30 and 39, and 22 (9.3%) reported being between 50 and 59. Only four (1.7%) respondents reported being between the ages of 18 and 20 and three (1.0%) respondents reported being between the ages of 60 and 69.

Table 4.7 Demographics of Participant Respondents - Age

	18-20		20-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60-69		70 and above	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	3	4.4	35	51.5	10	14.7	9	13.2	10	14.7	1	1.5	0	0.0
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	0	0.0	39	58.2	7	10.4	15	22.4	5	7.5	1	1.5	0	0.0
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	1	1.0	80	79.2	6	5.9	6	5.9	7	6.9	1	1.0	0	0.0
TOTAL	4	1.7	154	65.3	23	9.7	30	12.7	22	9.3	3	1.0	0	0.0

Table 4.8 illustrates the ethnicity of the participant respondents. Of the 237 respondents, 216 (91.5%) reported white as their ethnicity. In addition, two (0.8%) reported being American Indian or Alaska Native, one (0.4%) reported being Asian, and six (2.5%) reported Black or African American as their ethnicity. Of the additional participants, seven (3.0%) reported being Hispanic or Latino, while four (1.7%) respondents refused to indicate their ethnicity. These percentages are consistent with the total population of undergraduate students at Fort Hays State University in the Fall of 2007 (Fort Hays State University, 2008).

Table 4.8 Demographics of Participant Respondents - Ethnicity

	American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian		Black or African American		Hispanic or Latino		Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		White		Other		Refuse to Indicate	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	2.9	2	2.9	0	0.0	62	89.9	0	0.0	3	4.3
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	1	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.0	0	0.0	63	94.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	1	1.0	1	1.0	4	4.0	3	3.0	0	0.0	91	90.1	0	0.0	1	1.0
TOTAL	2	0.8	1	0.4	6	2.5	7	3.0	0	0.0	216	91.5	0	0.0	4	1.7

Table 4.9 shows the delivery method by which participant respondents ($N = 237$) took Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300). Of course, group one (control) did not take the course. However in group two, 25 (37.3%) participants took LDRS 300 on campus and 42 (62.7%) took this course virtually. In group three, 73 (72.3%) of the respondents took LDRS 300 on campus, while only 28 (27.7%) took the course virtually.

Table 4.9 Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300) Delivery Method

	On Campus Delivery		Virtual Delivery		Did not take course	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	0	0.0	0	0.0	69	100.0
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	25	37.3	42	62.7	0	0.0
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	73	72.3	28	27.7	0	0.0
TOTAL	98	41.0	71	30.0	69	29.0

Table 4.10 illustrates the delivery method by which participant respondents took Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302). Again, none of the 69 participants in group one (control) took the course. Of the 67 respondents in group two, 14 (20.9%) took LDRS 302 on campus, 24 (35.8%) took LDRS 302 virtually, and 29 (43.3%) had not taken LDRS 302 at the time the questionnaire was administered. A majority of the respondents in group three (72.3%) took LDRS 302 on campus and 28 (27.7%) took the course virtually.

Table 4.10 Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302) Delivery Method

	On Campus Delivery		Virtual Delivery		Did not take course	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	0	0.0	0	0.0	69	100.0
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	20.9	24	35.8	29	43.3
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	73	72.3	28	27.7	0	0.0
TOTAL	87	36.7	52	21.9	98	41.4

In Table 4.11 the Fieldwork in Leadership Studies (LDRS 310) course delivery method by group is shown. Because this course is the final course of the Leadership Studies Certificate Program, only group three had taken the course at the time the data was collected. Of the 101 group three respondents 75 (74.3%) took LDRS 310 on campus, while 26 (25.7%) took this course virtually. It is interesting to note that a majority of the Leadership Certificate recipient respondents (group three) had taken their courses on-campus.

Table 4.11 Fieldwork in Leadership Studies (LDRS 310) Delivery Method

	On Campus Delivery		Virtual Delivery		Did not take course	
Treatment Group	f	%	f	%	f	%
Group One (Control)	0	0.0	0	0.0	69	100.0
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	0	0.0	0	0.0	67	100.0
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	75	74.3	26	25.7	0	0.0
TOTAL	75	31.6	26	11.0	136	57.4

Findings Related to Research Question One

Research question one asked what employability skills were important to the workplace. This question was broken down into three components: a) participant perceptions of the importance of six employability skill constructs, b) supervisor perceptions of the importance of six employability skill constructs, and c) differences between participant and supervisor perceptions of the importance of each of the six employability skill constructs.

Findings for Research Question One A

Means and standards deviations were calculated to rank each of the six employability constructs according to participant respondents with respect to importance in their job. Participants (N = 237) ranked Ability to Manage Self (M = 2.585, SD = .432) as being most important to their current position. This was also ranked highest by their respective supervisors. Teamwork Skills were ranked second in importance (M = 2.483, SD = .506). Problem-Solving Skills (M = 2.460, SD = .365), Change and

Innovation Behaviors (*M* = 2.380, *SD* = .477), and Communication Skills (*M* = 2.218, *SD* = .548) were ranked third, fourth and fifth respectively. Like their supervisors, participants felt that Being Civic-Minded was least important to their current job (*M* = 2.154, *SD* =.748). Table 4.12 illustrates these results.

Table 4.12 Employability Skill Constructs Rank by Importance according to Participants

	N	M**	SD	Rank
Problem-Solving Skills	237	2.460	.365	3
Communication Skills	237	2.218	.548	5
Teamwork Skills	237	2.483	.506	2
Change and Innovation Behaviors	237	2.380	.477	4
Ability to Manage Self	237	2.585	.432	1
Being Civic-Minded	237	2.154	.748	6

**Scale of 0=No Importance, 1=Minor Importance, 2=Moderate Importance, and 3=Major Importance

Research hypothesis one stated that there would be a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one (control), two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302), and three (Leadership Certificate) of study participants. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test this hypothesis. After conducting a homogeneity of variance test, equal variances were assumed. Table 4.13 describes the results of this analysis of variance on the perceived importance of employability skills by construct according to participants.

No statistical significant differences between the control and two treatment groups of participants were shown for the constructs with regard to importance Problem-Solving Skills (F (2, 233) = 0.808, p=.447); Communication Skills (F (2, 233) = 2.314, p=.101); Teamwork Skills (F (2, 234) = 0.309, p=.735); Change and Innovation Behaviors (F (2, 233) = 0.683, p=.506); Ability to Manage Self (F (2, 233) = 0.028, p=.973); and Being Civic-Minded (F (2, 234) = 0.198, p=.820). Therefore, research hypothesis one is rejected.

Table 4.13 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of mean questionnaire responses per construct between participant groups with regard to Importance

Construct Importance Treatment Group	N	M**	SD	F	p*
Problem-Solving Skills				0.808	.447
Group One (Control)	69	2.413	.422		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.480	.355		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.479	.329		
Communication Skills				2.314	.101
Group One (Control)	69	2.104	.599		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.300	.529		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.240	.517		
Teamwork Skills				0.309	.735
Group One (Control)	69	2.444	.600		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.490	.462		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.506	.465		
Change and Innovation Behaviors				0.683	.506
Group One (Control)	69	2.324	.476		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.400	.445		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.406	.499		
Ability to Manage Self				0.028	.973
Group One (Control)	69	2.575	.420		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.586	.421		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.591	.452		
Being Civic-Minded				0.198	.820
Group One (Control)	69	2.111	.653		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.152	.726		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.185	.624		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Importance, 1=Minor Importance, 2=Moderate Importance, and 3=Major Importance

Findings for Research Question One B

Means and standards deviations were calculated to rank each of the six employability constructs according to participants' supervisors with respect to importance of the construct to the participant's job. Supervisors (N = 53) ranked Ability to Manage Self (M = 2.600, SD = .293) as being the most important to their respective employee's current position. Problem-Solving Skills were ranked second in importance (M = 2.454, SD = .367). Teamwork Skills (M = 2.368, SD = .459), Change and Innovation Behaviors (M = 2.256, SD = .432), and Communication Skills (M = 2.187, SD = .459) were ranked third, fourth and fifth respectively. Supervisors felt that Being Civic-Minded was least important to their participants' current job (M = 1.959, SD =.694). Table 4.14 illustrates these results.

Table 4.14 Employability Skill Constructs Rank by Importance according to Supervisors

	N	M**	SD	Rank
Problem-Solving Skills	53	2.454	.367	2
Communication Skills	53	2.187	.459	5
Teamwork Skills	53	2.368	.459	3
Change and Innovation Behaviors	53	2.256	.432	4
Ability to Manage Self	53	2.600	.293	1
Being Civic-Minded	53	1.959	.694	6

**Scale of 0=No Importance, 1=Minor Importance, 2=Moderate Importance, and 3=Major Importance

Research hypothesis two stated that there would be a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one (control), two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302), and three (Leadership Certificate) of supervisors of study participants. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test this hypothesis. Table 4.15 describes the results of this analysis of variance on the perceived importance of employability skills by construct according to supervisors.

There was a statistically significantly difference between the importance of Communication Skills (F (2, 50) = 3.766, p=.030) between the three groups. To test where the differences occurred, the Gabriel post hoc test was conducted. This post hoc test revealed that the differences existed between groups one (M^1 = 1.943, SD^1 = .500) and three (M^3 = 2.340, SD^3 = .421). Supervisors who supervise leadership certificate recipients (group three) perceive communication skills to be more important than those who supervise those who have not had any leadership courses (group one). Research hypothesis two is accepted regarding communication skills.

No statistical significant differences between the control and two treatment groups were shown for the constructs with regard to importance Problem-Solving Skills (F (2, 49) = 2.196, p=.122); Teamwork Skills (F (2, 49) = 1.525, p=.228); Change and Innovation Behaviors (F (2, 49) = 1.814, p=.174); Ability to Manage Self (F (2, 50) = 0.372, p=.692); and Being Civic-Minded (F (2, 50) = 1.117, p=.335). Research hypothesis two is rejected based on these five non-significant comparisons.

Table 4.15 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of mean questionnaire responses per construct between supervisor groups with regard to Importance

Construct Importance Treatment Group	N	M**	SD	F	p*
Problem-Solving Skills				2.196	.122
Group One (Control)	14	2.404	.425		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.316	.452		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.557	.249		
Communication Skills				3.766	.030*
Group One (Control)	14	1.943	.500		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.157	.392		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.340	.421		
Teamwork Skills				1.525	.228
Group One (Control)	14	2.197	.552		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.349	.482		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.467	.380		
Change and Innovation Behaviors				1.814	.174
Group One (Control)	14	2.097	.627		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.208	.401		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.365	.296		
Ability to Manage Self				0.372	.692
Group One (Control)	14	2.579	.330		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.356	.329		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.636	.256		
Being Civic-Minded				1.117	.335
Group One (Control)	14	1.738	.824		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.119	.572		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	1.993	.674		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Importance, 1=Minor Importance, 2=Moderate Importance, and 3=Major Importance

Findings for Research Question One C

Hypothesis three stated that there would be a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between participants and their supervisors.

Means and standard deviations revealed that the study participants (N = 237) and supervisors (N = 53) ranked the importance of the six employability skill constructs differently. Participant means indicated that the Ability to Manage Self was most important with Teamwork Skills, Problem-Solving Skills, Change and Innovation Behaviors, Communication Skills, and Being Civic-Minded following. However, supervisor mean scores also revealed Ability to Manage Self as most important employability skill for their employees to possess. Problem-Solving Skills, Teamwork Skills, Change and Innovation Behaviors, Communication Skills, and Being Civic-Minded followed. An independent t-test revealed that these slight differences in importance rank are not significant with regard to Problem-Solving Skills t (286) = 0.117, p=.907; Communication Skills t (287) = 0.383, p=.702; Teamwork Skills t (287) = 1.520, p=.130; Change and Innovation Behaviors t (286) = 1.730, p=.085; Ability to Manage Self t (287) = -0.238, p=.812; and Being Civic Minded t (288) = 1.737, p=.083). Therefore, hypothesis three is rejected. Results of the independent t-test are depicted in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16 Independent T-Test of Responses as Related to the Perceived Importance of Employability Skills between Study Participants and their Supervisors

Construct Importance		N	M**	SD	t	p*
Problem-Solving Skills					0.117	.907
	Participants	237	2.460	.365		
	Supervisors	53	2.454	.367		
Communication Skills					0.383	.702
	Participants	237	2.218	.548		
	Supervisors	53	2.187	.459		
Teamwork Skills					1.520	.130
	Participants	237	2.483	.506		
	Supervisors	53	2.368	.459		
Change and Innovation Behaviors					1.730	.085
	Participants	237	2.380	.467		
	Supervisors	53	2.256	.433		
Ability to Manage Self					-0.238	.812
	Participants	237	2.585	.432		
	Supervisors	53	2.600	.293		
Being Civic-Minded					1.737	.083
	Participants	237	2.154	.748		
	Supervisors	53	1.960	.694		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Importance, 1=Minor Importance, 2=Moderate Importance, and 3=Major Importance

Findings Related to Research Question Two

Research question two asked if participants have meaningful employability skills demanded by the workplace. This question was separated into two sub-questions: a) does a leadership certificate program enhance participants' relevant employability skills; and b) does the number of academic leadership courses, in an academic leadership program, affect employability skills development. Results pertaining to these questions are described below.

Findings for Research Question Two A

This research question sought to look at whether or not a leadership certificate enhanced participants' relevant employability skills. The participants' self-perceived competence on the total employability skills scores and each of the six employability constructs were analyzed by computing an analysis of variance (ANOVA) between the scores for group one (control), group two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302), and group three (Leadership Certificate).

Table 4.17 describes the analysis of variance of the total employability skills score of study participants by group. Equal variances were assumed upon calculating the homogeneity of variance. No difference was shown between the three groups for the Total Employability Skills (F (2, 232) = 1.000, p=.370).

Table 4.17 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of mean questionnaire responses between participant groups with regard to Perceived Total Employability Skills Competence

Treatment Group	N	M**	SD	F	p*
				1.000	.370
Group One (Control)	69	2.295	.362		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.261	.412		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.342	.341		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05
**Scale of 0=No Competence, 1=Minor Competence, 2=Moderate Competence, and 3=Major Competence

Research hypothesis four stated that there would be a statistically significant difference in the self-perceived competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one (control), two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302), and three (Leadership Certificate) of study participants. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test this hypothesis with regard to self-perceived competence of each construct. After conducting a homogeneity of variance test, equal variances were assumed. Table 4.18 describes the results of this analysis of variance on the perceived competence of employability skills by construct according to participant groups.

No statistically significant differences were shown between the three groups for the constructs Problem-Solving Skills (F (2, 233) = 0.769, p=.465); Communication Skills (F (2, 234) = 1.655, p=.193); Teamwork Skills (F (2, 234) = 1.789, p=.169); Change and Innovation Behaviors (F (2, 233) = 0.526, p=.592); Ability to Manage Self (F (2, 234) = 0.354, p=.702); and Being Civic-Minded (F (2, 234) = 1.055, p=.350). Research hypothesis four is rejected. Hence, this data reveals that a leadership certificate program does not significantly enhance participants' self-perceived competence of employability skills.

Table 4.18 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of mean questionnaire responses per construct between participant groups with regard to Perceived Competence

Construct Competence Treatment Group	N	M**	SD	F	p*
Problem-Solving Skills				0.769	.465
Group One (Control)	69	2.388	.391		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.316	.374		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.378	.356		
Communication Skills				1.655	.193
Group One (Control)	69	2.210	.459		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.215	.459		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.317	.413		
Teamwork Skills				1.789	.169
Group One (Control)	69	2.480	.451		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.362	.539		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.487	.381		
Change and Innovation Behaviors				0.526	.592
Group One (Control)	69	2.200	.480		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.195	.470		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.259	.429		
Ability to Manage Self				0.354	.702
Group One (Control)	69	2.443	.417		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.400	.513		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.460	.446		
Being Civic-Minded				1.055	.350
Group One (Control)	69	2.118	.653		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	2.164	.726		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	2.262	.624		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Competence, 1=Minor Competence, 2=Moderate Competence, and 3=Major Competence

Findings for Research Question Two B

This research question sought to look at whether or not a leadership certificate enhanced participants' relevant employability skills from their supervisor's perspective. Supervisors ($N = 53$) reported the competence level of the participant on six employability skill constructs. The participants' competence on the total employability and each of the six employability constructs according to their supervisors were analyzed by computing an analysis of variance (ANOVA) between the mean scores for group one (control), group two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302), and group three (Leadership Certificate).

No statistical significant differences were found between participant groups and their total employability skills with respect to their competence as perceived by supervisors (F (2, 45) = 1.032, p=.365). Table 4.19 illustrates the summary of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted.

Table 4.19 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of mean questionnaire responses between supervisor groups with regard to Total Employability Skills Competence

Treatment Group	N	M**	SD	F	p*
				1.032	.365
Group One (Control)	14	2.120	.458		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.312	.369		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.116	.441		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05
**Scale of 0=No Competence, 1=Minor Competence, 2=Moderate Competence, ` and 3=Major Competence

Research hypothesis five stated that there would be a statistically significant difference in the perceived competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one (control), two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302), and three (Leadership Certificate) of the study participants based on their supervisors' responses. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test this hypothesis with regard to competence of participants from their supervisors' perspective on each construct. After conducting a homogeneity of variance test, equal variances were again assumed. Table 4.20 describes the results of this analysis of variance on the perceived competence of employability skills by construct according to study participants' supervisors.

There were no significant differences between groups and their employability skills scores from the supervisors' perception by each construct: Problem-Solving Skills, (F (2, 48) = 0.576, p=.566); Communication Skills, (F (2, 49) = 0.664, p=.519); Teamwork Skills, (F (2, 50) = 1.565, p=.219); Change and Innovation Behaviors (F (2, 49) = 0.783, p=.463); Ability to Manage Self, (F (2, 49) = 0.053, p=.948); and Being Civic-Minded (F (2, 50) = 1.016, p=.370). Therefore, research hypothesis five is rejected. Based on this analysis, the number of academic leadership courses in an academic leadership program does not affect employability skill development.

Table 4.20 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of mean questionnaire responses per construct between supervisor groups with regard to Competence

Construct Competence Treatment Group	N	M**	SD	F	p*
Problem-Solving Skills				0.576	.566
Group One (Control)	14	2.205	.334		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.256	.419		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.104	.497		
Communication Skills				0.664	.519
Group One (Control)	14	2.054	.489		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.271	.565		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.128	.477		
Teamwork Skills				1.565	.219
Group One (Control)	14	2.183	.522		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.500	.392		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.213	.619		
Change and Innovation Behaviors				0.783	.463
Group One (Control)	14	2.031	.532		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.214	.399		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.031	.467		
Ability to Manage Self				0.053	.948
Group One (Control)	14	2.349	.420		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.405	.358		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.370	.522		
Being Civic-Minded				1.016	.370
Group One (Control)	14	2.143	.884		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	2.441	.441		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	2.147	.626		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Competence, 1=Minor Competence, 2=Moderate Competence, and 3=Major Competence

Findings Related to Research Question Three

Research question three asked whether a leadership education program delivers necessary employability skills. Three separate analysis of variance tests were conducted to answer this research question. These analyses correspond to hypotheses six through eight.

Hypothesis six stated that differences between supervisor importance and competency levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three would be statistically significant. Differences in means were calculated between supervisor reported importance and competence levels. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then conducted between the three groups to determine whether the difference scores between supervisor importance and competency levels on each of the six employability skill constructs were significantly different.

Table 4.21 illustrates that there were no statistically significant differences between the supervisor importance and competency levels differences reported by each construct: Problem-Solving Skills, (F (2, 48) = 2.398, p=.102); Communication Skills, (F (2, 49) = 0.367, p=.695); Teamwork Skills, (F (2, 49) = 1.932, p=.156); Change and Innovation Behaviors, (F (2, 48) = 1.120, p=.335); Ability to Manage Self, (F (2, 49) = 0.706, p=.499); and Being Civic-Minded, (F (2, 50) = 1.129, p=.331). Therefore, hypothesis six is rejected.

Table 4.21 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of differences in mean questionnaire responses between Importance and Competence per construct between supervisor groups

Construct Treatment Group	N	Diff in Mean**	SD	F	p*
Problem-Solving Skills				2.398	.102
Group One (Control)	14	.417	.301		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.298	.187		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.566	.470		
Communication Skills				0.367	.695
Group One (Control)	14	.339	.405		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.414	.344		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.452	.401		
Teamwork Skills				1.932	.156
Group One (Control)	14	.513	.470		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.278	.292		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.538	.434		
Change and Innovation Behaviors				1.120	.335
Group One (Control)	14	.375	.329		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.286	.130		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.455	.415		
Ability to Manage Self				0.706	.499
Group One (Control)	14	.310	.368		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.294	.225		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.426	.446		
Being Civic-Minded				1.129	.331
Group One (Control)	14	.405	.554		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.369	.490		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.607	.548		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Importance/Competence, 1=Minor Importance/Competence, 2=Moderate Importance/Competence, and 3=Major Importance/Competence

Hypothesis seven stated that differences between participant importance and self-perceived competency levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three would be statistically significant. Differences in means were calculated between participant self-perceived importance and competence levels. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then conducted between the three groups to determine whether the difference scores between participant self-perceived importance and competency levels on each of the six employability skill constructs were significantly different.

Table 4.22 illustrates that there were no statistically significant differences between the participants' self-perceived importance and competence levels reported by each construct: Problem-Solving Skills, (F (2, 233) = 0.305, p=.738); Communication Skills, (F (2, 233) = 0.673, p=.511); Teamwork Skills, (F (2, 234) = 1.962, p=.143); Change and Innovation Behaviors, (F (2, 232) = 0.482, p=.618); Ability to Manage Self, (F (2, 233) = 1.701, p=.185); and Being Civic-Minded, (F (2, 234) = 0.281, p=.755). Hence, hypothesis seven is rejected.

Table 4.22 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of differences in mean questionnaire responses between Importance and Competence per construct between participant groups

Construct Treatment Group	N	Diff in Mean**	SD	F	p*
Problem-Solving Skills				0.305	.738
Group One (Control)	69	.344	.359		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	.318	.289		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	.306	.296		
Communication Skills				0.673	.511
Group One (Control)	69	.354	.401		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	.408	.383		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	.341	.348		
Teamwork Skills				1.962	.143
Group One (Control)	69	.300	.380		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	.370	.483		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	.250	.307		
Change and Innovation Behaviors				0.482	.618
Group One (Control)	69	.318	.284		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	.375	.435		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	.353	.305		
Ability to Manage Self				1.701	.185
Group One (Control)	69	.306	.306		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	.424	.471		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	.380	.354		
Being Civic-Minded				0.281	.755
Group One (Control)	69	.408	.470		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	67	.475	.610		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	101	.451	.507		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Importance/Competence, 1=Minor Importance/Competence, 2=Moderate Importance/Competence, and 3=Major Importance/Competence

Hypothesis eight stated that differences between supervisor importance and participant self-perceived competence levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three would be statistically significant. Differences in means were calculated between participant importance and competence levels. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then conducted between the three groups to determine whether the difference scores between supervisors' importance and participants' self-perceived competency levels on each of the six employability skill constructs were significantly different.

Table 4.23 illustrates that there were no statistically significant differences between the difference score of participants' self-perceived competence and their respective supervisors' importance score reported by each construct: Problem-Solving Skills, (F (2, 49) = 0.372, p=.691); Communication Skills, (F (2, 50) = 0.647, p=.528); Teamwork Skills, (F (2, 49) = 1.960, p=.152); Change and Innovation Behaviors, (F (2, 49) = 1.023, p=.367); Ability to Manage Self, (F (2, 50) = 1.826, p=.172); and Being Civic-Minded, (F (2, 50) = 0.800, p=.455). Therefore, hypothesis eight is rejected.

Table 4.23 Summary of One-way ANOVA comparisons of differences in mean questionnaire responses between Supervisor Importance and Participant self-perceived Competence per construct

Construct Treatment Group	N	Diff in Mean**	SD	F	p*
Problem-Solving Skills				0.372	.691
Group One (Control)	14	.333	.272		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.415	.111		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.430	.359		
Communication Skills				0.647	.528
Group One (Control)	14	.536	.531		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.357	.301		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.476	.420		
Teamwork Skills				1.960	.152
Group One (Control)	14	.744	.474		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.627	.733		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.427	.299		
Change and Innovation Behaviors				1.023	.367
Group One (Control)	14	.609	.490		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.373	.534		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.440	.358		
Ability to Manage Self				1.826	.172
Group One (Control)	14	.293	.229		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.603	.751		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.369	.447		
Being Civic-Minded				0.800	.455
Group One (Control)	14	.726	.385		
Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or 302)	14	.500	.531		
Group Three (Leadership Certificate)	25	.693	.524		

*Indicates a significant difference at alpha = .05

**Scale of 0=No Importance/Competence, 1=Minor Importance/Competence, 2=Moderate Importance/Competence, and 3=Major Importance/Competence

Additional Findings

Upon completion of the data analysis corresponding to the directional research hypotheses, two additional analyses were conducted on the questionnaire used in the study. A zero-order correlation was conducted on both the participant and supervisor data sets to determine the inter-correlations, if any, among questionnaire items. Secondly, upon completion of the zero-order correlation, an exploratory factor analysis was used to test the factor structure of the 69 item questionnaire. Finally qualitative data was collected using open-ended questions on the participant and supervisor questionnaire. Findings from these data analysis processes follow.

Zero-Order Correlations

Zero-order correlations provided a means for further investigation into the questionnaire findings. A zero-order correlation, using SPSS, was conducted both on the participants' and supervisors' data sets. A significance level of .05 ($p<.05$) was used in the data analysis. Variable means, standard deviations, and correlations appear in Table 4.24 for the participants.

The distinctions among the six employability skill constructs based on importance and competence are unclear. As shown in Table 4.24, significant correlations among participant constructs ranged from (r = .182 - .711). However, the variance accounted for by these correlations ranged from low (r = .20 - .40) to moderate (r = .60 - .80), resulting in the conclusion that the magnitude of the correlations was not high. In fact, only 12 of the 66 correlations (18%) were "moderate" correlations, with no correlations ranking

"high" (r = .80 – 1.00). However, the results did cause the researcher to further explore the data and structure of the instrument through an exploratory factor analysis.

Table 4.24 Zero-Order Correlations – Participants

		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1)	Problem-Solving Skills Importance	2.46	.365												
2)	Problem-Solving Skills Competence	2.36	.371	.293*											
3)	Communication Skills Importance	2.22	.548	.625*	.182*										
4)	Communication Skills Competence	2.26	.441	.313*	.635*	.464*									
5)	Teamwork Skills Importance	2.48	.506	.601*	.270*	.544*	.300*								
6)	Teamwork Skills Competence	2.45	.452	.254*	.596*	.151*	.546*	.487*							

*$p < .05$

Table 4.24 continued Zero-Order Correlations – Participants

		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
7)	Change and Innovation Behaviors Importance	2.38	.477	.632*	.237*	.646*	.370*	.605*	.286*						
8)	Change and Innovation Behaviors Competence	2.22	.455	.297*	.615*	.299*	.616*	.288*	.644*	.510*					
9)	Ability to Manage Self Importance	2.58	.432	.523*	.082	.486*	.238*	.547*	.201*	.660*	.248*				
10)	Ability to Manage Self Competence	2.44	.456	.241*	.508*	.177*	.503*	.213*	.610*	.307*	.711*	.343*			
11)	Being Civic-Minded Importance	2.15	.748	.404*	.075	.466*	.196*	.459*	.143*	.492*	.204*	.468*	.100		
12)	Being Civic-Minded Competence	2.19	.663	.244*	.342*	.231*	.387*	.251*	.425*	.279*	.469*	.232*	.428*	.528*	

*p <.05

Table 4.25 illustrates variable means, standard deviations, and correlations for supervisors of the study participants. At first glance, the distinctions among the six employability skill constructs with respect to importance and competence look unclear. Constructs were significantly correlated among supervisor data (r = .283 - .806). However, as with the participant data, further analysis reveals that these correlations do not account for much variance with only 12 of the 66 correlations (18%) accounting for "moderate" variance (r = .60 - .80) and one correlation (1.5%) accounting for "high" variance (r = .80 – 1.00).

Table 4.25 Zero-Order Correlations - Supervisors

		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1)	Problem-Solving Skills Importance	2.45	.367												
2)	Problem-Solving Skills Competence	2.17	.437	.167											
3)	Communication Skills Importance	2.19	.459	.409*	-.047										
4)	Communication Skills Competence	2.15	.502	.235	.640*	.315*									
5)	Teamwork Skills Importance	2.37	.459	.407*	-.050	.477*	.131								
6)	Teamwork Skills Competence	2.28	.549	.085	.510*	.090	.655*	.262							
7)	Change and Innovation Behaviors Importance	2.26	.432	.653*	.098	.688*	.301*	.631*	.270						

*p <.05

Table 4.25 continued Zero-Order Correlations - Supervisors

		M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8)	Change and Innovation Behaviors Competence	2.08	.467	.100	.718*	.262	.754*	.194	.733*	.431*					
9)	Ability to Manage Self Importance	2.60	.293	.535*	.156	.326*	.255	.405*	.194	.734*	.310*				
10)	Ability to Manage Self Competence	2.37	.448	.026	.616*	.130	.623*	.090	.727*	.260	.806*	.257			
11)	Being Civic-Minded Importance	1.96	.694	.249	-.050	.337*	.170	.283*	.106	.530*	.280*	.454*	.043		
12)	Being Civic-Minded Competence	2.22	.665	.193	.236	.345*	.560*	.212	.505*	.416*	.534*	.304*	.478*	.500*	

*p <.05

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The questionnaire broken down in each of each six constructs was found to be reliable; however upon completion of the data collection and zero-order correlations the researcher sought to explore the underlying factor structure of the 69 items in Part I of the questionnaire. To do this, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted upon completion of the data collection process. Evers et al. (1998) had conducted a factor analysis on the original instrument resulting in four factors, but with the added civic-minded construct, it was imperative to run an additional exploratory factor analysis to determine whether the six factor structure held up through data collection.

In SPSS, a Principal Component Analysis (no factor limit) with Varimax rotation was used to obtain solutions. Rotations assist in keeping factors independent or separate from one another. The Varimax rotation was chosen in SPSS because it is the most wisely used orthogonal rotation in factor analysis and it clusters factors into a more interpretable first analysis without altering the mathematical structure (Field, 2005). Hence, the results provided would be less complex to interpret in an exploratory format with this rotation. Upon completion of the Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation on the participant data, the no limit factor solution indicated 17 eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Eigenvalues higher than 1.0 are said to contribute to the explanation of variances and "show how evenly the variances of the data are distributed" (Field, 2005, p. 198). Eigenvalues essentially help determine how many factors are present in the data set.

The 17 factor solution found through this exploratory factor analysis accounted for 69.26% of the variance. Eigenvalues for the 17 factors were 18.73, 4.28, 3.35, 2.50,

2.15, 2.00, 1.83, 1.65, 1.56, 1.50, 1.41, 1.32, 1.21, 1.18, 1.08, 1.05, and 1.00 respectively. The higher the eigenvalue indicated the more variance accounted for by that factor. This factor solution results in the assumption that the instrument did not cleanly load into the six constructs proposed, resulting in some question about the factor structure of the questionnaire for this particular study of perceived transfer of employability skills to the workplace. Coupled with the zero-order correlation data, these results lead the researcher to the conclusion that the instrument possessed a lack of validity.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was collected through open-ended questions asked on both the participant and the supervisor questionnaire. Participants in group two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302) and group three (Leadership Studies Certificate) were asked the following two questions. Group one (control) participants did not answer these questions since the questions only pertained to FHSU leadership courses taken.

1. What topics have been most helpful to you in the workplace from your FHSU leadership courses?
2. What topics do you wish you had learned in your FHSU leadership courses that you did not?

Although the data is anecdotal because the questions were not answered by all study participants, some information can be gleaned from the responses. Table 4.26 below shows a brief summary of responses to the two questions on the participants' questionnaire. Leadership theories and styles were stated as being beneficial to participants in the workplace by both group two and group three. Teamwork and collaboration were cited by 15 participants in group two and 29 participants in group

three as being helpful to them in the workplace. It is interesting to note that 21 students in group three (Leadership Certificate) cited the Fieldwork in Leadership Studies (LDRS 310) service-learning course as being helpful in the workplace with regard to planning a change. However nine participants in both group two and group three indicated that they wished they would have had more hands-on, application experiences. Conflict and communication leadership strategies were topics cited by study participants in group three they wanted to have learned in their FHSU leadership courses. Study participant responses to these questions can be found in Appendix M.

Table 4.26 Summary of Participant Responses to Open-Ended Questions

	Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS)	Group Three (Leadership Certificate)
Question One – Topics most helpful to you in the workplace from your FHSU leadership courses.	*f*	*f*
Ability to Manage Self	5	5
Conflict Resolution Skills	2	2
Communication Skills	5	18
Ethics	2	3
Followership Behaviors	5	8
Initiating Change through Fieldwork or service-learning (LDRS 310)	0	21
Leadership Theory and Styles	10	17
Problem-Solving Skills	4	6
Serving Others	5	6
Teamwork/Collaboration Skills	15	29
Question Two – Topics you wished you would have learned in your FHSU leadership courses that you did not.		
Ability to Manage Self	0	4
Application of Concepts/Hands-On	4	5
Business Skills	5	2
Communication Skills	2	5
Conflict Resolution Skills	2	5
Diversity	3	2
Followership	1	0
Problem-Solving Skills	2	0
Teamwork/Collaboration Skills	2	5

Supervisors of the study participants were asked the following four open-ended questions on the final page of their questionnaire.

1. What skills are important to the success of this employee's current position that have NOT been included in this study?
2. What employment-related skills does your employee need that he/she currently does NOT have?
3. What are the three greatest strengths of your employee?
4. How has this employee contributed to the overall organizational goals?

Because of the limited number of supervisors that responded to the questionnaire and answered the open ended questions was so few, the following results must be interpreted with caution. Five supervisors indicated that time management and paying attention to detail as skills being important to the success of the employee's current position, but were not included in the study questionnaire. Other skills mentioned as being important were interpersonal skills, written communication, problem-solving, honesty and integrity, self-motivation, and respect for others. Six supervisors indicated that the important skills to their employee's jobs had been included in the study questionnaire by responding to question one with "none".

Question two asked supervisors to indicate what employment-related skills their employee needs that they current did not have. Again, these results are anecdotal at best. Eight supervisors did indicate that self-motivation was a skill that their employees needed most, which echos the responses on the questionnaire with ability to manage self deemed as most important. Table 4.27 shows a summary of questions one and two. Data was compiled for supervisors all together due to the low number of responses in each group.

Table 4.27 Summary of Supervisor Responses to Open-Ended Questions One and Two

	f
Question One: What skills are important to the success of this employee's current position that have NOT been included in this study?	
Honesty/Integrity	2
Interpersonal Skills	4
None	6
Problem-Solving Skills	4
Respect for Others	3
Self-Motivated	2
Time Management and Attention to Detail	5
Written Communication	2
Question Two: What employment-related skills does your employee need that he/she currently does NOT have?	
Budget Skills	2
Critical Thinking Skills	2
Confidence	3
Experience	3
Multi-tasking/Managing Priorities	3
None	2
Respect for Others	3
Self-Motivated	8
Scientific Writing Skills	2
Verbal Communication	2

Question three on the supervisor's questionnaire asked the supervisor to identify the three greatest strengths of his/her employee. Caring for others was cited by 20 supervisors as being one of their employee's greatest strengths. Teamwork skills and dependability were cited 12 times each by supervisors as being strengths of their employees. The ability to change was one of the greatest strengths of only two employees as indicated by their respective supervisor. Table 4.28 identifies the strengths of the employees by categories.

Table 4.28 Summary of Supervisor Responses to Open-Ended Question Three

Question Three: What are the three greatest strengths of your employee?	*f*
Ability to Change	2
Caring for Others with Positive Attitude	20
Communication Skills	9
Confidence	3
Dependable	12
Energy	6
Hard Business Skills	3
Honest	9
Knowledgeable	9
Independent	3
Positive Work Ethic	11
Problem-Solving Skills	6
Organized/Multi-tasking	9
Teamwork Skills	12
Willingness to Learn	10

The final open-ended question asked supervisors how the employee had contributed to the overall organizational goals. Forty-seven supervisors responded that that their respective employee had contributed positively to the organization's goals. However, two supervisors responded negatively as per their employee's contribution to overall organizational goals. Complete responses to supervisor's open-ended questions can be found in Appendix N.

Summary of Findings

This chapter included an examination of the study findings data analysis and a summary of those findings. Study participants (N = 237) responded to a questionnaire that asked them to rate their perceived level of importance and their self-perceived competence of six employability skills in their current position. These six employability skills included Problem-Solving Skills, Communication Skills, Teamwork Skills, Change and Innovation Behaviors, Ability to Manage Self, and Being Civic-Minded. The participants were divided into three groups based on the leadership classes taken at Fort Hays State University (FHSU): group one (control – students who had not taken a leadership course at FHSU), group two (students who took LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302), and group three (students who had completed the Leadership Studies Certificate Program).

Participants' supervisors (N = 53) also responded to a similar questionnaire. They were asked to respond based on the level of importance the employability skill was to their employee's job and their perceived competence in that skill. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine if the importance levels of each employability skill differed between each of the three participant groups and each of the three

supervisor groups. The analysis of variance on the supervisor groups produced statistically significant results. Post hoc tests revealed that results were significant in the perceived importance of communication skills between group three (Leadership Certificate) and group one (control). However, the analysis of variance on the participant groups produced non-significant results. An independent t-test also revealed that the differences between importance rank between participants and supervisors were non-significant.

A second analysis investigated the competence levels of each employability skill based on both the participants' self-perceptions and the supervisors' perceptions of the participants. Analysis of variance results were non-significant.

The third and final analysis consisted of a series of analysis of variance tests conducted to investigate the differences in means between supervisor importance and perceived competence; participant importance and self-perceived competence; and supervisor importance and participant self-perceived competence. These tests produced results that were non-significant.

Qualitative data from the open-ended questions on both the participant and supervisor questionnaire provided anecdotal information regarding both leadership topics found to be useful from leadership courses, as well as what supervisors deem as critical to the development of their employees and their contribution to the organization. Additional analysis of the questionnaire through a zero-order correlation and exploratory factor analysis causes some question about the factor structure and validity of the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 5 - Summary, Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This final chapter discusses both a summary of the study and its findings and conclusions, as well as implications for future programming and research. The chapter is organized into the following sections: a) summary of the study; b) study limitations; c) summary of findings and conclusions; d) programmatic recommendations; and e) recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether students are transferring employability skills learned in the Fort Hays State University (FHSU) Leadership Studies Certificate Program to the workplace. The study sought to evaluate the participants' perceptions with regard to the level of importance of identified employability skills to their job, as well as their level of self-perceived competence in performing each of the employability skills. The study also sought the supervisors' perceptions of the study participants. Supervisors evaluated the level of importance of identified employability skills, as well as the perceived competence level of the participant performing these skills in the workplace. Both the participant and supervisor data assisted in making inferences about the perceived transfer of employability skills, as well as making important recommendations with regard to the leadership curriculum at Fort Hays State University.

This study was designed as a quasi-experiment. Three stratified groups of enrolled or previously enrolled Fort Hays State University students were the target population. A random sample from each group was taken for study purposes. Group one

(n^1 = 195) consisted of students who had not taken a leadership course at Fort Hays State University. Group two (n^2 = 196) was made up of students who had taken Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300) and/or Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302). Students who had completed the nine credit hour Leadership Studies Certificate Program made up group three (n^3 = 198). A random sample from each of these groups were asked to complete a questionnaire based on the work of Evers, Rush, and Bedrow (1998); Robinson (2005); and Shiarella, McCarthy, and Tucker (2000).

The Dillman Tailored Design Method (2007) was used for data collection during the Summer and Fall of 2008. Participants responded to the self-perceived importance and competence levels on 69 questions that were categorized into six employability skill constructs: problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded. Participants also reported demographic information pertaining to their current employment status, current academic status, number of hours per week spent on the job, longevity in the current position, annual salary/income, gender, age, ethnicity, and delivery method of their leadership courses. Responses were received from 69 participants in group one, 67 participants in group two, and 101 participants in group three yielding a 40.2% response rate.

Participants were then asked to provide the name and contact information of their immediate supervisors. A separate, yet similar questionnaire was sent to the supervisors asking them to rate the level of importance and competence of each item with reference to their employee's (study participant) current job and performance. Responses were

received from 14 supervisors in group one, 14 supervisors in group two, and 25 supervisors in group three yielding an overall response rate of 45.6%.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and an independent samples t-test. Zero-order correlations and an exploratory factor analysis were also conducted on the data collected in the study. Results from these two tests both illustrated that the employability skills were significantly correlated with one another and did not load succinctly into the six employability skills constructs the study sought to evaluate. Analysis of open-ended questions on both the participant and supervisor questionnaires concluded the data analysis process.

Limitations of the Study

In addition to the study limitations listed in Chapter One, the following limitations were identified throughout the data collection process and upon completion of the study. Because this study was not a true experiment with randomly selected groups, caution must be taken in making inferences about the impact of the Leadership Certificate Program on the development and perceived transfer of employability skills.

The sample is not diverse, which is consistent with the Fort Hays State University student body. However, to generalize findings to Leadership Certificate Programs across the country, more than Fort Hays State University students should be studied.

Based on an exploratory factor analysis and zero-order correlations conducted on the questionnaire and data from the study, the conclusion can be made that the instrument does lack validity. The factor analysis resulted in 17 factors, which was 11 more factors

than were thought to be measured using this instrument. More analysis will need to be conducted on this questionnaire before use in future studies.

In order to account for the limitations associated with self-report data, study participant's supervisors were also invited to participate in the study. However, only 116 of the 237 participants reported their supervisor and his/her contact information on the questionnaire. Although the data collected from supervisors is included in this study, this limitation lessens the ability to properly evaluate and make conclusions about each research question when comparing participant ($N = 237$) and supervisor ($N = 53$) responses due to the unequal sample sizes.

The response rates for study participants and supervisors were below average at 40.2% and 45.6% respectively. Early and late responders were compared to find no significant results; however, caution should occur when interpreting the data and generalizing the findings to the entire population.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Data were collected and subjected to a series of statistical analysis. This section will revisit each research question and hypotheses, and report a summation of the findings and conclusions. Although the data revealed few significant differences, conclusions and insights are offered per research question and its corresponding hypotheses.

Research Question One: What employability skills are important in the workplace?

Research Question One A: What are participants' perceptions? Are there differences between groups?

Hypothesis One: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived important of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of study participants.

Data analysis targeted at research questions 1A and hypothesis one indicated that there were no significant differences between groups one, two, and three with respect to the participants' perceptions of each of the six employability skills important in the workplace. These employability skills were problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to find these results. In this study the order in which participants in group one (control) ranked each of the skills with respect to the importance of the skill to their job was not significantly different than participants in group two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302) and group three (Leadership Certificate). Therefore, hypothesis one was rejected.

Findings with regard to research question 1A indicate that as a whole, students who have taken classes at Fort Hays State University, without regard to the number of leadership courses taken, similarly view the importance of each of the six employability skills to their current job. These findings could be impacted by the number of participants in each group or the overall return rate. Further research should be conducted on this research question.

Research Question One B: What are the supervisors' perceptions? Are there differences between groups?

Hypothesis Two: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of supervisors of study participants.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) conducted for research question 1B and hypothesis two indicated that there was a significant difference in the perceived important of communication skills between the three groups of supervisors with respect to their employee's (study participant's) current job. Post hoc tests revealed that this difference existed between groups one (control) and three (Leadership Certificate). However, the results further indicated that there were no significant differences in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded.

These findings indicate that employers of leadership certificate recipients view communication skills as more important to their employee's position than do employers of employees who had had no leadership coursework at Fort Hays State University. These findings are consistent with Casner-Lotto & Barrington (2006) and Hart Research Associates (2006) as their work on employer perceptions revealed the ability to communicate as being an important skill for employees to possess. This does not explain, however, the difference between group one and group three with respect to the importance of communication skills. These findings could suggest that employers who hire leadership certificate recipients place them into positions that require effective communication skills whereas employers who hire those who have not taken any

leadership courses at FHSU are placed into positions where communication is less important than other employability skills. Further research with larger groups is needed to verify this conclusion.

Research Question One C: Are there differences in the perceptions between participants and their supervisors?

Hypothesis Three: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived importance of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between participants and their supervisors.

Findings related to research question 1C and hypothesis three were realized using means, standard deviations, and an independent sample t-test. Means and standard deviations revealed differences in the ranking of importance of skills between participants and their supervisors. Participants ranked the ability to manage self as being most important, with teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, change and innovation behaviors, communication skills, and being civic-minded following. Supervisors ranked the employability skills in the following order: ability to manage self, problem-solving skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, communication skills, and being civic-minded. However, the t-test revealed that even though differences occurred with respect to participants' and their supervisors' perceptions of problem-solving and teamwork skills, they were not statistically significant. This is a positive non-significant finding because we can conclude that participants and their supervisors are consistent in their interpretation of what skills are important to the employee's current position.

Both participants and their supervisors believe the ability to manage self as the most important to the participants' current job. It is interesting to note that these findings are not consistent with much of the current research with regard to important employability skills. Communication and teamwork skills are typically seen as being most important by both the employer and employee (Billing, 2003; Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Hart Research Associates, 2006).

The ability to manage self, which consists of life-long learning and personal growth, is not found in current employability skill research as being critical to the job. Evers et al. (1998) point out that the self-management process is becoming ever so important due to the amount of knowledge and information that is available to employees, as well as the structure of companies changing. This environment requires a more self-directed and motivated employee. "Showing that you care enough about your own development to manage it…you will be able to work through (challenges) and learn from them. Given the uncertainty of today's work environment, these are the attitudes being sought" (Evers et al., 1998, p. 64). This is consistent with the findings in this study. We can conclude that employers and employees are also consistent in their interpretation of the employability skills most important to the employees' current jobs.

Research Question Two: Do participants have meaningful employability skills demanded by the workplace?

Research Question Two A: Does a leadership certificate program enhance participants' relevant employability skills?

Hypothesis Four: There is a statistically significant difference in the self-perceived competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of study participants.

Findings related to research question 2A and hypothesis four revealed that there were no significant differences in the self-perceived competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups of study participants. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine these findings. This study failed to support the notion that Leadership Studies Certificate recipients (group three) perceive themselves to be more competent than the study participants who had not taken an FHSU leadership course (group one) and study participants who had taken LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302 (group two) from the Department of Leadership Studies at Fort Hays State University. This is not consistent with findings from research conducted by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Conclusions report that students who had participated in leadership programs reported increases in leadership skills when compared to non-participants (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, & Burkhardt, 2001; Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt,

1999). Similarly, Dugan & Komives (2007) reported an increase in students' ability to do leadership as a result of a formal leadership program.

However, the current study's findings were consistent with those found by Brungardt (1997). This research indicated that students in the FHSU Leadership Program had enhanced skills such as civic responsibility, problem-solving, managing change, group processes, and communication. However, this improvement was reported as not significantly different from "other university students" (p. 142). These findings, coupled with the findings from the current study result in conclusions related to the effectiveness of the Leadership Certificate Program. The program may not be preparing students with the necessary employability skills to its fullest potential.

The findings also raises a question about whether students who have not taken leadership courses 'know that they don't know' when it comes to employability skills. Because participants in groups two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302) and three (Leadership Certificate) have discussed and practiced the concepts in leadership classes, might they be more self critical with respect to employability skills and their competence in them? More research using an updated version of the questionnaire used in the study, as well as larger group sizes should be conducted. Upon completion of this step, discussion within the Department of Leadership Studies is recommended to evaluate whether the Leadership Certificate Program should be enhanced or updated to better prepare students for the workplace.

Research Question Two B: Does the number of academic leadership courses, in an academic leadership program, affect employability skill development?

Hypothesis Five: There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded between groups one, two, and three of supervisors of the study participants.

Analysis targeted at research question 2B and hypothesis five using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that there were no significant differences in the perceived competence of the six employability skills between the three groups of supervisors of the study participants. Based on the results the conclusion is made that the number of leadership classes taken at FHSU does not impact the competence of problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded according to the participants' supervisors. The number of academic leadership courses taken does not affect employability skill development.

Although findings indicate employability skill development is not impacted by the number of academic leadership courses, this study does begin the process of evaluating and assessing the needs of employers. This can assist the further development of skills needed in the workplace (Shivpuri & Kim, 2004). One should be cautious about the findings in the study due to the low number of supervisors ($N = 53$) who were reported and who participated. A follow-up study with a more complete list of supervisors is warranted to make further conclusions.

Research Question Three: Does a leadership education program deliver necessary employability skills?

Hypothesis Six: Differences between supervisor importance and competency levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three will be statistically significant.

Hypothesis Seven: Differences between participant importance and self-perceived competency levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three will be statistically significant.

Hypothesis Eight: Differences between supervisor importance and participant self-perceived competence levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded in groups one, two, and three will be statistically significant.

In order to answer research question three, three different hypotheses were addressed and tested using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Significant differences did not exist between supervisor groups with regard to perceived importance and competency levels reported on each employability skill. This finding indicates that according to their supervisors, a difference does not exist between groups with regard to importance of these skills in the participants' current jobs and the participants'

competence in these skills. Interestingly, we can with caution due to sample size and the factor structure of the study questionnaire, conclude that all FHSU enrolled or previously enrolled students are competent in the employability skills most important to their jobs.

Hypothesis seven findings illustrated that significant differences did not exist between participant groups with regard to their self-perceived importance and competence levels in each employability skill. Participants see their competence levels matching the importance levels in their jobs with regard to problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded.

Findings related to hypothesis eight revealed that there were no differences between supervisor importance and participant self-perceived competence levels in problem-solving skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, change and innovation behaviors, ability to manage self, and being civic-minded with respect to groups one, two, and three. The employability skills that supervisors found to be important were the skills in which the study participants perceive themselves to competent.

The conclusion cannot be made that those who had completed the Leadership Studies Certificate have a greater match between what their supervisors perceive as being important and their own self-perceived level of competence. In other words, the skills that supervisors deem important are those skills in which participants feel most competent. With respect to hypothesis six, seven, and eight, there were no differences found between groups; however, we can conclude that FHSU enrolled and previously enrolled students perceive themselves to be competent in the employability skills most important to their current job.

The implications of these findings within the population of FHSU students is that a 9 credit hour Leadership Certificate Program does not have a significant impact on employability skills delivered in the college experience and transferred to the workplace. It is quite possible that other factors such as general education courses, co-curricular leadership activities, work experiences, and other major specific coursework also address and equip students with necessary employability skills. These activities do give students the opportunity to directly apply what they are learning in the classroom. In fact, Robinson (2005) concluded that participation in organizational clubs was perceived to be most influential in the development of employability skills among college students. Recommendations made by Dugan and Komives (2007) in their Multi-Institutional Study for Leadership indicate that leadership training should be taken "to places students are involved including recreational sports clubs, academic clubs, honor societies, service-learning settings, and student employment" (p. 18). Further research should be conducted to isolate these factors and make further conclusions about employability skill development beyond academic leadership coursework.

Additional Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Upon completion of the data analysis in conjunction with the research questions and hypotheses, further analysis was conducted on the factor structure of the study questionnaire. Zero-order correlations conducted on both the participant and supervisor data indicated that the questionnaire's employability skill constructs were significantly correlated with one another.

A Principal Component Analysis (no factor limit) with Varimax rotation revealed no clear conceptual factor structure, resulting in the conclusion that the data did not fit

into the six employability skill constructs used in the study. Rather, the exploratory factor analysis revealed 17 different factors. Although the instrument had been used in previously published research (Evers, et al., 1998; Robinson, 2005), the properties of the instrument with the added Civic-Minded construct were poor. Adding this construct most likely impacted the factor structure.

High alpha coefficients were found on each employability skill construct upon completion of the data collection, indicating that the instrument was indeed reliable. However, the factor structure and significantly inter-correlated data based on the participant and supervisor questionnaires does cause question regarding the validity of the instrument. Working on the factor structure of the questionnaire, re-ordering questionnaire items randomly, and using a different questionnaire should be options considered for future research on employability skills.

The qualitative data from the open-ended questions from both the participant and supervisor questionnaires did provide anecdotal data that can be used cautiously to make conclusions. Overall participants in group two (LDRS 300 and/or 302) and group three (Leadership Certificate) felt that the most helpful topics they learned in their coursework were leadership theory and styles, as well as teamwork and collaboration skills. The content of the leadership courses are focused on theory and interpersonal skills; therefore, this data confirms that students are learning these concepts and can apply them to the workplace. Much more qualitative data should be collected to generalize this finding to the population.

Groups three (Leadership Certificate) study participants indicated benefiting from the change project initiated in the Fieldwork in Leadership Studies service-learning

course (LDRS 310). This project is the focus of this course; therefore, students are given the opportunity to apply what they have learned throughout the entire semester on a project addressing a community need. When students are engaged in highly reflective classes that integrate service with learning, like LDRS 310, they better understand issues and can apply this knowledge to their community and workplace (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gray et al., 1998; Roberts, 2008).

Supervisor's responses to the open-ended questions indicated that overall, supervisors are satisfied with their employee's contribution to the organizational goals. Furthermore, supervisors see their employee's greatest strengths as caring for people with a positive attitude, dependability, and teamwork. These employability skills are critical to an organization and should continue to be honed through academic coursework at Fort Hays State University and other institutions.

Programmatic Recommendations

The following programmatic recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions of this study.

1. The Leadership Studies Certificate Program currently requires three academic courses (9 credit hours). It was concluded that there was no greater impact on employability skill development of participants who received the certificate than those participants who had not taken any leadership courses at FHSU. It is recommended that a fourth class be considered as an addition to the Leadership Certificate Program. Leadership and Personal Development (LDRS 670) or Leadership and

Team Dynamics (LDRS 480) should be considered because of their focus on managing self, problem-solving, and teamwork skills.

2. Although the Fieldwork of Leadership Studies course (LDRS 310) is hands-on with a direct application of theories and behaviors through service-learning, it is recommended that more hands-on, direct application activities be included in both the Introduction to Leadership Concepts (LDRS 300) and Introduction to Leadership Behaviors (LDRS 302) courses. This could assist in students understanding and applying the theories and concepts earlier in their pursuit of the Leadership Studies Certificate rather than only in the final course (LDRS 310) in the program.
3. Since employers have knowledge about the employability skill needs in the workplace, it is recommended to further involve potential employers in the academic leadership courses at FHSU as guest speakers, facilitators, and consultants in the classroom. These experiences would not only assist students in connecting the course content to the real-world, but offer them opportunities to network with employers and learn early about the need for employability skills in the workplace.
4. It is critical that the Leadership Certificate Program student learning outcomes in relation to the leadership curriculum and skills taught in the nine hours of certificate coursework be reviewed. This review

should take into consideration both content and delivery of coursework, as well as their match to learning outcomes.

Future Research Recommendations

From this study comes a list of recommendations for future research. These recommendations are numbered and described below. Many of the recommendations also address the limitations of this study.

1. Research must address the factor structure of the instrument. A confirmatory factor analysis should be conducted on the questionnaire to determine appropriate factor structure.
2. A study replication should be conducted using the new questionnaire to measure employability skill importance and competence. A then, post methodology should be used to control for response-shift bias since a pre-test was not used (Rohs, 2002). Participants would be asked to rate their competence on each employability skills prior to their FHSU coursework (then) and after their FHSU coursework was completed (post).
3. Although the sample sizes for the participant groups were appropriate for the study, overall response rate was low. A replication of the study with a mixed –mode survey, using both the web and mail, could be facilitated (Dillman, 2007).
4. Further research should be conducted to determine how other factors in addition to academic leadership skills enhance employability skill development. Factors such as additional service-learning coursework,

the general education program, and co-curricular activities could be assessed using a regression analysis.

5. Although a form of 360-degree feedback was used in the study, a peer or co-worker assessment of employability skills could be added to triangulate the data source for each employee (Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988). This additional data source, along with more participant and supervisor participation, could enable researchers to further assess the impact of academic leadership courses.
6. To further advance the discipline of leadership, data from different leadership programs across the country should be collected and analyzed. This collaborative research could give students and faculty more opportunity to learn about effective leadership development strategies.
7. A more extensive qualitative research study, using interviews, observation, and focus groups, should be conducted on leadership certificate recipients and their supervisors. This data could enhance and further explain quantitative data already collected.
8. A longitudinal study should be conducted to address leadership certificate recipients and their development over their time in school, as well as into the workplace. Longitudinal studies could provide more specific strengths and weaknesses of the Leadership Certificate Program, thereby resulting in specific programmatic improvements.

9. Further research analysis should be conducted on leadership development through academic coursework and demographic data, including type of course delivery method. Do students learn more from courses delivered virtually or on-campus?
10. Future research should include factors that measure students competence in interacting with and leading diverse people in the workplace, as well the ability of students to use social media and networking in the workplace.
11. Additional research could also using existing data from the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) or the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to compare leadership students to non-leadership students at FHSU and/or other peer institutions.

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Appendix A - Participant Instrument

An Assessment of the Employability Skills Needed in the Workforce

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire is to secure information from current or former Fort Hays State University students. Specifically, the questionnaire is designed to assess your perceptions of the importance of selected employability skills and your perceived level of competence at performing the skills. In addition, the questionnaire asks you a few questions regarding your current employment status, as well as your experience in FHSU leadership courses.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and greatly appreciated. The information you provide will assist the University in evaluating the ways in which students are being prepared for employment. Therefore, your responses are vital. However, you are not required to participate in this study. It is strictly voluntary. Should you decide to participate in this study, please return the questionnaire in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope.

The responses you provide will remain confidential. The number on the front of this questionnaire will be used as a method for tracking in an event that a follow-up mailing to non-respondents is needed. However, no names will be associated with the findings of this study.

Thank you for participating in this important study. Through your participation, we can continue to provide Fort Hays State University students with a high quality education.

Part I – Employability Skills

Please respond to the following items by **circling the response** that most adequately reflects your perception of the importance of the skill in your current occupation and your perceived level of competence at performing the skill in your current occupation.

- In the **Left column**, indicate how **important** you believe the corresponding skills are to the success of your occupation.
- In the **Right column**, indicate your perceived level of **competence** at performing the corresponding skills.

	Importance				**Competence**			
Sample Question **Item** **Circle** your responses.	**No** importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
#. Facilitating a panel discussion	0	1	(2)	3	0	1	2	(3)
The respondent perceived facilitating a panel discussion to be of moderate importance to his/her job and perceives him/herself to have major competence at performing that skill.								

	Importance				**Competence**			
BEGIN HERE **Item** **Circle** your responses.	**No** importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
1. Identifying problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
2. Prioritizing problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
3. Solving problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
4. Contributing to group problem-solving.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
5. Identifying essential components of the problem.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
6. Sorting out the relevant data to solve the problem.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
7. Making decisions in a short time period.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
8. Assessing long-term effects of decisions.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
9. Making decisions on the basis of thorough analysis of the situation.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3

Item **Circle** your responses.	Importance				Competence			
	No importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
10. Identifying political implications of the decision to be made.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
11. Knowing ethical implications of decisions.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
12. Recognizing the effects of decisions to be made.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
13. Conveying information one-to-one.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
14. Communicating ideas verbally to groups.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
15. Making effective business presentations.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
16. Making impromptu presentations.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
17. Writing reports.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
18. Writing external business communication.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
19. Writing internal business communication.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
20. Using proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
21. Listening attentively.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
22. Responding to others' comments during a conversation.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
23. Working well with fellow employees.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
24. Relating well with supervisors.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
25. Establishing good rapport with subordinates.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
26. Empathizing with others.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
27. Understanding the needs of others.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
28. Coordinating the work of peers.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
29. Coordinating the work of subordinates.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
30. Identifying sources of conflict among people.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
31. Resolving conflicts.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
32. Taking reasonable job-related risks.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
33. Identifying potential negative outcomes when considering a risky venture.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
34. Monitoring progress toward objectives in risky ventures.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
35. Recognizing alternative routes in meeting objectives.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
36. Providing novel solutions to problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
37. Adapting to situations of change.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
38. Initiating change to enhance productivity.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
39. Keeping up-to-date with external realities related to your company's success.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
40. Reconceptualizing your role in response to changing corporate realities.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
41. Conceptualizing a future for the company.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
42. Providing innovative paths for the company to follow for future development.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
43. Combining relevant information from a number of sources.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3

Item **Circle** your responses.	Importance				Competence			
	No importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
44. Applying information to new or broader contexts.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
45. Integrating information into more general contexts.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
46. Establishing the critical events to be completed.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
47. Assigning/delegating responsibility.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
48. Monitoring progress against the plan.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
49. Integrating strategic considerations in the plans made.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
50. Revising plans to include new information.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
51. Setting priorities.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
52. Allocating time efficiently.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
53. Managing/overseeing several tasks at once.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
54. Meeting deadlines.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
55. Keeping up-to-date on developments in the field.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
56. Gaining new knowledge in areas outside the immediate job.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
57. Gaining new knowledge from everyday experiences.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
58. Maintaining a high energy level.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
59. Functioning at an optimal level of performance.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
60. Responding positively to constructive criticism.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
61. Maintaining a positive attitude.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
62. Functioning well in stressful situations.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
63. Ability to work independently.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
64. Responsible for doing something about improving the community in which you reside.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
65. Taking real measures to help others in need.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
66. Sense of contribution and helpfulness through participating in community service activities.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
67. Gaining an increased sense of responsibility from participating in service.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
68. Feeling an obligation to contribute to community.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
69. Other people deserve my help.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3

Part II – Demographics and Occupational Status

1. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?
    a. Employed full-time
    b. Employed part-time
    c. Caring for family full-time
    d. Serving in the military
    e. Unemployed, seeking employment
    f. Other (please specify)_____

2. If employed, what is your current occupational status?
    a. Position/Title:_____
    b. Employer:_____
    c. Responsibilities:_____

3. Which of the following best describes your current academic status?
    a. Current full-time undergraduate student
    b. Current part-time undergraduate student
    c. Current full-time graduate student
    d. Current part-time graduate student
    e. Currently not in school
    f. Other (please specify)_____

4. On average, how many hours per week do you spend at your job? (i.e. 20 hours)

    _____

5. How many months have you been in your current position? (i.e. 24 months)

    _____

6. For the current year, what is your annual salary/income?
    a. Less than $20,000
    b. $20,000-$24,999
    c. $25,000-$29,999
    d. $30,000-$34,999
    e. $35,000-$39,999
    f. $40,000-$44,999
    g. $45,000-$49,999
    h. $50,000 or greater

7. What is your gender?
    a. Female
    b. Male

8. What is your age?
    a. 18 – 20
    b. 20 – 29
    c. 30 – 39
    d. 40 – 49
    e. 50 – 59
    f. 60 – 69
    g. 70 and above

9. What is your ethnicity?
    a. American Indian or Alaska Native
    b. Asian
    c. Black or African American
    d. Hispanic or Latino
    e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    f. White
    g. Other (please specify)_____
    h. Refuse to indicate

Part III – Leadership Studies

1. What delivery method was used for your leadership coursework?

LDRS 300 (Introduction to Leadership Concepts) – Place an X on the appropriate line

____On campus ____Virtual ____Did not take this course

LDRS 302 (Introduction to Leadership Behaviors) - Place an X on the appropriate line

____On campus ____Virtual ____Did not take this course

LDRS 310 (Fieldwork in Leadership Studies) – Place an X on the appropriate line

____On campus ____Virtual ____Did not take this course

2. What topics have been most helpful to you in the workplace from your FHSU leadership courses?

3. What topics do you wish you had learned in your FHSU leadership courses that you did not?

Part IV – Supervisor Information

In addition to your responses, this study also seeks input from supervisors. Therefore, please provide the name and contact information of your immediate supervisor as well as the number of months you have worked under his/her supervision. Remember that your responses will remain completely confidential. **Your supervisor will NOT view your responses.** Understand that only summarized data will be reported.

Name of supervisor:_____

E-mail address of supervisor:_____

Mailing address of supervisor:_____

_____

City, State, Zip Code:_____

How many months have you worked for your current supervisor?_____

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix B - Supervisor Instrument

An Employer Assessment of the Employability Skills Needed in the Workforce

Purpose

The purpose of this questionnaire is to secure information from current or previously enrolled Fort Hays State University (FHSU) students since January 2002 through December 2007. Specifically, the questionnaire is designed to assess your perceptions of the importance of selected employability skills and your perceived level of competence your employee who is currently or was previously enrolled at FHSU exhibits while performing the skills.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and greatly appreciated. The information you provide will assist the University in evaluating ways in which students are being prepared for employment. Therefore, your responses are vital. However, you are not required to participate in this study. It is strictly voluntary. Should you decide to participate in this study, please return the completed questionnaire in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope.

The responses you provide will remain confidential. The number on the front of this questionnaire will be used as a method for tracking in the event that a follow-up mailing to non-respondents is needed. However, no names will be associated with the findings of this study. Please rest assured that your responses will NOT be shared with your employee. The information you provide will be used to better prepare students for future employment.

Thank you for participating in this important study. Through your participation, we can continue to provide FHSU students with a high quality education.

Part I – Employability Skills

Please respond to the following items by **circling the response** that most adequately reflects your perception of the importance of the skill to your FHSU employee's occupation and your perceived level of competence of your FHSU employee in each skill in his/her current occupation.

- In the **Left column**, indicate how **important** you believe the corresponding skills are to the success of your employee's occupation.
- In the **Right column**, indicate your perceived level of **competence** concerning your employee's ability to perform the corresponding skills.

	Importance				**Competence**			
Sample Question **Item** **Circle** your responses.	**No** importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
#. Facilitating a panel discussion	0	1	(2)	3	0	1	2	(3)
The supervisor perceived facilitating a panel discussion to be of moderate importance to his/her employees' job and the supervisor perceives he/she to have major competence at performing that skill.								

	Importance				**Competence**			
BEGIN HERE **Item** **Circle** your responses.	**No** importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
1. Identifying problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
2. Prioritizing problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
3. Solving problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
4. Contributing to group problem-solving.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
5. Identifying essential components of the problem.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
6. Sorting out the relevant data to solve the problem.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
7. Making decisions in a short time period.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
8. Assessing long-term effects of decisions.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
9. Making decisions on the basis of thorough analysis of the situation.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3

Item **Circle** your responses.	Importance				Competence			
	No importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
10. Identifying political implications of the decision to be made.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
11. Knowing ethical implications of decisions.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
12. Recognizing the effects of decisions to be made.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
13. Conveying information one-to-one.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
14. Communicating ideas verbally to groups.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
15. Making effective business presentations.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
16. Making impromptu presentations.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
17. Writing reports.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
18. Writing external business communication.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
19. Writing internal business communication.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
20. Using proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
21. Listening attentively.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
22. Responding to others' comments during a conversation.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
23. Working well with fellow employees.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
24. Relating well with supervisors.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
25. Establishing good rapport with subordinates.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
26. Empathizing with others.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
27. Understanding the needs of others.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
28. Coordinating the work of peers.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
29. Coordinating the work of subordinates.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
30. Identifying sources of conflict among people.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
31. Resolving conflicts.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
32. Taking reasonable job-related risks.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
33. Identifying potential negative outcomes when considering a risky venture.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
34. Monitoring progress toward objectives in risky ventures.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
35. Recognizing alternative routes in meeting objectives.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
36. Providing novel solutions to problems.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
37. Adapting to situations of change.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
38. Initiating change to enhance productivity.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
39. Keeping up-to-date with external realities related to your company's success.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
40. Reconceptualizing your role in response to changing corporate realities.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
41. Conceptualizing a future for the company.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
42. Providing innovative paths for the company to follow for future development.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
43. Combining relevant information from a number of sources.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3

Item **Circle** your responses.	Importance				Competence			
	No importance	**Minor** importance	**Moderate** importance	**Major** importance	**No** competence	**Minor** competence	**Moderate** competence	**Major** competence
44. Applying information to new or broader contexts.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
45. Integrating information into more general contexts.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
46. Establishing the critical events to be completed.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
47. Assigning/delegating responsibility.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
48. Monitoring progress against the plan.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
49. Integrating strategic considerations in the plans made.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
50. Revising plans to include new information.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
51. Setting priorities.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
52. Allocating time efficiently.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
53. Managing/overseeing several tasks at once.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
54. Meeting deadlines.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
55. Keeping up-to-date on developments in the field.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
56. Gaining new knowledge in areas outside the immediate job.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
57. Gaining new knowledge from everyday experiences.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
58. Maintaining a high energy level.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
59. Functioning at an optimal level of performance.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
60. Responding positively to constructive criticism.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
61. Maintaining a positive attitude.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
62. Functioning well in stressful situations.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
63. Ability to work independently.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
64. Responsible for doing something about improving the community in which you reside.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
65. Taking real measures to help others in need.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
66. Sense of contribution and helpfulness through participating in community service activities.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
67. Gaining an increased sense of responsibility from participating in service.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
68. Feeling an obligation to contribute to community.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
69. Other people deserve my help.	0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3

What skills are important to the success of this employee's current position that have NOT been included in this study?

What employment-related skills does your employee need that he/she currently does NOT have?

What are the three greatest strengths of your employee?

1.

2.

3.

How has this employee contributed to the overall organizational goals?

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix C - First Postcard to Participants

Dear (Participant Name): August 4, 2008

Fort Hays State University (FHSU) is conducting a study on the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. You have been randomly selected to participate in this study. Because you have been randomly selected, you are representing a number of your former classmates and colleagues; thus, your responses are vital. The findings from this study will be used to enhance academic programs at FHSU in an effort to better prepare students for employment.

The purpose of this postcard is to inform you that you will be receiving a questionnaire in the near future. Should you have any questions or concerns about this project, please contact Jill Arensdorf, doctoral candidate and study coordinator, at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu.

On behalf of FHSU, thank you in advance for your assistance and participation in this much needed study. With your help, we can continue to provide high quality programs.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix D - Initial Cover Letter to Participants

August 18, 2008

Dear (Participant Name):

Fort Hays State University (FHSU) is conducting a study on the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. As a recent FHSU student, your insight is highly valued. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in this important study.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can help this cause by taking 15-20 minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope provided **no later than Friday, September 5, 2008.** Use the enclosed $1.00 to buy yourself a soft drink or cup of coffee to enjoy while you complete the questionnaire. Completing and submitting the questionnaire implies that you consent for us to use the information for the current study.

You will notice a code number on the front of the questionnaire. This number will be used to follow-up with individuals who do not respond to the study. In no way will this number be used to match you with your responses to the questionnaire beyond this initial contact. Your answers are completely confidential and will be reported only as summaries, with no identification used. No names will be linked to responses. Please respond to each question openly and honestly without reservation. If there are questions with which you are not comfortable answering, you can most certainly skip those questions. While you are not obligated to participate in this study, your responses are very important to FHSU as we consider modifying the academic curriculum to meet the needs of current and future students, as well as their potential employers. Rest assured that your refusal to participate in any part of this study will not affect your relationship with Fort Hays State University.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter and/or this study, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, via email at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu or by phone at 785-628-4303 or Dr. Charles Heerman, study advisor, via email at heerman@ksu.edu. Please contact Jill Arensdorf via email or phone if would like the final results of the study sent to you. You may also contact the FHSU IRB office in the Graduate School at 785-628-4236 for further information regarding human participation in research studies. You may also contact the K-State IRB Compliance Office by contacting Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects at 785-532-3224.

Thank you for your interest in this important study and in the academic preparation of students at Fort Hays State University. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix E - Follow-up Postcard to Participants

Dear (Participant Name): September 8, 2008

Approximately three weeks ago, you were mailed a questionnaire from Fort Hays State University concerning a study on the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. As of today, we have not received your response. Please take a few moments to complete the questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope provided in the packet. Your responses are important to the University as we look to enhance the curriculum in an effort to better prepare our future students.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, thank you very much for your response and please disregard this message. If you have misplaced your questionnaire, please call 785-628-4303 or email Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu and we will get another sent to you.

On behalf of Fort Hays State University, thank you for your assistance and participation in this much needed study.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix F - Follow-up Cover Letter to Participants

September 22, 2008

Dear (Participant Name):

Approximately four weeks ago, a questionnaire was sent to you on behalf of Fort Hays State University (FHSU) concerning the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. Our records indicate that as of this date, your questionnaire has not been received.

Our goal with this study is to obtain all of the questionnaires distributed to our study participants in an effort to fully understand the needs of future students. The results of this study will be useful to understand the impact of the FHSU experience and make modifications to the curriculum and other programs to better prepare students for the ever-changing workforce. We are writing again because of the importance your responses have to this study.

You will notice a number on the front of the questionnaire. This number is used to track the participants who respond to the study and those who do not. Once your questionnaire is returned, your name will be checked off of the mailing list. The list of names will then be destroyed so that no one will be able to match you with your responses. Protecting your privacy is very important to the University.

Please take a few moments (15 – 20 minutes) to complete the questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope provided no later than October 13, 2008. Should you have any questions concerning this letter and/or this study, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, via email at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu or by phone at 785-628-4303 or Dr. Charles Heerman, study advisor, at heerman@ksu.edu. Please also contact Jill Arensdorf via email or phone if would like the final results of the study sent to you. You may also contact the FHSU IRB office in the Graduate School at 785-628-4236 for further information regarding human participation in research studies. You may also contact the K-State IRB Compliance Office by contacting Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Thank you for your interest in this important study and in the academic preparation of students at Fort Hays State University. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix G - Follow-up Email to Participants

November 10, 2008

Dear (Participant Name):

During the last two months we have sent you several mailings about an important research study we are conducting on behalf of Fort Hays State University (FHSU) concerning the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. The results of this study will be useful to understand the impact of the FHSU experience and make modifications to the curriculum and other programs to better prepare students for the ever-changing workforce.

Please take a few moments (15 – 20 minutes) to complete the questionnaire you received in the mail and return it in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope you received in the mail. If you need an additional packet sent to you, please reply to this email and we will get one sent to you.

You will notice a number on the front of the questionnaire. This number is used to track the participants who respond to the study and those who do not. Once your questionnaire is returned, your name will be checked off of the mailing list. The list of names will then be destroyed so that no one will be able to match you with your responses. Protecting your privacy is very important to the University.

Should you have any questions concerning this email and/or this study, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, via email at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu or by phone at 785-628-4303 or Dr. Charles Heerman, study advisor, at heerman@ksu.edu. You may also contact the FHSU IRB office in the Graduate School at 785-628-4236 for further information regarding human participation in research studies. You may also contact the K-State IRB Compliance Office by contacting Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Thank you for your interest as we conclude this important study focusing on the academic preparation of students at Fort Hays State University.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix H - Final Follow-up Cover Letter to Participants

January 6, 2009

Dear (Participant Name):

Happy New Year! During the last few months we have sent you several mailings about an important research study we are conducting on behalf of Fort Hays State University (FHSU) concerning the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. The results of this study will be useful to understand the impact of the FHSU experience and make modifications to the curriculum and other programs to better prepare students for the ever-changing workforce.

The study is drawing to a close, and this is the last contact that will be made to you as a study participant. Would you mind taking a few moments (10 minutes) to complete the questionnaire you received in this packet and return it in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope by Friday, January 16, 2009?

You will notice a number on the front of the questionnaire. This number is used to track the participants who respond to the study and those who do not. Once your questionnaire is returned, your name will be checked off of the mailing list. The list of names will then be destroyed so that no one will be able to match you with your responses. Protecting your privacy is very important to the University. Once again, this is the last contact that you will receive regarding this study.

Should you have any questions concerning this email and/or this study, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, via email at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu or by phone at 785-628-4303 or Dr. Charles Heerman, study advisor, at heerman@ksu.edu. You may also contact the FHSU IRB office in the Graduate School at 785-628-4236 for further information regarding human participation in research studies. You may also contact the K-State IRB Compliance Office by contacting Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Thank you for your interest as we conclude this important study focusing on the academic preparation of students at Fort Hays State University.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix I - First Postcard to Supervisors

October 17, 2008

Dear (Supervisor Name):

Fort Hays State University (FHSU) is conducting a study on the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. This study assesses the perceptions of FHSU students as well as those of their immediate supervisors. A random sample of enrolled or previously enrolled FHSU students were selected for this study and one of your employees, **(first and last name of employee)** was selected as a participant. Therefore, your input is also needed. The information you provide will remain confidential and will not be shared with your employee. The findings from this study will be used to enhance academic programs at FHSU in an effort to better prepare students for employment.

The purpose of this postcard is to inform you that you will be receiving a questionnaire in the near future. Should you have any questions or concerns about this project, please contact Jill Arensdorf, coordinator of the study, at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu. On behalf of the University, thank you in advance for your assistance and participation in this much needed study. With your help, we can continue to provide high quality programs.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix J - Initial Cover Letter to Supervisors

October 24, 2008

Dear (Supervisor Name):

Fort Hays State University (FHSU) is conducting a study on the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in this important study.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary; however, in order to assess the employability skills of the study participants, we would appreciate you taking a few moments (10 – 15 minutes) to complete the enclosed questionnaire on **(first and last name of employee)** and return it in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope that has been provided. The findings from this study will be used to enhance the academic curriculum at FHSU in an effort to better prepare students for employment.

You will notice a code on the front of the questionnaire. This number will be used to follow-up with individuals who do not respond to the study. In no way will this number be used to match you with your responses to the questionnaire beyond this initial contact. Your answers are completely confidential and will be reported only as summaries, with no identification used. No names will be linked to responses. Nor will **(first name of employee)** see your responses. Please respond to each question openly and honestly without reservation. If there are questions with which you are not comfortable answering, you can most certainly skip those questions. While you are not obligated to participate in this study, your responses are very important to the University as we consider modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of current and future students, as well as their potential employers. Rest assured that your refusal to participate in any part of this study will not affect your relationship with Fort Hays State University.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter and/or this study, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, via email at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu or by phone at 785-628-4303 or Dr. Charles Heerman, study advisor, via email at heerman@ksu.edu. Please contact Jill Arensdorf via email or phone if would like the final results of the study sent to you. You may also contact the FHSU IRB office in the Graduate School at 785-628-4236 for further information regarding human participation in research studies. You may also contact the K-State IRB Compliance Office at 785-532-3224.

Thank you for your interest in this important study and in the academic preparation of students at Fort Hays State University. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix K - Follow-Up Postcard to Supervisors

November 11, 2008

Dear (Supervisor Name):

Approximately two weeks ago, you were mailed a questionnaire from Fort Hays State University concerning a study on the transfer of employability skills from the FHSU collegiate experience to the workplace. As of today, we have not received your response. Please take a few moments to complete the questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope provided in the original packet. Your responses are important to the University as we look to enhance the curriculum in an effort to better prepare our future students and your future employees.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, thank you very much for your response and please disregard this message. If you have misplaced your questionnaire, please call 785-628-4303 or email Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu and we will get another sent to you.

On behalf of Fort Hays State University, thank you for your assistance and participation in this much needed study.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix L - Follow-Up Cover Letter to Supervisors

November 21, 2008

Dear (Supervisor Name):

Approximately three weeks ago, a questionnaire was sent to you on behalf of Fort Hays State University (FHSU) concerning the transfer of employability skills from the collegiate experience to the workplace. Our records indicate that as of this date, your questionnaire has not been received.

To date, many supervisors have responded and have included a wide range of skills they deem important for employees in the workforce. Our goal with this study is to obtain all of the questionnaires distributed to our participants' supervisors in an effort to fully understand the needs of our students to better prepare them for their future employment. The results of this study will be useful to understand the impact of the experience at FHSU and make modifications to the curriculum and other programs to better prepare students for the ever-changing workforce. We are writing again because of the importance your responses have to this study.

You will notice a number on the front of the questionnaire. This number is used to track the participants who respond to the study and those who do not. Once your questionnaire is returned, your name will be checked off of the mailing list. The list of names will then be destroyed so that no one will be able to match you with your responses. Protecting your privacy is very important to the University.

Please take a few moments (15 – 20 minutes) to complete the questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope provided no later than Monday, December 8th. Should you have any questions concerning this letter and/or this study, please do not hesitate to contact Jill Arensdorf, study coordinator, via email at jrarensdorf@fhsu.edu or by phone at 785-628-4303 or Dr. Charles Heerman, study advisor, at heerman@ksu.edu. Please also contact Jill Arensdorf via email or phone if would like the final results of the study sent to you. You may also contact the FHSU IRB office in the Graduate School at 785-628-4236 for further information regarding human participation in research studies. You may also contact the K-State IRB Compliance Office by contacting Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Thank you for your interest in this important study and in the academic preparation of students at Fort Hays State University. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Sincerely,

Jill Arensdorf, Instructor & Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Brent Goertzen, Chair
Department of Leadership Studies
Fort Hays State University

Dr. Charles Heerman, Professor & Doctoral Advisor
Department of Secondary Education
Kansas State University

Appendix M - Participant Responses to Open-Ended Questions

B = Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302) Study Participant
C = Group Three (Leadership Certificate) Study Participant
Note: Group One (Control) did not respond to these questions

Question 1: What topics have been most helpful to you in the workplace from your FHSU leadership courses?

B8 - Definition of leadership and leadership styles

B24 - Recognizing different management styles and working with others

B28 - I think group activities were most helpful because I learned how to lead and follow.

B39 - Planning, time management, conflict resolution

B40 - All of them

B41 - I discovered the different leadership concepts and related them to my own position and work. As the class continued, I began to recognize these patterns in other businesses.

B45 - Being able to stand up in front of a group and talk, and how to bring in ideas and feedback from others

B49 – Behavioral approaches, elements/types of power, methods of influence, collaboration, civic leadership, 7 C's of change, and followership

B60 - It's been tough because I work at a school where most of the employees are parents of kids at school – in this environment: None!

B61 - Teamwork, listening effectively

B70 - Working with others to solve problems

B73 - Collaborative work

B77 - The importance of following/followers in the leadership process

B85 - Teamwork, community service, seeing the big picture, servant leadership

B105 - Ethics, empathy

B106 - Just taking control when need be or taking orders. Contributing to discussions

B116 - Dealing with the daily activities of work, how to handle situations, maintain positive attitude, and presenting myself

B125 - Customer service, human resources

B137 - Types of leadership and reading about corporations and the different leadership styles used

B139 - Types and styles

B142 - Leadership behaviors all made you think

B145 - Because I took the class online, working with others on projects really taught me how to work well in groups. Also the course helped me learn hot to meet deadlines.

B148 - Decision-making

B151 - LDRS 302 on conflict

B153 - Various leadership roles take place on a daily basis so you have to adapt to switching back and forth without much trouble.

B169 - Delegating/managing workload

B172 - Honestly, I can't say that I have applied anything from these classes in leadership; not saying I haven't, I just cannot think of an example.

B176 - Interpersonal relations, supervisor/subordinate personality types, supervisory approaches/management styles

B177 - Collaborative leadership studies – Utilized on school board and bond issues. Great at solving difficult issues with real solutions; problem solving and issues resolution; how to identify a problem and develop a strategy; plan a solution and execute

B182 - Civic responsibility, ethics in all things – work and personal, group/team projects

B183 - Recognizing management styles

B194 - Collaboration, influence, motivation

B195 - The topics on interacting with people and collaborative leadership

B197 - Sense of community, ability to work in group and with others well

B201 - Critical thinking and problem-solving; understanding and implementing leadership principles and styles; teamwork

B209 - Solving problems and communication in a collaborative, group environment

B204 - Leadership classes are always helpful but classes that require a final project or project that builds from the concepts of the course when you apply your learned knowledge are best.

B212 - I learned a lot about basic leadership in the 300 class. The most beneficial leadership class that I have taken is leadership and team dynamics. I feel that every topic we covered in the class helped me understand the dynamics of teamwork.

B213 - Collaborative work

B215 - Understanding leadership styles; understanding the need for employee involvement and ownership in decision-making

B217 - Integrating leadership

C2 - Teamwork and working in the community

C4 - Teamwork, creating plans, presentation skills, hands-on service-learning

C9 - None of my previous positions placed an emphasis on leadership topics…community involvement…etc. For this reason, I will be seeking employment in a different area that will be more fulfilling. The courses in leadership were helpful to me personally.

C11 - Servant leadership, risk leadership, paradigm shifts in leadership styles

C14 - Learning all the different styles of leadership to enhance my own and to understand others. This education (learning) was throughout my courses.

C15 - Taking control of a situation

C25 - Management styles, communication skills, teamwork and positive communication

C33 - LDRS 300, LDRS 302, LDRS 310 – Excellent courses

C37 - Fieldwork to help delegate/problem solve with employees

C42 - Effective management – how to constructively criticize that leads to growth and harder determination of the group

C44 - Working with others and being able to step up and lead when needed

C45 - Communication skills, teambuilding skills, community involvement, change leadership

C46 - Relations with people, community involvement, presentations, youth leadership - which is very important to me

C47 - Fieldwork

C52 - Working in groups and organizing events; communicating effectively with people

C56 - Team building topics and communication

C59 - LDRS 310

C65 - Servant leadership

C66 - Importance of relationships; importance of recognizing when changes are crucial to development of individual or organization

C69 - Strategy- developing strategic plans, especially long-term; understanding change and embracing it; understanding role in leadership and followership

C75 - Teamwork and teambuilding; problem solving (independently and in groups); public speaking in relation to LDRS 310; working with higher officials in professional settings

C80 - Leadership concepts and basics. Leadership 310 was helpful with real world experiences.

C81 - Leadership styles and their roles in effective conduct; purpose of effective communication and conflict resolution; how to lead and follow while effectively determining when it is appropriate to adopt either/both roles

C82 - All of them. FHSU program is exceptional.

C85 - Teamwork, problem solving, communication with clients

C87 - Leadership qualities

C93 - Management styles, teamwork, organization

C94 - How to influence people and working with other people

C95 - Empathy

C100 - Collaborating with others on projects

C103 - Learning to work well with others and how to compile everyone's ideas to make a better positive outcome in a situation

C104 - Setting and following a plan

C109 - Working in large groups and in my current position I often have the leadership role, but also think there are times when I have to follow. Learning and practicing that has been beneficial.

C114 - Understanding that along with good management comes the responsibility of being a good and ethical leader

C115 - Being able to interact with people who are having problems properly and in a professional manner; to be able to identify and respond to behavior issues such as morale, work output, etc.

C117 - Everything! I can't elaborate enough on how much these classes have helped me in my career. One that sticks out is the importance that followers play in change. Not everyone can be a leader and we must know our strengths and weaknesses in order to succeed. The difference between a team and group was beneficial as well. Everyone should have to take these classes.

C120 - Talking with people in community, networking

C121 - Leadership 310- That whole course taught me a lot of what being a leader really is.

C123 - Implementing change

C124 - I enjoyed all aspects of my leadership studies courses. I think the Fieldwork in Leadership course really helped me to be confident and strategic with implementing leadership in the workplace.

C126 - Leadership vs. management

C128 - Team building skills. As interim director of nursing or as a consultant I have to identify problems and solve them quickly.

C129 - Recognizing the need for service, developing a plan for change, and following it through

C130 - Leadership 310 class where you go to out in the community and show what I had learned

C137 - Working with the community on LDRS 310 project

C138 - Dealing with others

C140 - Different theories and styles of leadership

C149 - The distinguished roles of leaders and the understanding of leaders. I work in group therapy settings currently and being able to help them understand what it is like to be a leader in a group is tailored a lot to what I learned while working on getting my certificate in Leadership Studies.

C150 - Learning how different leadership styles lead and manage; how to identify the leadership style

C151 - Listening, working with teams, project management

C152 - How to adapt to change

C153 - The fieldwork was most beneficial because it prepared me with appropriate professionalism and proper communication among community members.

C156 - Concepts of change for the better.; motivation; creating a sense of ownership in the company

C158 - Personal development

C160 - Management vs. leadership; risk leadership

C161 - All of them have been helpful.

C162 - Working with others and problem solving skills

C164 - Teamwork

C165 - LDRS 300

C171 - Communication; leadership application, not just theory

C174 - Intro to Leadership Concepts helped me look outside the box.

C177 - Communication with peers and authority figures

C179 - Styles of group members; identify importance of problem; finding solutions to problems; and working with others

C181 - Work collaboratively with employee

C182 - Managing others how I would like to be managed

C185 - Following, working in groups

C187 - Change and being a change agent

C191 - Teams vs. groups; working with different personalities; learning that leadership is a relationship

C192 - How to deal with different people and how to help others succeed

C194 - Problem solving, communication, ethics, teamwork, and diversity

C198 - Designing a strategic plan

C204 - The idea that leadership and management are two different things

C205 - Working with people/group cooperation/knowledge of workplace

C206 - Communication with others; delegating tasks

C207 - Everything. I know that may be a terrible answer, but every aspect of my job deals with leadership: definition, theories, and ideas. I am constantly dealing with people to uncover their needs and satisfy them while accomplishing my own tasks.

C209 - Presentations and strategic planning

C210 - The most important thing I learned in leadership was the fact that it takes both leaders and followers and how our roles changes depending on the situation. Also, it was important to learn all of the different styles of leadership. This helps me understand higher supervisors.

C217 - All have helped! The project in 310 has helped the most.

C218 - Teamwork, conflict management, time management

C219 - The entire leadership program has been helpful. I really can't pick them out.

C221 - Being a good listener and follower is just as important as being a good leader. By following others it helps to show us how to and how not to lead. Learn from other's mistakes and attributes

C222 - Team dynamics and learning the personalities and work styles of co-workers

C224 - All aspects of leadership have helped a great deal.

C225 - Teamwork, leadership behaviors, fieldwork, and service-learning

C228 - How to handle the different personalities/work styles of my co-workers. By knowing and understanding their styles, it's easier to work/communicate/understand them.

C229 - Team dynamics and group roles (i.e. manager, caretaker, etc.)

C230 - Different leadership styles; ethics; examples shared by professors and other students of workplace situations

Question 2: What topics do you wish you had learned in your FHSU leadership courses that you did not?

B8 - More methods of effective interaction and collaboration

B14 - Most leadership classes did not apply to the "real" world business environment. Corporate America is not readily adopting new age business methods such as leadership.

B24 - Dealing with problems that arise when working with groups of individuals from different backgrounds

B28 - I only took two courses, but I did enjoy the open environment.

B40 - Desktop publishing/Advertising

B49 - At this time in my career, I wish I felt more confident in dealing with conflict and pathways to resolution.

B60 - How to convince people their values at home many not work for everyone else

B85 - Reports/more financial

B116 - Learning about handling negative co-workers

B145 - Maybe more about how to give great presentations and tips for presentations (i.e. how to dress, relaxers, etc.)

B148 - Critical thinking

B151 - More on conflict. This job has daily situations.

B169 - Different strategies for motivating people; individual problem solving

B176 - Not so much "did not" but the topic of intergenerational management could be studied in more depth.

B177 - Additional focus on developing leadership development for training and developing followers. I believe most organizations lack effective training programs. Most corporate leadership programs and to some extent the FHSU leadership program focus on telling what to do, but not how to train and develop and how it should be done. I see leaders telling what needs to be done, but not how to do. I can discuss this at great length if needed. Stronger emphasis on how to see problems or issues in early stages and develop leadership abilities to solve and execute. Great focus on human resources, human relations, dealing with tough people issues, leadership coaching for performance and results. The most challenging part of a leader is the people and human relations area. From the courses I have taken I do not feel they will prepare your students to deal with this when entering the workforce. There needs to be more in-depth classes that focus on this. This should not be just book and theory, but should be either a lab or interactive class with possibly using speakers or leaders from the community and businesses.

B182 - Real life activities; more project work; connect leadership to business fundamentals

B204 - I took a well rounded group of classes so I think I have been exposed to the best of all courses provided.

B209 - More emphasis on ethnicity and cultural differences

B213 - Corporate operations/functions

B215 - I would like to have studied Covey's 7 habits/8th Habit.

C4 - Internship opportunities or speak with those in the business world

C8 - I simply wish that I would have been a better student.

C11- Hands-on experience

C14 - Integrating/supervising multi-generational employees

C46 - Time management

C47 - More real life situations, the importance of time management and organization

C52 - The faculty did a great job.

C69 - Putting strategic plans not just in Word documents, but also visually in professional Power Point presentations and Excel spreadsheets…more of what it would look like if presenting to a committee.

C85 - Less focus on community oriented service and more focus on problem solving techniques that deal with real company situations

C87 - Identification of poor leadership skills/habits

C95 - Building relationships with employees

C100 - I wish some of the leadership classes would have been taught in a more professional manner.

C103 - How to deal with rude customers; how to remain positive during a very negative situation

C104 - How to market the skills gained through the program

C109 - How to sit at a desk and like it

C114 - I felt like a lot of what I learned gave me an edge on other candidates when it came to seeking a job, but I was always edged out by the one with experience. Application and business fields in which to apply it would have helped (i.e. strong list of internship opportunities for students).

C115 - The leadership course provides a wide variety of subjects. I haven't been in a situation when I said, "I wish the leadership course at FHSU had taught me that." FHSU has a great course.

C117 - I can't think of a topic. Possibly the best thing I learned was what hard work really was (310) and the confidence and poise to give presentations to people in power, as well as peers. It gave me a lot more confidence and that has helped me out greatly. The staff is absolutely incredible. Thank you all!!

C120 - Importance of own reputation

C121 - A brief confidence lecture and not to be scared of being a leader

C124 - I think books like the "Coach K" book really opened my eyes to how leadership skills can set you apart from others.

C128 - Problem for a real company, like 310 only real problems

C129 - Human resource management, interpersonal relations

C137 - Public speaking

C138 - Dealing with competing in the workplace

C149 - How to help younger individuals understand their potential as a leader in the ever changing society they live in

C151 - Conflict resolution; working with difficult people

C153 - Being an effective initiator – This was covered, but not in extensive depth. It is a definite weakness of mine.

C165 - I am happy with all of my leadership study courses at FHSU. I wish that I could take some of the new courses since I graduated.

C174 - More work related scenarios to help apply what is taught to how we will actually use it

C179 - Dealing with co-workers inability

C181 - Learn how to be a leader, as well as a manager; learn to delegate

C185 - How to communicate better with others with "leader authority"

C187 - It is not that we did not cover leader age groups of individuals, but I think this topic should be covered in more depth.

C191 - How to better deal with conflict as a leader/follower

C192 - How to reach out to those who are really against your idea or you, and how to start communication with them and then turn that into productive communication

C198 - More on communication styles and personalities

C204 - I wish leadership would run a special course for new teachers.

C205 - More student involvement in a couple of classes

C207 - More information on leadership negotiations

C209 - More on resolving conflict

C219 - I feel that the course has provided me with the tools to be a much better manager.

C221 - I got everything that I could have from those classes…best classes at FHSU.

C222 - More business related topics

C225 - More presentations…I still need to work on confidence in my work and decisions.

C228 - How to handle a boss who doesn't manage/organize well. I work in a small firm with one owner/boss. I would like better skills of how to approach her with ideas/change without offending/upsetting her. Need to make students more accountable/responsible. Understand the stress and responsibility that goes into a career. We have hired recent grads who worked hard at school, but don't want to have to work hard in the work place.

C229 - More philosophy oriented lessons

C230 - More global issues/current events. Otherwise my leadership classes have guided me more than any others, and I only had three of them! **** and **** are the best teachers I've ever had in my life!

Appendix N - Supervisor Responses to Open-Ended Questions

SA = Supervisor of Group One (Control) Study Participant
SB = Supervisor of Group Two (LDRS 300 and/or LDRS 302) Study Participant
SC = Supervisor of Group Three (Leadership Certificate) Study Participant

Question One: What skills are important to the success of this employee's current position that have NOT been included in this study?

SA62 - None- This person was a seasonal laborer, no leadership responsibility was existing- excellent employee.

SA76 - Show detail, be genuinely interested in the person you are selecting follow up

SA114 - Successful writing of journal articles and grant applications, management subordinates, interactions and dates assignments from superiors

SA135 - Had years of experience at current position before completing RN to BSN

SA164 - Being an effective sales person that can compare and contrast different items. Be a good mechanic or mechanically inclined and a good thinker and problem-solver

SA176 - Positive communication, meeting deadlines, measuring performance

SA192 - Computer skills, customer service skills, working with a diverse population, organizational skills

SA229 - I question if the person should be in study. Plan was to go to nursing school. She finally got into the Vo Tech program, but quit in several weeks. Works presently as an aid.

SB40 - Nothing other than she is invaluable to our association and to the people who consider her a friend.

SB61 - This study covers most all the skills needed.

SB116 - Accuracy/repetition of duties

SB136 - This study was done for the business work- not the education field.

SB151 - Honesty, integrity, and the ability to put the community before self

SB176 - Multi-tasking

SB195 - Attendance

SB213 - Self-motivation to follow up on tasks, or do more than the minimum. Communicate/translate technical information to others at their level of understanding, customer service skills, patience, courtesy, professionalism

SC65 - The ability of the person to think and work independently. Also, the ability to evaluate a situation and decide what needs to be done

SC120 - Ability to identify resources

SC124 - Additional skills include: the ability to convince/sell clients, following company policies and procedures, goal setting, job function engagement/satisfaction

SC137 - Respect for management. Ability to consider manager's position above his own

SC151 - Using creativity to solve problems, mentoring others, customer service

SC224 - Addressed them already

SC229 - I think you hit on all the cylinders! Positive attitude, eagerness to learn and move/grow in the position are paramount in any job position! He has these attributes.

Question Two: What employment-related skills does your employee need that he/she currently does NOT have?

SA62 - Be more outgoing

SA76 - An understanding of the whole business- an action today will create a reaction tomorrow. Needs to follow through with ALL jobs and tasks

SA114 - Scientific writing. **** is still learning to write papers to be published in peer received journals, and therefore I would recommend that students learn from this.

SA132 - Technical intuition that can only be gained through more experience, organization, have scientific writing exercises

SA139 - Multitask, setting priorities, time organization, sharing concerns with appropriate persons, not very flexible

SA192 - He has the skills needed to perform his job.

SA229 - Critical thinking skills

SA245 - Adapt to company decision-making that you may or may not agree with

SB40 - Nothing. Our association tries to keep her with the top of the line equipment from telephones to computers.

SB41 - She gets more confident every day. Her degree gave her a self-confidence that she could take on any challenge – and she does.

SB151 - To know when to say "no"

SB169 - Some aspects of leadership

SB176 - Working with budgets

SB195 - Staying focused

SB213 - Self-motivation to do more than the minimum without being asked. When given projects, although he has the knowledge and skills to do an exceptional job, he will often only put forth a minimal effort.

SC10 - Verbal communication skills

SC38 - None- she has been a great employee with knowledge of all the skills needed to be successful.

SC52 - Experience

SC65 - Experience

SC66 - Dealing with judicial/legal issues

SC103 - The ability to communicate clearly and concisely

SC109 - Real world experience that will come with time

SC115 - **** is a very good employee who seems well rounded with all the different situations he faces.

SC120 - Problem-solving skills

SC121 - Urgency to go the extra mile, do more than is asked of you, don't always just do your job

SC124 - I feel my associate is a bit sheltered, and doesn't have an understanding or

appreciation for the different cultures that now control our global market place.

SC137 - Ability to relate to fellow employees and subordinates, ability to work independent with limited supervision, being a self starter, willingness to work hard

SC151 - The ability to take risks when it is warranted to do so.

SC209 - Ability to understand other people's point of view and not necessarily agree, but understand

SC210 - Sense of organizational hierarchy working within boundaries of job description

SC213 - How to deal with stress of short deadlines

SC224 - HR/PR = legal interview processes

SC225 - She has been exposed to all the necessary skills with the exception of specific task items such as marketing. More motivation and risk-taking on her part would be good as well as stress-management. Polish of skills is needed.

Question Three: What are the three greatest strengths of your employee?

SA51 - Attitude, ability to work with others, adjustments to change

SA62 - Hard worker, team player, dependable

SA76 - Willing to work to get job done, looks for ways to grow the business, seem to be just a nice person

SA114 - High energy, willingness to take on additional responsibilities, good computer skills

SA132 - Continues to improve and learn new skills relative to the position, works well with others-maintains a professional attitude, works independently

SA135 - Assessment skills, compassionate care, teaching others

SA139 - Knowledgeable, team oriented, desire to succeed

SA164 - Trustworthy, reliable, honest

SA166 - Community activities, meeting deadlines

SA176 - Teamwork, positive communication, work independently timely accurately

SA192 - Communication skills, customer service skills, ability to solve problems

SA 217 - Maturity- completed degree after having a family, cares about her students, and works well as a part of a team of teachers to educate students

SA245 - Problem solving, critical thinking, multitasking

SA229 - Hard worker, very dependable, works well independently

SB40 - Outgoing, organized, on-time

SB41 - Knowledge of job responsibilities regulations and processes, caring attitude in helping students, willingness to do whatever it takes to get the job done correctly

SB46 - Friendly, communicates well, hard worker

SB61 - Positive attitude, dependable, makes good decisions

SB67 - Working with others, making everyone work together

SB77 - Problem-solving, concern for others, attention to detail

SB116 - Reliable, considerate of others, quick learner

SB125 - Associate customer reaction, overcome conflicts in schedules, employee interaction

SB136 - Subject matter knowledge, cares about his students, cares about our commitment

SB151 - Internal customer rapport, very easy to approach, desire to make a difference

SB169 - Attitude, customer service first, intelligence

SB176 - Ability to read people, organization skills, ability to speak and relate to people

SB195 - Continuing his education, wanting to be a leader, conscientious worker

SB212 - Her knowledge of the job, her ability to work well with others, her willingness to learn

SB213 - Knowledge of the job-longevity, compared to most of his peers, good troubleshooting skills; can resolve problems with minimal guidance or assistance, dependability; very good at arriving on time and always requests time off with plenty of advance notice – **** has recently responded well to supervisor authority and improved quantity of customer contact documentation. When documenting customer contacts he normally provides only the most basic details, when more elaboration would be helpful. In the past he failed to track many contacts. Has excellent writing skills, but doesn't use them to his full potential.

SC10 - Project management, technical skills, energy/enthusiasm

SC38 - Outstanding communication skills, high level of energy and enthusiasm, works diligently and efficiently

SC49 - Work ethic, smart, gets along well with others

SC52 - Getting along with others, accepting responsibility, operating within the limits of teamwork

SC54 - Ability to generalize supervisor's directives to other situations, respectful to supervisors even when disagreeing with the supervisor's plan or directives, acceptance of student differences and respectful of students, even when working with difficult behaviors

SC65 - Is attentive, wants to learn and do good, is honest, is determined

SC66 - Functioning well in stressful situations, understanding the needs of others, willingness to learn new ways of doing things

SC75 - High energy level

SC103 - Personality, organization, time management

SC109 - Intelligent, organized/manages well, great work ethic

SC115 - Hard working, honest, cares about level of work

SC120 - Belief and commitment to the organization, family members who can support and assistance to the organization, ability to be suppressive by a person who changes their mind

SC121 - Outgoing, willing to learn, timely

SC124 - Maintaining a positive attitude, listening attentively, conveying information one-on-one

SC137 - Outspoken, confident

SC138 - Honest, punctual, common sense

SC140 - Communication skills, community service, providing great customer service

SC151 - Caring for others, technical proficiency, positive attitude

SC195 - Willing to learn, getting along with team members, good customer service

SC209 - Ability to take charge, good work ethic, always on time and can relate to customers

SC210 - Honesty, confidence, good attitude

SC224 - Listening skills, positive personality, multitasking

SC225 - Dependable, ability to see value of program, ability to accept direction

SC229 - New fresh ideas and ability to follow them through to completion, positive and eager to become better or move up in career, works well with employees and supervisors, looks for opportunities to learn from those around him.

Question Four: How has this employee contributed to the overall organizational goals?

SA51 - She has assumed roles that were not asked, but were needed from our school. She was able to do this during very stressful events in her personal life.

SA62 - Always there when you need him!

SA76 - Put on as seed sales and service increased gross margin by 10% in first year. I will be lucky to keep him.

SA114 - He has been instrumental to the success of my long term monitoring research program through his ability to learn and take on new projects.

SA132 - Completed projects in a timely manner and has redirected objectives that were previously misdirected in an effort to complete a project.

SA135 - She provides exceptional healthcare in a compassionate and healing environment-fulfilling our mission statement.

SA139 - Hard worker- willing to put time in to be successful

SA164 - By being an efficient bicycle mechanic and a productive worker, he helped keep the summer time madness of bike sales and repairs at a manageable level!

SA192 - **** understands and supports the Union mission.

SA217 - **** is a successful 2nd year kindergarten teacher.

SA245 - Developing of strong relationships in the community and related job fields

SB40 - She keeps our Board of Directors in line! She reminds us of our goals!

SB41 - She understands the role of financial assistance in the success of students. She has established her goals for the financial aid office to help meet those institutional goals for student's success and retention.

SB46 - Has been a leader

SB61 - She is a team player. She works hard to make our company a better place to work for everyone.

SB77 - Fulfilled duties as GA

SB116 - Watches expenses and suggests areas for improvement

SB125 - Good, great customer service skills

SB136 - I believe that **** had many of these essential qualities before entering college. He is going to be a great teacher.

SB151 - The employee's desire to be here making decisions that contribute to the whole community rather than one person of class of persons helps tremendously in achieving organizational goals.

SB169 - Although entry level she has begun to view the big picture and is making progress towards long term development.

SB176 - He analyzes current problems and works on solutions.

SB194 - Our goal here at **** is to support the war fighter and he takes this very personally.

SB195 - Good customer service and willing to help customers also team members

SB212 - She is a very good leader in my absence. She knows where the priorities lie and is very good at taking care of them.

SB213 - When asked, he does make constructive suggestions for improving Help Desk operations. He has helped some with mentoring new student employees.

SC10 - Completed large projects successfully

SC38 - Yes! She has worked wonderfully in the office and FHSU will benefit if we keep her in higher ed.

SC49 - Played her role with Dept.

SC52 - He is responsible to oversee a critical work program; the proper care and maintenance of our self-contained breathing apparatus. He is an informed leader on his shift.

SC54 - Follows guidance well; offers suggestions for solutions to problems

SC65 - Has added "youthful" enthusiasm to our office and a new "younger" view towards things

SC66 - Yes

SC75 - He has been employed only a short time, but has responded well to assignments.

SC103 - She has made great contributions to the success of our Accounts Receivable Dept. She is a great asset to our organization.

SC109 - Working on entry management of business day to day operations

SC115 - Helpful and willing to learn and help out. Doesn't have a "know it all" attitude. Functions at a high level.

SC120 - She has been an example of the lack of FHSU student knowledge of the organization, so an education plan can be developed or implemented.

SC121- Can be productive at times. Has the good of the organization furthermost-just doesn't have a real go getter attitude-should be ready and willing to be a self-starter at this age…

SC124 - This associate has repeatedly been a top performer on our team. Clients love her! And, most importantly, I like working with her. She is one of the most positive and fun people I have ever hired. She is a true asset to our organization.

SC138 - Very dependable, management level skills

SC140 - By promoting a healthy, clean environment for customers to work and go to school.

SC151 - Absolutely

SC209 - He has brought push to the group.

SC210 - Self starter and takes initiative

SC213 - Yes

SC224 - He has contributed to customers' growth through building relationships inside and out of work.

SC225 - With direct guidance she has met several organizational goals by implementation of projects.

SC229 - **** has brought with him a proposal that has allowed our bank to work with another business in town to allow us both to benefit from the partnership! He's been a bright ray of sunshine, always positive, and brought great future ideas with him in his new position here.