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AFFECTING CHANGE SYNERGISTICALLY: AN INTERPRETATIVE CASE
STUDY OF LEADERSHIP RELATIONSHIPS AT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

by

Jacquelyn A. Freiberg

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

University of San Diego

1994

Dissertation Committee

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ABSTRACT

AFFECTING CHANGE SYNERGISTICALLY: AN INTERPRETIVE CASE STUDY OF LEADERSHIP RELATIONSHIPS AT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

FREIBERG, JACQUELYN A., Ed.D. University of San Diego, 1994
pp. 270

Director: Joseph C. Rost, Ph.D.

As we move into the 21st century it becomes increasingly more important to move beyond what we have come to know as leadership--great man and position/authority-based, excellent management. Instead, what organizations are in need of is a postindustrial model of leadership. Rost defined 21st century leadership as "*an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes*" (p. 102).

This study sought to operationalize 21st century leadership in Southwest Airlines Co., a Texas-based corporation that is recognized as one of America's most successful airlines. This company has a 22 year history, over 10,000 employees, and earned profits of \$91 million in 1993.

This research is an interpretative case study guided by open-ended interviews, observation and document analysis. Key informant interviews were held with Southwest Airlines employees from different levels and a variety of positions within the company to determine whether or not leadership relationships were involved in two major change efforts--an

improvement in on-time performance and the perpetuation of Southwest's spirited culture.

This case study presents the people of Southwest Airlines as leaders and followers who intended, and accomplished two very real and substantive changes. These change efforts were based on multidirectional influence and reflective of the mutual purposes held by the individuals engaged in these synergistic leadership relationships. It was determined that the leaders and followers involved in these change efforts were successful because they collectively practiced postindustrial leadership.

Dedication

This document is dedicated to the highly spirited people of the Southwest family. Indeed, Southwest Airlines is rich with leaders and followers who provided an uncanny description of postindustrial leadership. In the process, the people of Southwest have paved the way for a more real picture of what has contributed to the success and uniqueness of this fun loving airline -- leadership that is practiced by everyone!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been richly blessed throughout the process of writing this dissertation. Blessed by the relationships that I have developed with Southwest Airlines and the people that make that family so very special. Blessed by family and friends that have shared their unconditional faithfulness with me throughout this process. Finally, I have been blessed with a renewed appreciation for the awesome process of learning.

Indeed, the relationships that I have developed throughout this process have caused me to grow and mature both intellectually and emotionally. Through the intellectual pursuit of becoming a leadership scholar, I have also become very intolerant of leadership studies that are seeking to gain more insight into the phenomena of leadership, yet continue to focus primarily on one person--a leader--who sits at the top of an organizational hierarchy. I thank Dr. Joe Rost for his insight--so far, Joe is the definitive scholar behind the postindustrial definition of leadership and is a scholar for whom I hold the utmost of respect. It was postindustrial leadership that gave me hope. This model granted me a new lens through which I was able to study the people of Southwest Airlines with passion and confidence. In addition, Joe has also become a very dear

friend. He has been humanizing, consistent, dependable and honest. He challenged me to think more clearly and write more concisely. Joe has been a respected mentor, a true friend and a partner in this project. For all of this, I am very grateful!

Dr. Ed Kujawa added spirit, spontaneity and wit to this process. I am very thankful for Ed's flexibility and his willingness to become a player. It was a treat to experience Ed's Southwest-like spirit during the defense! Dr. Jan Andersen served as an empowering role model. Every comment, question, and discussion became a synergistic exchange that brought this investigation to a new intellectual and emotional level. It was refreshing, encouraging and empowering to work with Jan.

Of course, there are so many doctoral students that have shared and influenced my most current views and opinions on leadership. To all my friends and colleagues, thank you for challenging me to think and articulate my views through a variety of different perspectives. On a more personal note, there are two leadership scholars whose ideas and intellect I respect immensely and think deserve recognition--Peter Andrade and Steve Williams. Peter and Steve are wise beyond their years and both have been gifted with incredible minds. Peter was my seminar buddy, the one who challenged me to think at an extremely high level, yet was always willing to come back down to a more practical day to day application of our philosophical pursuits. Steve is an individual with an

amazing talent of driving a point to its most logical conclusion. Thus, he was most helpful in assisting me in preparing for this project and working with me at its logical conclusion--the dissertation defense. Some of my more pointed and concise opening comments and responses were clearly a result of the many hours spent in mock defense with Steve. Thinking like Steve didn't come easy. However, it proved most powerful!

Finally, it is my family that is most worthy of acknowledgment. It was seven years ago that Kevin's doctoral work served as an inspiration for me to further develop my own thoughts on leadership. He then became my most trusted and faithful coach. At times, he challenged me--almost too hard. At other times, he encouraged me. All the time, he believed in me. We share a dream, and one piece of that dream has been realized. In partnership, we can now look ahead with hopeful anticipation of truly *living* the rest of our dream.

Almost three years ago we were blessed with the gift of life--on May 30, 1991 Taylor Grace joined our family. It is the childish wisdom of this little gift from God that continually challenges us to put life into proper perspective. Comments like, "Mommy don't work on your dissertation" used to break my heart. However, today I am pleased to say, with joy and a refreshing playfulness, "Taylor, Mommy's dissertation is done!"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I	1
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE	1
Introduction	1
Definition of Leadership	4
The Relationship Is Based On Influence	5
Leaders and Followers Are the People in This Relationship	6
Leaders and Followers Intend Real Changes	8
Leaders and Followers Develop Mutual Purposes ...	9
Purpose of the Study	10
The Issue	12
Significance of the Study	14
Assumptions and Limitations	16
Definition of Terms	16
Organization of the Dissertation	17
CHAPTER II	19
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	19
Leading up to the Industrial Views on Leadership	20
From Industrial Views To Postindustrial Views	30
Postindustrial Views On Leadership	37
Leadership and Organizational Culture	54
CHAPTER III	67
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	67

Phenomenological Research Approach	69
The Ethnographic Research Approach	70
Site Selection	72
Participants	74
Ethics of the Investigation	77
Participant Interviews and On-site Observation	78
Additional Data Gathering Procedures	82
Data Analysis	83
CHAPTER IV	87
RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP AT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	87
Introduction	87
A Short History of Southwest Airlines	90
A Change in On-Time Performance At Southwest Airlines	97
On-Time Performance and Influence-Based Relationships	107
Leaders and Followers Involved in the On-time Turnaround	128
Leaders and Followers Intend Real Changes At Southwest	144
Leaders And Followers Develop Mutual Purposes At Southwest	149
Conclusion	153
Creating A Culture Committee	156
The Southwest Family	160
Leadership Is Based On Influence	173
Leaders And Followers Perpetuate The Family Feel	190
Leaders And Followers Intend Real Change	206
The Culture Committee Challenge and Mutual Purpose ...	211
CHAPTER V	221

LEADERSHIP, PERFORMANCE AND SPIRIT AT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	221
The Practice Of Postindustrial Leadership At Southwest	224
What Real Changes Have Leaders And Followers Intended Through Influence Relationships?	225
What Are The Catalytic Agents That Ignite Leadership Relationships?	227
How Are Leadership Relationships Formed?	231
What Are The Underlying Values And Interaction Patterns That Fostered The Interdependence That Is Inherent In Leadership Relationships? ...	233
Are These Influence Relationships Reflective Of Mutual Purposes?	239
How Is Influence Operationalized In These Leadership Relationships?	241
Summary	245
Strengths of This Study	246
Weaknesses of This Study	249
Future Research	253
Concluding Remarks	255
REFERENCES	260
APPENDIX	266

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Memorandum from Kelleher	109
2. Letter from Harry Ehmann, a concerned employee	110
3. In-house report regarding on-time performance ...	119
4. SWA's weekly Employee Update	121
5. "How Do We Rate?"	123
6. A memo regarding on-time performance-stimulus for the troops	138
7. A memo from Herb and Colleen regarding a "Day in the Field"	142
8. Dare to Dream	157
9. Letter from Governor Ann Richards	161
10. The hallways of Southwest Airlines	164
11. Greeting cards from Southwest Airlines	165
12. Letter regarding three days in the field	176
13. Spirited letter from a Houston Station employee	182
14. Adopt a new employee. Southwest Co-Hearts program.	199
15. Culture Committee business card	201
16. The Texas Lone Star	218
17. A letter from a customer	258

CONTENTS OF APPENDICES

<u>Appendix</u>	<u>Page</u>
A. Titles of informants	266
B. Informant consent form	267
C. Human subjects	268
D. Letter from Southwest Airlines	269
E. Interview guide	270

CHAPTER I
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE
Introduction

The team approach to organizing and accomplishing tasks has become very popular in the 1990s. People are realizing that the collective is much more powerful than the individual. Many contemporary authors are calling for individuals who can work against the industrial ideals of hierarchy, individual power and corporate bureaucracy that are reflective of most organizations (e.g. Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978; Depree, 1989; Foster, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Naisbitt & Aburdene, 1985; Rost, 1991; Tierney, 1989). These authors stress the need for individuals who can manage the demands of efficiency and also engage in leadership relationships to create a nontraditional climate. In these more contemporary climates, people are encouraged and empowered to work collectively to form teams and create networks that will lead toward the accomplishment of a shared and valued purpose.

One of the primary concerns of researchers and practitioners who are interested in the phenomenon of

leadership must be a more complete understanding of the ways in which individuals exercise leadership through relationships and networks in organizations. Burns (1978) implied that leadership is much more than one individual:

Leadership is a collective, one-man leadership is a contradiction in terms. The critical consideration is the form or structure that collective leader-follower relationships assume. The emotional connection between heroic leaders and the vast number of followers who related to them is a form of collective leadership. (p. 452-453)

In the past, studies have focused primarily on great men and women as leaders, assuming that they carry more clues for a better understanding of history, current events, and an improved future. Yet the truth of this assumption has never been demonstrated and the study of leadership cannot ride on any single existing theory of historical causation (Burns, 1978, p. 52). Rather, the study of leadership could benefit by developing more naturalistic approaches that move beyond individual heroes and heroines toward a better understanding of leadership relationships. It is time to propose an alternative to understanding leadership as the heroic activity of an individual or a leader. Could it be the heroic activity of groups, teams and networks of people? Burns (1978) asserted that:

The crisis of leadership today is the mediocrity or irresponsibility of so many of the men and women in

power, but leadership rarely rises to the full need for it. The fundamental crisis underlying mediocrity is intellectual. If we know all too much about our leaders we know far too little about leadership. . . . Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth. (pp. 1-2)

Leadership, when studied as a process through relationships rather than simply as the heroic achievements of individuals may "compensate for the noncomparability, unreliability, and narrow focus of the information we have on individual great leaders" (Burns, 1978, p. 53). Thus, Southwest Airlines, a Texas-based corporation that is recognized as one of America's most successful airlines and one of the most fun organizations to work for in the world, was chosen as the organization to investigate for this research project. This company is known as an industry leader in many respects. For example, Southwest Airlines has been consistently profitable since its second year of operation, over 22 years ago. Southwest is known to have one of the most productive work forces in the industry. Over the last five years Southwest has been the focus of increasing media attention. Southwest also leads the industry in on-time performance, fewest mishandled bags and least number of customer complaints and thus, is the only airline to be a four-time Triple Crown winner.

In addition, as this organization continues to grow in popularity and profitability, the people of Southwest

continue to experience frustration when the media and industry analysts suggest that their success is due to the heroic nature of Southwest's leader, Herb Kelleher. Yes, Kelleher, is a very shrewd and judicious Chairman, President and CEO with an intensely dynamic and charismatic personality. However, Kelleher is also always the first to give credit where credit is due--to the people of Southwest Airlines. Consequently, based on the information outlined above, an introduction to leadership at Southwest through Freiberg's (1987) study, and an eight year relationship with many of the people within this company, this investigator had reason to believe that the significant changes taking place at Southwest Airlines were not the result of one person, but rather a collective. This is why this researcher chose Southwest as the organization to investigate.

Thus, to determine the significance of studying leadership as a relationship, practiced as the heroic activity of groups, teams and/or collectives, it is important first, to identify a new definition of leadership. This definition of postindustrial leadership and its components can be used as a template for determining whether leadership relationships are occurring within Southwest Airlines and if so, in turn, provide new inspiration for the 21st century.

Definition of Leadership

A postindustrial definition of leadership developed by Rost (1991) states that leadership is *"an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real*

changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 102). Rost (1991) posed a challenge to leadership scholars and professionals for the 21st century. His definition is new and has not yet been operationalized. This study seeks to operationalize Rost's definition of leadership. The definition and its major components are the template through which this researcher will analyze how an organization has experienced and intended some major changes through leadership relationships. Rost (1991) identified four "essential elements of leadership:

1. The relationship is based on influence
 2. Leaders and followers are the people in the relationship
 3. Leaders and followers intend real changes
 4. Leaders and followers develop mutual purposes"
- (p. 104).

In order to determine whether leadership as defined by Rost has been operationalized in an organizational context, it is important to elaborate on these four essential elements.

The Relationship Is Based On Influence

A leadership relationship is one in which people use influence to have an impact on other people in the relationship. Influence occurs when people are able to use persuasion to have this impact. Persuasion involves the use of power resources. Rost (1991) identifies a number of possible power resources such as "reputation, prestige, personality, purpose, status, content of message,

interpersonal and group skills, give-and-take behaviors, authority or lack of it, symbolic interaction, perception, motivation, gender, race, religion, and choices" (p. 105).

Influence in the leadership relationship is multidirectional, it flows in all directions. Influence doesn't only flow from the top down in a leadership relationship. Influence in a leadership relationship is not based on authority or dictatorial actions; rather, influence is noncoercive. In summary, leadership as an influence relationship is based on persuasive behavior and the use of power tools. The leadership relationship is one in which anyone involved can freely agree or disagree and thus drop into or out of the relationship at any point in time.

Leaders and Followers Are the People in This Relationship

In Rost's postindustrial definition, leaders are not equated with managers and followers are not equated with subordinates. Leaders and followers can be anyone. However, one should not assume that leaders and followers are equal. Rost (1991) developed five points to give the concept of followers substance and clarity.

First, only people who are active in the leadership process are followers. Passive people have chosen not to be involved and thus are not followers. They cannot have influence.

Second, there is a continuum of activity within the leadership relationship and active people can fall anywhere

on that continuum. Activity may range anywhere from highly active to minimally active, and their influence in the leadership process is highly dependent on their level of activity. Activity levels will rise and fall from person to person and from issue to issue.

Third, followers can become leaders and leaders can become followers in any one leadership relationship. Unlike the industrial definitions of leadership, followers have the ability to change places without changing organizational positions in the 21st century definition of leadership. Thus, followers have considerable influence and mobility.

Fourth, in all leadership relationships, followers are not always followers. Likewise, in all leadership relationships, leaders are not always leaders. Just as activity levels vary in the leadership relationships, the leader and follower activities will also vary from one group or organization to another.

Fifth, followers do leadership; followers do not do followership. Together, leaders and followers form one relationship and both are essential to leadership (pp. 108-109).

Typically there is more than one leader and there must be more than one follower. The trend is clearly moving toward shared and collaborative leadership. The Lone Ranger image--the idea that one person who is out in front taking charge, and everyone else is following is losing its appeal

and more importantly it's losing its credibility--as it is becoming increasingly more difficult to substantiate.

In leadership relationships, leaders, typically, have more influence because they are both more willing and more skilled at committing the power resources they possess to influence others in the relationship. Thus, the relationship between leaders and followers is inherently unequal, because the influence patterns are unequal.

Leaders and Followers Intend Real Changes

The intention of change is all that is needed in the leadership relationship. *Intend* means that the changes are purposeful and are in the future. The intention, however, is in the present and is communicated and demonstrated through words and actions. Intention is to leadership like glue is to a model airplane. The glue holds the various pieces and parts together. Likewise, intention draws the various individuals in the leadership relationship together.

Intended changes must be real. *Real* changes are substantive and transforming. When leaders and followers engage in a relationship to change people's lives, attitudes, behaviors, and basic assumptions, as well as the groups, organizations, societies, and civilizations they are a part of, they intend real, substantive, transforming change. Intending pseudo, dishonest, and phony changes will not qualify. Leadership does not require the leaders and followers to actually accomplish the changes. Although changes may indeed be produced as a result of a leadership

relationship, real changes are not essential for the relationship to be leadership. In addition, leaders and followers can actually intend more than one change at any one time.

Leaders and Followers Develop Mutual Purposes

Leaders and followers pursue mutual purposes, not goals. Purposes are holistic, longer term and integrated pursuits. Purposes are more oriented to what people ordinarily think of as a vision, a bigger, broader, more qualitative picture of the future. Mutual purposes are reflective of what the leaders and followers have come to understand from numerous interactions as areas of agreement. When leaders and followers have several purposes, the likelihood of mutuality is enhanced because different leaders and followers can emphasize related purposes and still achieve some mutuality. It also means that there are several purposes around which different followers and leaders can build a common vision.

Again, leaders and followers intend real changes that *reflect* mutual purposes. The word *reflect* is responsive to the dynamic nature of a leadership relationship. Reflect suggests development and progressive change in the purposes of the leaders and followers. Mutual purposes are common purposes that leaders and followers share because they engage in leadership together.

As a final summary of the essential elements of the postindustrial definition of leadership, Rost (1991) stated:

Mutual purposes are common purposes, not only because they are forged from the influence relationship, which is inherently noncoercive, not only because they develop over time from the multidirectional nature of the relationship, but because the followers and leaders together do leadership. Leadership is their common enterprise, the essence of the relationship, the process by which they exert influence. If leadership is the common enterprise of the leaders and followers, it cannot be done without commonality of purposes. (p. 122)

For a more complete understanding of the essential elements, see Rost (1991, pp. 104-123).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the relationships and behaviors of individuals who are a part of an organizational collective in order to better understand leadership as a relational process. It is my intention to add to the research completed by Freiberg (1987) and Skalbeck (1991). Freiberg (1987) conducted a qualitative case study to better understand the degree to which the chief executive officer of Southwest Airlines exemplified transformational leadership as defined by Burns (1978) and how he operationalized leadership through the lens of the Burnsian model. Likewise Skalbeck (1991) analyzed and described the leadership behavior of a female high school principal. Skalbeck examined leadership as a process in a context where she was able to determine the degree to which her subject

emulated Burns' model of transformational leadership (p. 156). Both studies followed a similar research design using the naturalistic research tradition (Bantz, 1983, Guba and Lincoln, 1981). I, too, have followed a similar method of investigation. However, where my study will extend the Freiberg and Skalbeck studies is in the unit of analysis. Instead of focusing on a leader and how that leader operationalized Burns' model of leadership, I have focused on how many of the people in Southwest Airlines engaged in relationships to intend substantive changes in the organization. This exploration is an attempt to focus on the collective process of leadership.

If we are to learn more about leadership as a relationship through the interaction of people working toward a purpose, then scholars must begin by examining the collectives these people form to pursue their mutual purpose in particular contexts. I am most interested in gaining a better understanding of leadership relationships that are nonhierarchical and include leaders who serve as catalysts or facilitators, leaders who enable others to act collectively toward the accomplishment of a common goal, shared vision or mutual purpose. The purpose of this research is to determine whether or not a 21st century definition of leadership has been operationalized in Southwest Airlines. Six broad questions are explored in this research to assist me in learning more about leadership as a relational process: (1) In this organization what real changes have leaders and

followers intended through influence relationships? (2) What are the catalytic agents that ignite leadership relationships? (3) How are leadership relationships formed? (4) How is influence operationalized in these leadership relationships? (5) Are these influence relationships reflective of mutual purposes? (6) What are the underlying values and interaction patterns that foster the interdependence that is inherent in leadership relationships?

The Issue

Burns (1978) suggested that "transformational leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and leaders into moral agents. Leadership is nothing if not linked to collective purpose, the roles of leader and follower must be united conceptually" (p. 3). Leadership then is a dynamic process between leaders and followers and could certainly benefit from studies that recognized the interactional component of the leader-followers relationship.

Burns also stated that "purposeful leadership is a means of constructing reality which enables us to see history as the sum of the actual experiences of actual men and women in their relation to one another and to their environment" (1978, p. 442). Leadership, then, is more likely a construction of human interaction than a result of great individuals or skilled managers.

The study of leadership as a relational process will move us beyond the deficiencies of traditional definitions.

Smith (1982) suggested that focusing on relationships in organizations is analogous to focusing on the wind as it blows through the trees.

The wind is recognizable primarily by its impact on objects that move and behave within the realm of the wind's presence. We could observe the rippling of the leaves and the bending of the trees and describe these as an expression of the trees' inner nature. Or we could talk about the wind. We do the latter. We "see" the wind, even though it is invisible. (p. 328)

Interestingly, when viewed as a relational process leadership is analogous to the wind; it too is invisible. However, our conceptual understanding of leadership has not yet challenged us to seek the invisible.

Leadership is not recognized by its impact on objects that move and behave within the realm of leadership. However, we do observe leaders and followers (rippling leaves and bending trees) and have described a specific change as an expression of a leader's inner nature. We could talk about leadership, but we have chosen to talk about leaders. We "see" leaders, even though they are merely inferences of the leadership that is invisible.

The wisdom in this analogy is simply to look beyond the leaves and the trees and see the wind. Likewise, the time is ripe to look beyond the leader and see leadership, a complex relational construction of reality. Just as the wind is more than a moving tree, so too leadership is more than a leader.

A tree and a leader denote the obvious. Yet, wind and leadership connote collective activity that is much more complex and far more dynamic than something simply seen.

As more consideration is given to leadership as a relational process and less to the leader, it is helpful to reflect upon Burns again. He noted that the function of leadership is to engage followers and that the most powerful influences consist of deeply human relationships in which two or more persons engage with one another (1978, p. 11). Therefore, the study of leadership as a deeply human relationship is more appropriate to move us beyond the existing industrial paradigm definitions of leadership.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is based on the degree to which one perceives there to be a need to transform current thought and practice about leadership. Rost (1991) conducted an impressive review and analysis of leadership literature throughout the twentieth century and noted that the:

Definitions of leadership from the 1980s. . . show that the mainstream leadership literature is overwhelmingly industrial in its concept of leadership, demonstrating that the transformation of leadership thought to a postindustrial framework has barely begun. . . . If our thought and practice about leadership in the 1990s still express the dominant values of the industrial era--then a profound transformation of leadership thought and practice must take place in the 1990s if the needs of

the people living in this decade and the twenty-first century are to be well served. (p. 100)

This study is one attempt to initiate the transformation of leadership thought. It is an attempt to study leadership through this new lens, a lens that is reflective of a postindustrial school of leadership. This study grants scholars and practitioners alike an opportunity to apply these radically new thoughts about leadership to a real organizational context. It is an attempt to identify whether Southwest Airlines is an organization in which this new postindustrial view of leadership is being exercised.

The significance of this particular study lies in its focus on leadership as a relational process. Scholars at the University of San Diego have engaged in a tremendous amount of dialogue regarding the notion of leadership as a relationship. Yet, the difficulty is in actually designing ways through which we can study leadership as a relationship. This study attempts to move us beyond what we have come to know as leadership. In this study leadership is investigated as something more powerful than what can be done by an individual who is ultimately recognized as a leader because he/she holds a position of authority within a major organization or institution. This study focuses specifically on how people at all different levels in Southwest Airlines collectively pursue and accomplish purpose. Upon the completion of this study we will have gained valuable insight about the practice of this new school of leadership and the

degree to which the people of Southwest Airlines have engaged in leadership relationships and have in effect, facilitated the transition from the industrial to the postindustrial era.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study begins with the assumption that there is, in fact, a need to redefine the current thought and practice of leadership. In order to redefine the thought and practice of leadership we must begin with a new and radically different definition that can move us beyond the mainstream view of leadership. Rost (1991) offered that definition.

On the basis of these assumptions, I have chosen to investigate the degree to which Rost's 21st century definition of leadership can be operationalized within an organizational context. Thus, the conclusions are limited to the issues and the organization I have chosen to investigate. However, as with any qualitative study, the conclusions and implications of this study should offer valuable insights for further studies and future research on leadership.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have not yet been defined and are referred to and used throughout the course of this study.

Industrial paradigm of leadership: The leadership school of thought that pervades most research, practice and understanding to date. "Leadership as good management is the industrial paradigm of leadership. . . . Leadership that is rational, management oriented, male, technocratic, quantitative, goal dominated, cost-benefit driven,

personalistic, hierarchical, short term, pragmatic, and materialistic" (Rost, 1992, p. 94).

Postindustrial paradigm: A new era following the industrial era. "The new era is beyond, or more than, or different from the present, industrial era. . . . This new paradigm will presumably become the mainstream paradigm sometime in the twenty-first century" (Rost, 1991, p. 100).

Network: Group involvement that is typically concerned with the status of a particular issue. The involvement tends to connect like-minded people and a group is formed. The group provides support for concerns and allows people to experience the effectiveness of collective action to bring about change (adapted from Astin & Leland, 1991).

Organization of the Dissertation

In describing how the postindustrial definition of leadership has been operationalized by people in Southwest Airlines, the second chapter of this study presents a review of the literature surrounding the mainstream and the twenty-first century views of leadership and organizational culture. The research design and methodology of this investigation are outlined in Chapter Three. The site selection, people involved and issues investigated are also described in Chapter Three. Chapter Four represents the responses gained from the investigation. The researcher's observations and interpretations of the data collected are also included in this chapter. Finally Chapter Five presents a summary of the investigation and the researcher's conclusions regarding the

degree to which the subjects of this investigation engaged in leadership relationships as defined by Rost. The summary and conclusions in this chapter are followed by a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses and some implications for future leadership research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The focus of the first main section of this literature review is on leadership. However, it is important to note that this review of the literature is not an attempt to revisit all the literature written on leadership in the twentieth century. Recently, Rost (1991) presented a very penetrating analysis that looked under the surface for background assumptions and took a more holistic view of the leadership literature throughout the twentieth century. He argued:

Despite all the apparent confusion of the hundreds of definitions and dozens of models, leadership has consistently been understood since the 1930s as good management. In a culture that has been managerial at its core, the scholars and practitioners in that culture could do no less than give the coveted and new concept of leadership a definition that equated it not with just management but with good management. (p. 99)

Rather than duplicate Rost's efforts, the literature reviewed for this investigation documents industrial views on leadership written primarily between 1975 and the present. In addition, postindustrial views attempting to move beyond the boundaries of the industrial paradigm to advance a bold

new agenda for leadership in the twenty-first century have been highlighted. The degree to which these ideas and definitions are likely to facilitate the transition from the industrial to the postindustrial era has been discussed.

The focus of the second main section of this literature review is on corporate culture. Again, it is important to note that this review is not an attempt to revisit all the work written on corporate culture during the twentieth century. More to the point, this investigation reviews corporate culture research conducted between 1975 and the present. The rationale for selecting this time period is to discover whether the corporate culture literature, like the leadership literature of the same period, is also reflective of the predominant values of the industrial era.

Additionally, many researchers link corporate culture to leadership. It should be interesting to discover whether the scholars attempting to move beyond the values of the industrial paradigm in discussions of leadership are doing the same for perspectives on corporate culture. In either case, a transition from the mainstream view of leadership into a postindustrial view of leadership is likely to have an impact on the corporate culture research as well. In this section of the literature review, some implications for these transitions are considered.

Leading up to the Industrial Views on Leadership

Leadership began as an elitist concept; it was something that only great men (and some women) practiced. Then around

the 1930s leadership became more egalitarian, when it was studied as a democratic group activity. The group approach to leadership soon gave way to the traits approach which suggested that leaders needed to practice certain behaviors and possess certain qualities to do leadership. The traits theory fell short as more and more studies revealed that behaviors were not the only variable related to leader effectiveness.

The 1970s gave way to the situation/contingency theory of leadership, suggesting that leadership behaviors are contingent upon the situation and the needed outcome. In the 1980s leadership became whatever it takes to promote excellence. All these understandings have created further confusion in the 1990s. People are now quite used to thinking of leadership as a synonym for management and leader as a synonym for manager.

Rost and Smith (1992) took the point even further when they suggested:

The 20th century definitions and understandings of leadership can be integrated into the current industrial paradigm of leadership. Essentially, the great man theory was about great managers. The group theory was about managers who were able to facilitate groups well. The traits theory was about managers who had desirable traits and used them to accomplish a job done well. The contingency/situational theories were about managers who varied their behaviors in clearly defined ways so as to

motivate employees to achieve stated goals. And the excellence theory was about managers who did the right things to accomplish excellence in organizations. (p. 194)

The question then remains: Are contemporary authors continuing to facilitate an industrialized understanding of leadership? Additionally, if we are to transform current thoughts about leadership, what focus should be taken to generate a postindustrial view of leadership? Rost (1991) offered some keen insight into the questions.

Leadership scholars have spilled much ink on the peripheral elements surrounding leadership and its content instead of on the nature of leadership as a process, on leadership viewed as a dynamic relationship . . . and almost no research has been aimed at understanding the essential nature of what leadership is, the process whereby leaders and followers relate to achieve a purpose. . . . The reality is that, as of 1990, scholars and practitioners do not know, with certainty, what leadership is. (pp. 4-6)

As the literature demonstrates, traditional approaches to leadership tend to be dominated by images of great men and women speaking to, for, and over the masses. We know far too little about leadership as a relationship because scholars have not yet found appropriate methods through which to study leadership as a relational process. In an attempt to argue for a more democratic approach to leadership, Gastil (1991)

stated that "unfortunately, the research on alternate forms of leadership has not been complemented by an equally vigorous effort to design and articulate a general model of leadership that could challenge the more commonplace notion of the Great Man" (p. 1). Gastil also suggested that the day of the 'Great Man' may pass" and further argued that it "must, if we are to survive" (p. 3). Clearly, the industrial era is steeped in traditional models of leadership. According to Rost (1991), "while the industrialized model of leadership has served the people of the United States well since the late 1800s, it increasingly ill serves our needs as we approach the twenty-first century" (p. 101). Thus, before we embark upon waters that are methodologically uncharted, it is important to review the current understanding of leadership.

Industrial Views On Leadership

Until recently, much of the research on leadership was done through the study of individuals who occupy management and executive positions within organizations, and up until the present the majority of those subjects have been men. However, statistics show that the workforce 2000 will be very different than the traditional workforce has been, as two-thirds of those entering the workforce today are women and minorities. In time these people will also begin to occupy many of the management and executive positions within organizations.

Henrickson, Jeffries, and Rost (1988) revealed that "management" has been mistakenly studied through what are

falsely called models of leadership, all contributing to false notions of leadership as management, power wielding, masculine traits, and great men. Hosking and Morley (1988) noted that:

The last fifteen years have seen a marked increase in studies of managerial behavior, identifying what managers do, how they do it, the contacts they make, and so on. Although excellent in many ways, this work has not been directed by an explicit and systematic treatment of the skills involved. Further, the authors have not implemented a distinction between leadership and management, and have not been concerned with leadership as an organizing process. (p. 95)

In addition, Rost (1991) stated that "confusing leadership and management and treating the words as if they were synonymous have a long and illustrious history in leadership studies. The practice is pervasive in the mainstream literature on leadership" (Rost, 1991, p.129). A persistent theme of the 1980s literature on leadership is an attempt to label as leadership those management practices which produce excellence in organizations. This practice is simply a restatement of the industrial paradigm of leadership that upgrades good management to excellent management. Thus much of our current understanding of leadership has been defined and confined by what we know about men and management.

Clearly, the predominate male bias in leadership (management) models of the past has perpetuated a larger

societal confusion of gender characteristics of leadership. Sergiovanni (1992) noted that:

More traditional concepts of leadership seem decidedly more male-oriented. Modern management, for example, is a male creation that replaced emphasis on family and community with emphasis on individual ambition and other personal considerations. . . . For most men, achievement has to do with the accomplishment of goals; for most women, achievement has to do with the building of connections between and among people. . . . Giving legitimacy to the female perspective would give license to men who are inclined toward similar practice. (pp. 135-138)

Similarly, Nelton (1991) stated that "until very recently, the general perception of business management was a structure dominated by males whose leadership style was hierarchical, action-oriented, and even quasi-military. The ideal leader was seen as an independent, tough, individualistic hero--like a John Wayne character or a real-life Lee Iacocca" (p. 16). It wasn't too long ago that women were not able to bring feminine values of compassion, cooperation, patience, and interdependence with them into management roles. This was partly due to social and traditional forces. "But now a new generation of women is bringing to business a style often described as more consensus building, more open and inclusive, more likely to encourage participation by others,

and even more caring than that of many males" (Nelton, 1992, p. 16). As Burns (1978) stated:

Over the centuries femininity has been stereotyped as dependent, submissive and conforming, and hence women have been lacking in leadership qualities. . . . The male bias is reflected in the false conception of leadership as mere command and control. As leadership comes properly to be seen as a process of leaders engaging and mobilizing the human needs and aspirations of followers, women will be more readily recognized as leaders and men will change their own leadership styles. (p. 50)

Ferguson (1980) added to the argument. "As women in transition are discovering their sense of self and vocation, men are discovering relationships. During these equalizing shifts, the basis for male-female interaction is being redefined. Men are becoming more feeling and intuitive; women, more autonomous and purposeful" (p. 389). Nelton (1991) indicated a similar change:

A survey of high-level executives by Russell Reynolds Associates, Inc., a New York-based executive recruiting firm, categorized respondents as 'leader-style' (that is visionary, innovative, and strategic in their thinking) or as 'manager-style' (concerned with maintaining momentum, balancing interests, stabilizing forces, and implementing tactical plans). The study found that women in both staff and line positions were more likely

to be leader-style executives than their male counterparts. (p. 18)

If Sergiovanni, Ferguson and Nelton, among others, are correct, then it is time to seek new lenses through which we can gain a better understanding of leadership. Nelton (1991) found that "men and women managers can work comfortably together at the top and their differing styles of leadership can be complementary, producing a synergism that gives the company benefits it would not receive if two men or two women were in those jobs" (p. 16). To facilitate the move into the postindustrial paradigm, perhaps organizations should become more aggressive in creating organizational cultures supportive of leadership relationships that can be practiced by men and women alike. In turn these organizational cultures will offer more opportunities to better understand the dynamics of these relationships and possibly give us more insight into leadership as well.

Rejecting the assumption that leading is managing is another alternative to understanding leadership through a male-biased management frame. According to Burns (1978), "leading is not managing" (p. 451). More to the point, perhaps it is time to separate leadership from management and study each as a separate and distinct process worthy of its own analysis. Kotter stated that "most U.S. corporations are overmanaged and underled" (1990, p. 103). Kotter also noted that "leadership and management are two distinct and complementary systems of action. Each has its own function

and characteristic activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment" (p. 103). It is important to note that there is no logical or necessary connection between leadership and managerial position or effectiveness. Therefore, it is no longer useful to draw such comparisons. Leadership is fundamentally addressed to social change and human emancipation (Foster, 1989, p. 48). Kotter (1990) stated that leadership is different from management, it is about achieving grand visions by "satisfying basic human needs for achievement, a sense of belonging, recognition, self-esteem, a feeling of control over one's life, and the ability to live up to one's ideals. Such feelings touch us deeply and elicit a powerful response" (p. 107). Management, on the other hand, connotes control, structure, and regulation, all of which are quite contrary to the ideals of transformation, social change, and emancipation. However, it is interesting to note that these management qualities are quite instrumental in promoting and fostering the ideals associated with the industrial paradigm. Rost (1991) stated:

The industrial paradigm of leadership continues to dominate the study and practice of leadership as we begin the 1990s. . . . The problem with the industrial leadership paradigm is that it increasingly ill serves the needs of a world rapidly being transformed by a massive paradigm shift in societal values. There is more and more evidence to conclude that the industrial

paradigm is losing its hold on the culture of Western societies and that some type of postindustrial paradigm will dominate these societies in the twenty-first century. (p. 181)

The reality is that our understanding of leadership for the last 75 years has been very consistent with the industrial paradigm that has dominated the 20th century in the Western world. Leadership has been understood as "good management" (Rost & Smith, 1992, pp. 193-194). Even though leadership has evolved through several meanings in the 20th century it remains confused. These meanings haven't necessarily developed our understanding of leadership. Hosking and Morley (1988) have developed a model that emphasizes leadership processes as those of "complex decision making in which participants recognize and respond to actual or potential changes in the status quo--changes that imply that they may have something significant to lose (a stake) or to gain (a prize)" (p. 96). Their point is this:

The literatures do not add up because leadership phenomena have been divorced from the organizational processes of which they are a part. . . . The attempt was to link leadership and organization, and the use of social skills as an integrating concept. . . . The hope was to overcome the naive separation of individual and social units of analysis; second to have done so in ways that put the study of leadership where it belongs--that is, at the center of organization analysis. (p. 105)

To date, the literature seems to have provided as many ideas about leadership as there have been authors to do the studies. Through the industrial lens leadership has been construed with the good of the organization and in the end it benefits only a few--the top level managers.

From Industrial Views To Postindustrial Views

Although there are a number of contemporary authors continuing to promote thoughts and models of leadership that are most reflective of industrialized values, there are also a number of authors trying to push us beyond these twentieth century boundaries. Tierney (1989) stated that "leadership involves moral action that promotes democracy. Leadership is neither simply a management technique to promote organizational effectiveness nor is it the accomplishment of a charismatic hero. . . . Leadership provides an active mechanism for achieving an empowered community" (p. 164). This empowered community is one in which all participants must be involved in decision making and where power is consensual. Tierney also suggested that leadership must operate within a sense of mutuality and is better served when operating within a centriarchy rather than a hierarchy (pp. 165-166). Perhaps one of the most pressing issues for us to consider is how leadership in the postindustrial sense can operate within the given social structures of the industrial paradigm, since the majority of organizations are still hierarchical, not centriarchial?

Many authors have alluded to this very issue. Foster (1989) stated that "under the type of institutional conditions we have established, leadership. . . is not possible because of the bureaucratization which argues against leadership" (pp. 2-3). Likewise, Tierney (1989) suggested that "a primary challenge for leadership is to come to terms with how organizations and institutions may become more centrally concerned with issues of empowerment" (pp. 2-3). This, too, is a difficult issue because most organizations and institutions have fostered more of an individualistic ideal of entitlement, not necessarily empowerment. Gastil (1991) also discussed the need for democratic leadership. "Ideal democratic groups might be seen as leaderless, but such groups are not, in reality, 'leaderless.' Rather, they are 'leaderful'--everyone in the group feels empowered to start or stop things, to challenge others or to meet challenges, to move out in front or to fall back" (p. 2). The reality is that most of the organizations of the industrial era are run by hierarchically designated managers who are carrying out directives that are a result of corporate bureaucracy. Naisbitt and Aburdene (1985) noted that one of the most exciting and impressive changes needed in organizations is a "fundamental movement away from the authoritarian hierarchy--where everyone has a superior and everyone has an inferior--to the new lateral structures, lattices, networks, and small teams where people manage themselves" (p. 253). Fortune Magazine featured an article

"A New Age for Business," in which a handful of visionary leaders--General Electric Chairman Jack Welch and Levi Strauss Chairman Robert Haas among others--were reported as going beyond the industrialized work structures and reordering managerial priorities (Rose, 1990). Welch intended to create an organization that has no hierarchical boundaries vertically and no functional boundaries horizontally. Haas envisioned the corporation of the future as a global enterprise in which managers act as coaches, facilitators, and role models. "Meanwhile, a small network of consultants, thinkers, and academics are working to transform business. Propelled by a belief that the world is undergoing major changes, they will call for a new paradigm--a whole new framework for seeing and understanding business--that will carry humankind beyond the industrial age" (Rose, 1990, p. 157).

The future seems hopeful when we are informed of these major shifts in doing business. However, these examples are truly exceptions and we must be cognizant of the gap between our hopes and our practices. The doing and structuring of business is still predominantly reflective of industrial norms and values. Thus, if we are to continue in the industrial direction and do more to promote the industrial understanding of leadership, the shift from industrial to postindustrial seems less and less likely and these hopeful stories will continue to be merely exceptions to the norm. Kotter (1990) noted that "leadership is different from

management, but not for the reasons most people think. Leadership isn't mystical and mysterious. It has nothing to do with having 'charisma' or other exotic personality traits. It is not the province of a chosen few. Nor is leadership necessarily better than management or a replacement for it" (p. 103).

We must find ways to encourage more than a handful of visionary leaders to experiment in the ways described above: to do so is to improve the likelihood that leadership and management will find their respective places in the postindustrial paradigm. When leadership and management are thought of as distinct and complementary processes, the better or best debate between leadership and management can be put to rest. In addition, leadership as a mystical character trait gifted to only a few will be a notion of the past.

Foster (1989) suggested that "managerial techniques learned as leadership are simply myths. . . . Leadership in our institutions is misconceived if it is considered to be only a technical and strategic manipulation of individuals to increase productivity" (pp. 6-8). In other words, leadership is not management. Instead, Foster views leadership more as a practice, a critical practice that requires potential leaders to reject the scientific mindset that has engulfed the field and open themselves up to the human, moral, and transforming dimensions that leadership offers (pp. 10-11).

In discussing Burns' contributions to the study of leadership, Foster (1989) noted that Burns (1978) has provided a politically-based model of institutional change, and that his work sets the stage for conceptualizing leadership as a transformative, critical and emancipatory practice (p. 14). But Burns still falls prey to the industrialized definition of leadership and tended to view leadership as something of a trait that certain individuals possess (Foster, 1989, p. 42). Foster concluded that it is necessary to reconceptualize leadership to move us beyond the confusing state of affairs that the industrial paradigm has created. It is clear that the current understanding of leadership as good management is authentic and widely accepted as the mainstream view of leadership in the industrial paradigm. What more and more commentators are saying is that leadership for the 21st century can no longer be recognized and accepted as great men or women, specific traits, democratic group interactions, doing the right thing at the right time, nor should leadership be equated with good management.

Rose (1990) stated that "the new paradigm puts people--customers and employees--at the center of the universe and replaces the rigid hierarchies of the industrial age with a network structure that emphasizes interconnectedness" (p. 157). The point of the new paradigm is to get people to think for themselves. "Ideally this yields an organization that functions like a rugby team. Rugby is a flow sport. It

looks chaotic, but it requires tremendous communication, continuous adjustment to an uncertain environment, and problem solving without using hierarchy" (p. 162). Clearly this new paradigm, rejecting hierarchy and most of the other characteristics of the industrial era, is in need of a new definition of leadership--a definition that views leadership as a process of interaction and relating. New thoughts about leadership will be less on separation and less on individuals and more on interconnectedness and teams, as described in the Rugby analogy.

As a precursor to a postindustrial definition of leadership, it is interesting to note Foster (1986) again:

We all know the term "leadership" from experience. . . . Yet such a common term seems to defy definition, particularly a scientifically rigorous one, although many have tried to encapsulate it. Their definitions, though, have been limited largely by the disciplinary affiliation of the definers. . . . For those looking at the phenomenon of leadership through scientific lenses, the study has dead-ended. The scientific, largely sociopsychological approach has toppled under its own weight. (pp. 169-171)

Most of what we have come to know about leadership is a result of research based on psychological, business and political models of leadership. These models have facilitated a focus on leaders rather than leadership. The psychological and business models essentially have provided

us with a lot of research and information on how to manage an organization and are primarily responsible for the confusion created between leadership and management. On the other hand, the political models do not equate leadership with effective management. Instead leadership is seen as the playing out of the political process. Both leaders and followers work together to achieve a shared vision, rather than for the purpose of motivating workers to get them to accomplish tasks.

Although the political models are superior in their formulation, they continue to make the mistake of seeing leadership as a property inherent to key individuals rather than as activities performed within a social context (Foster, 1986, p. 181). Their definitions as well as those of the psychological and business schools, as Foster indicated, "have been limited largely by the disciplinary affiliation of the definers." What these models have failed to recognize is that leadership is a collective process of change, not the actions of an individual leader or manager governing an organization. Leadership as a collective, relational process constitutes less focus on the leader. In spite of mainstream views, Bennis and Nanus (1985) had the foresight to note that transformational leaders "achieve significant changes that reflect the community of interests of both leaders and followers, indeed, it frees up and pools the collective energies in pursuit of a common goal" (p. 217).

Although there are some who are striving to facilitate a shift in thought about leadership, it is apparent that up to this point, the nature of leadership in society is conceptually incomplete and confused. As Rost, Foster and many others have implied, improvement of our understanding of leadership does not lie in pursuing existing trends or in attempting to integrate existing research. Such practices will not allow us the flexibility and influence necessary to change from an industrial to a postindustrial society. Instead what is needed is a process definition that will move us beyond the styles and content problem of most earlier definitions.

Postindustrial Views On Leadership

To arrive at a more complete understanding of leadership, researchers might do well to focus on interacting units in the relationship that is leadership. "According to the studies, leadership based on greater openness and interaction with people is specifically suited to a contemporary workforce" (Nelton, 1991, p. 17). Leadership studies of the past have focused on individuals. Leadership research in the future will benefit by building upon what Burns (1978) called the "leadership-followership process," stating that "this process must be viewed as a totality of interactive roles before we can identify the focus and process at work and hence the role of leadership" (p. 53).

By focusing on the relationships that men and women form in an organization to intend real changes we can arrive at

new measures of leadership as a collective, relational process. There are a number of authors alluding to the importance of gaining more insight into the nature of leadership. They advocate more focus on the process and collective nature of leadership. Hosking and Morley (1988) argued that "to understand leadership, it is necessary to understand the cognitive, discretionary, and politically problematic aspects of leadership processes. It is these aspects that are fundamental to a shift from 'mechanistic' to 'non-mechanistic' views of knowledge. This is what it will take to achieve a paradigm shift in the study of leadership" (p. 106). Their process view of leadership represents a special kind of organizing activity that constructs reasonably stable social orders and, in turn, are more effective in protecting and promoting the values of participants (p. 91).

Watkins (1989) suggested that leadership as a dialectical relationship implies that there is no one preordained or designated leader within the collective, but that at any given time any one member of the process can come to the forefront to provide guidance in resolving the tensions and contradictions that beset the collective (p. 28). Foster (1989) stated that history will identify an individual as a leader but in reality the job is one in which various members of the community contribute (p. 49).

Denhardt (1981) argued that leadership is often a modern ritualized hero system. A symbolic hero/heroine may be

created or recreated when members of the collective vest elements of their world, beliefs, and great significance in one particular person (p. 29). Kouzes and Posner (1987) stated that "leadership is a relationship between leader and the people that they aspire to lead. A failure to understand that leadership is a shared responsibility has led many managers to take an individualistic, heroic view of leadership" (p. 135). The authors went on to conclude that "leaders alone do not make a company work" (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p. 135). Bennis (1989) also implied that leadership is a collective:

Today there is no such thing as an archetypal or ideal leader. Leadership is at least as much an art as a science, and the key is the people themselves, their ability to know their strengths and skills and to develop them to the hilt. Since the day has long since passed when one man, such as the first Henry Ford, could run an entire organization by himself, a leader must create a kind of executive constellation to assist him or her and thereby multiply power through the realistic allocation of functions and responsibilities. (pp. 144-45)

Essentially, leaders and followers can be viewed as the personification of leadership. Leaders and followers are catalysts or facilitators who enable others to act collectively to intend real changes that are reflective of mutual purposes.

On a similar note, Depree (1989) referred to leaders as stewards:

The art of leadership requires us to think about the leader-as-a-steward in terms of relationships: of assets and legacy, of momentum and effectiveness of civility and values. . . . Leaders owe a covenant to the corporation or institution, which is after all, a group of people. . . . Covenants bind people together and enable them to meet their corporate needs by meeting the needs of one another. (pp. 10, 12, 13)

These authors are advancing some very different thoughts about leadership. These thoughts are no longer consistent with the conventional notions of management, as the studies of the past have revealed. As we adapt to the trends of today and prepare for the needs of the future, perceptions are being transformed. Within any process or system, a shift in one component of the system leads to shifts in others. Thus, the shifts that are occurring in the business environment are leading many scholars and practitioners to question the very systems that have been set up to control and structure the companies operating in those environments. Many authors are suggesting that doing good business is no longer about doing good management. Kotter (1990) argued:

The more that change characterizes the business environment, the more that leaders must motivate people to provide leadership as well. When this works, it tends to reproduce leadership across the entire

organization, with people occupying multiple leadership roles throughout the hierarchy. This is highly valuable, because coping with change in any complex business demands initiatives from multitudes of people.

Nothing less will work. (p. 109)

In addition, Kotter (1990) recognized and described the importance of networks and leadership relationships in reference to the complexities we face in business today, and even more so, in reference to the business environment anticipated for future.

Strong networks of informal relationships--the kind found in companies with healthy cultures--help coordinate leadership activities in much the same way that formal structure coordinates managerial activities. The key difference is that informal networks can deal with the greater demands for co-ordination associated with non-routine activities and change. The multitude of communication channels and the trust among individuals connected by those channels allow for an on going process of accommodation and adaptation. . . . In fact, extensive informal networks are so important that if they do not exist, creating them has to be the focus of activity early in a major leadership initiative. (p. 109)

As we begin to prepare for the anticipated challenges of doing business in the future, many traditional organizational hierarchies are being restructured in some very new and

innovative ways. Informal networks, central approaches to influence, and more horizontal channels of communication offer some alternative approaches and are in turn influencing the new thoughts about leadership. Nanus (1990) challenged aspiring leaders:

To enable a society or an organization and its members to operate in dynamic balance with the changing external environment so that collectively they grow in strength, effectiveness, and legitimacy over time. . . . The leader must be in the center, where it all comes together. It is as if he stands in the middle of a finely woven spider web. . . . The leader belongs right in the middle of it all balancing the needs of the internal and external environments and the challenges of the present and future. (p. 17)

The web concept has been noted by other researchers as well. Seven years ago, Naisbitt and Aburdene (1985) proposed the lattice or grid as the structural model for the new corporate economy. With its interconnecting points and intersecting lines, it is quite similar to the web. In *The Female Advantage*, Helgesen (1991) chronicled four women and while doing her diary studies she noted that "women usually referred to themselves as being in the middle of things. Not at the top, but in the center; not reaching down, but reaching out" (pp. 45-46). In addition to this notion of being in the middle, Helgesen used the analogy of a web. She wrote that the women felt as if they were:

Connected to those around them, bound as if by invisible strands or threads. This image of an interrelated structure, built around a strong central point and constructed of radials and orbs, quite naturally made me think of a spider's web--that delicate tracery, compounded of the need for survival and the impulse of art, whose purpose is to draw other creatures to it. (p. 46)

Helgesen's description of the web is that of a centriarchy. But in reality most organizations hold true to the traditional hierarchical structure.

In the hierarchical scheme of things, 'reaching the top'--where others cannot get close--is the ultimate goal; in the web, the top is too far from the center. The ideal center spot in the web is perceived in the hierarchical view as 'being stuck' in the middle--going nowhere. . . . Hierarchy, emphasizing appropriate channels and the chain of command, discouraging diffuse or random communication; information is filtered, gathered, and sorted as it makes its way up to the top. By contrast, the web facilitates direct communication, free-flowing and loosely structured, by providing points of contact and direct tangents along which to connect. (p. 50)

It is very interesting to note how complementary the web structure is and how contradictory the hierarchy is to the 21st century definition of leadership. The tendency of the

hierarchy is to promote separation within an organization. In contrast, the tendency of the web or centriarchy is to promote connection and social interaction. The values of a centriarchitectural structure are so much more appropriate to developing the kinds of relationships and social interactions that are critical to practicing leadership in the 21st century.

The process of leadership is social because people in the leadership relationship learn from one another and because they influence the ways each other describe the context and the ways they act in it. Leadership is a social relationship because it allows us to better understand how we experience and act in the world. According to Hosking and Morely, (1988), networking is a skillful leadership activity.

Leaders can make especially important contributions to the process of managing meaning and testing out their interpretations by both moving around themselves and by influencing others accordingly. One of the ways skilled performers move around their environment is by networking. . . . Evidence also shows that networking may be skillfully employed to obtain information and achieve influence, processes without which survival would have been unlikely. . . . Skillful networking facilitates the development and implementation of "knowledge bases" and other resources. (pp. 100-101)

This skill of networking appears to be one means through which members of a leadership relationship are able to

utilize the power resources that are necessary to exert influence.

Lundin and Lancaster (1990) noted that "the workplace of the future will be an environment in which workers become increasingly autonomous and self-directed. The ability of employees to make difficult decisions, to decipher and deliver complex messages, and to be troubleshooters for the organization on every level will be intensely important" (p. 21). In traditional organizations, structures and work systems continue to be controlled through the skills of good managers. Essentially good managers are granted power through position. In contrast, the organizational cultures that promote and foster networks and self-directed, autonomous workers create an environment wherein the members are not granted power through positions. Rather, the people in these organizational cultures are more dependent on the use of their individual power resources in order to persuade and influence other members of the networks and organizational collectives. Thus, the process of leadership as a social activity involving the skillful use of power resources and networking is more likely to create corporate cultures that are more centriarchical and better suited to positioning and preparing ourselves for the 21st century.

There are a few authors who have attempted to radically divert from the mainstream views on leadership. Although, these scholars are trying to shed some new light on leadership thought, for the most part, they still fall prey

to some of the underlying assumptions of the industrialized definitions of leadership. Many scholars assume that leadership is positional. Thus, leadership is something that people in top-level positions are most inclined to utilize in their daily attempts to get things accomplished.

Nanus (1992) presented some futuristic thoughts when he argued that there are people with the skills necessary for leadership, however, the problem is that leadership is a much more difficult matter today. "The world is much more complex and confusing, continually reshaping and renewing itself, changing before our very eyes in endless kaleidoscope variations." (p. xvii)

In response to the complexity and variation, Nanus outlined the likely characteristics of a new 21st century organization. One characteristic he noted was that the labor force in this new organization consists mainly of highly skilled knowledge workers.

Knowledge workers are quite different from production workers in that they tend to view themselves as professionals and they operate on their own initiative. They also consider psychic rewards like challenge, status, personal growth, and self-esteem as important as their paychecks. . . . Also networks often replace hierarchies in such organizations to facilitate communication and coordination among knowledge workers. (p. 174)

These are thoughts that should be seriously considered as we begin transitioning into the twenty-first century. Yet, the question still remains. Will visionary leadership serve that purpose or does it reinforce mainstream views on leadership? Nanus specifically focused on forming a vision. His thoughts are, in essence, a response to a recurring question: "Despite all the tumult and all the problems, are there any practical steps that a leader can take to greatly improve his or her effectiveness?" (p. xviii).

His thoughts on organizations are indeed futuristic. However, Nanus, too, is guilty of advancing more industrialized thoughts on leadership. He presented a formula for forming a vision, steps to becoming a visionary leader, so men and women in organizations can greatly improve their effectiveness--a value that is truly reflective of the industrial paradigm--doing things right. This is not to suggest that effectiveness should not be valued in the postindustrial paradigm. Rather, as we gear-up for the twenty-first century it is important to focus on leadership as a relationship committed to the value of change. According to Sergiovanni (1992) the failure in leadership is a result of the managerial mystique that emphasizes doing things right at the expense of doing the right thing (p. 4). Nanus offered yet another strategy to assist leaders in doing things right--forming a vision. The primary function of leadership, forming a vision, is discussed as a process that will cure our cities, churches, schools, courts, hospitals,

museums, and other institutions that all seem to be sorely in need of the kind of visionary leaders that build them in the first place.

Sergiovanni (1992) is another futuristic thinker on leadership.

We have come to view leadership as behavior rather than action, as something psychological rather than spiritual, as having to do with persons rather than ideas. . . . The bright side of the picture is that in our schools, corporations, and other institutions, a practice is emerging that requires us to redefine the concept of leadership. The field is ahead of the theory. As a result our literature and our official conversation about leadership do not take enough account of successful practice. . . if we want our theory to reflect emerging practice, then we need to move the moral dimension in leadership away from periphery and right to the center of inquiry, discussion, and practice. (p. 3)

Sergiovanni advanced moral leadership as the new leadership practice that is necessary to transform society. He suggested that moral leadership is different from the official values of management.

Leaders are characters who single-handedly pull and push organizational members forward by the force of personality, bureaucratic clout, and political know-how. Leaders must be decisive. Leaders must be forceful.

Leaders must have a vision. Leaders must successfully manipulate events and people, so that vision becomes reality. Leaders, in other words, must lead. (p. 119)

Rather, Sergiovanni called for servant leadership, a practice with a moral definition centered around purpose, values and beliefs.

Such ideas as servant leadership bring with them a different kind of strength--one based on moral authority. When one places one's leadership practice in service to others who seek to serve the ideas, issues of leadership role and of leadership style become far less important. It matters less who is providing the leadership, and it matters even less whether the style of leadership is directive or not, involves others or not, and so on. These are issues of process; what matters are issues of substance. (p. 128-129)

The ideas Sergiovanni presented are ideal and are certainly a deviation from most of the mainstream literature on leadership. He noted a number of different leadership practices -- command, institutional, direct, servant and moral. His idea was to shift the focus of leadership away from style and organizational effectiveness toward a new-found practice of moral authority, to be leaders of leaders. "As leaders of leaders, they work hard to build up the capacities of others. . . . This is achieved through team building, leadership development, shared decision making, and striving to establish the value of collegiality" (p. 123).

As the mainstream literature illustrates, most thoughts on leadership are reflective of values inherent in the industrial paradigm. If Sergiovanni's comments are correct and the field is ahead of theory, is it likely that a new practice of leadership will result if we place a moral component at the center of leadership practice? According to Rost (1991), that is highly unlikely.

Our moral systems of thoughts, our moral language, do not encompass a concept of a social vision, a common good, a public interest. . . . Clearly, the system of ethical thought people have used in the past and that are still in use are inadequate to the task of making moral judgments about the content of leadership. Leaders and followers need to develop a new language of civic virtue to discuss and make moral evaluations of the changes they intend for organizations and societies. . . . Only then will leaders and followers begin to make some moral sense out of the changes they propose to transform our organizations and societies. (pp. 175, 177)

Sergiovanni neglected to address the concerns that Rost identified. Clearly, to practice moral leadership today would do more to facilitate and reinforce the existing industrialized school of leadership. Today, our moral systems of thought and our moral language are not about public interest--they are about individual interest, thus they are remain inadequate.

Conger (1992) presented some new thoughts on leadership as well. He noted:

This is the most exciting time to explore the issue of leadership development since the decade following World War II. Two important trends occurring over the 1970s and the 1980s have produced a radical shift in the way we perceive leadership, and as a result, they have challenged traditional methods of teaching leadership. The first is a newfound interest in the idea of leadership itself. The second is an accompanying radical shift in what we know about the process of leadership. (p. 8)

Conger noted that defining leadership has posed more problem than progress due to the lack of agreement about the term leadership. After setting the stage, he added to the confusion by choosing to use a broad definition that outlined the general behaviors that we should seek to develop as want-to-be-leaders. "Leaders are individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals, who gain commitment from these group members to this direction, and who then motivate these members to achieve the direction's outcome" (p. 18). He also noted that leadership is "not restricted to the management of an organization or to a particular level in the hierarchy" (p. 19). Yet, in his definition there was no mention of relationship. The broad definition he presented is still very much reflective of the great person doing leadership. Broad definitions such as

these are less and less likely to clear up the problem he addressed. Rather, broad definitions are likely to further confuse our thoughts about leadership.

Senge (1990) offered some very powerful and futuristic insights about correcting the ills and disabilities found in most businesses today through the creation of a learning organization. At the very heart of the learning organization is leadership.

Learning organizations demand a new view of leadership.

. . . In a learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards, and teachers. They are responsible for building organizations where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models--that is, they are responsible for learning. (pp. 339, 340)

Senge's thoughts are truly twenty-first century ideas on correcting much of the dysfunction experienced in organizations today. As we rethink organizations and attempt to master the five disciplines he presented, clearly, it will be necessary to shift thoughts on leadership as well. However, most of what Senge presented in reference to leadership is based on his consulting, experience and interviews with chief executive officers--those positioned at the top of the industrialized corporate hierarchy. Thus, the ideas on leadership tend to connote more on great person leadership and offer further support to mainstream thoughts about leadership as excellent management.

In summary, it is clear that leadership thought, even in 1993, is still heavily influenced by the views of many traditional leadership scholars. Despite the admirable attempts of some futuristic scholars and practitioners trying to move us beyond the prevailing mainstream views, the thought and practice of leadership are bogged down. The mainstream views about leadership continue to be reflective of values that are characteristic of the industrial paradigm.

Kotter (1990) mentioned there is nothing magical about the leadership process. The methods successful companies use are straightforward. "They actively seek out people with leadership potential and expose them to career experiences designed to develop that potential" (p. 103). According to Kotter the leadership process is simple and straightforward, but is it? In light of the mainstream view of leadership, if organizations follow Kotter's approach to developing the leadership process, it is likely these organizations will continue to promote leadership that is characteristic of excellent management. The people in the United States are "still acting, choosing and thinking on the basis of an industrialized leadership paradigm" (Rost, 1991, p. 101). In 1993, the need still remains, we must develop a postindustrial school of leadership that is serviceable to the coming era and will help shape the future of our civilization and the quality of life for future generations (Rost, 1991, p. 100).

Leadership and Organizational Culture

Organizational culture must be recognized as a critical component in fostering an environment suitable for the leadership processes of the postindustrial era. Kotter (1990) stated that "just as we need more people to provide leadership in the complex organizations that dominate our world today, we also need more people to develop the cultures that will create that leadership. Institutionalizing a leadership-centered culture is the ultimate act of leadership" (p. 111). However, there are implications associated with institutionalizing a leadership-centered culture. These implications have everything to do with the hodge-podge of leadership definitions associated with the industrial paradigm. To further explore the implications associated with institutionalizing a leadership-centered culture, it is important to consider how organizational culture has been defined and then relate the definitions to industrial and postindustrial thoughts on leadership.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) defined culture, as Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines it: "the integrated patterns of human behavior that includes thought, speech, action, and artifacts and depends on man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations" (p. 4). Kotter and Heskett (1992) defined culture as the American Heritage Dictionary defines it: "the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work

and thought characteristic of a community or population" (p. 4).

In contrast, Schein (1985a) defined culture as:

A pattern of basic assumptions--invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with the problems of external adaptation and internal integration--that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems. . . . Culture, in this sense is a learned product of group experience and is, therefore, to be found only where there is a definable group with a significant history. . . and is rooted more in theories of group dynamics and group growth than in anthropological theories of how large cultures evolve. (pp. 7, 8, 9)

In another work Schein (1985b) stated that culture is "more fundamental than behavior patterns and values; it is the basic assumptions that define the learned reality of a given group" (p. 41). Kilman, Saxton, and Serpa (1985) defined culture "as the shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and norms that knit a community together" (p. 5).

It is interesting how these definitions are reflective of a community of beliefs and behavior patterns. Most of the definitions imply a need for a relationship through the use of words and ideas such as: shared, community, given group,

group experience, and transmitting to succeeding generations --all of which are difficult to experience without some form of relating. Yet, most of the literature on organizational culture suggests that culture is a totality of socially transmitted behaviors passed on to future generations to encourage and facilitate the learned reality of a group or community of people and is created by leaders who are very bold, visionary and energetic. The implication is that great man leaders and excellent managers of the 20th century are the individuals responsible for establishing more efficient and productive corporate cultures.

Not only do definitions on corporate culture differ, but there are differing opinions about the role corporate culture plays in organizations as well. Kilman, Saxton and Serpa (1985) introduced a series of articles devoted to *Gaining Control of Corporate Culture*, with the statement: "Culture is too important to the effective functioning of the organization to be dismissed as yesterday's fad. Culture is not only the glue that holds our organizations together, but our theories about them as well" (p. 16). Ironically, six years later, Bolman and Deal (1991) noted that culture and the role it plays in organizations are still hotly contested questions. "Some agree that organizations have cultures; others prefer to think that organizations are cultures" (p. 268).

In addition, there appears to be contrasting views about when organizational culture research began and who was

responsible for popularizing culture as a focus of research. According to Fink (1990), the study of organizational culture began in the early 1970s but was popularized following the success of In Search of Excellence, a book authored by Peters and Waterman (1982). There are many others who associate the popularity of the corporate culture movement with Deal and Kennedy (1982). Yet in reviewing the literature on organizational culture, Bolman and Deal (1991) noted that:

Applying the term culture to organizations is not a new idea. Several decades ago Arnold (1938) and Bernard (1938) moved us below the conscious level of organizations to capture a deeper, more powerful force in everyday life. Selznick (1957) and others continued the tradition, but their work failed to capture the full attention of modern theorists and managers, who for many years continued to emphasize the rational properties of organizations. But all that has changed in recent years as a result of the full-scale revival of interest in symbolic ideas. The concept of culture now occupies a powerful place in both academic and managerial discourse. (pp. 267-268)

Pascarella and Frohman (1989) noted that corporate culture became a popular subject for study during the 1980s as a result of the quest for greater effectiveness and efficiency. However, they concluded that little has been accomplished in defining it, much less in learning how to deal with it.

Rather, corporate culture adds up to descriptions of "Here's how we do it; here's where we've been" (p. 117).

Although there is no definite agreement about exactly when organizational culture research began, it is clear that as corporate culture found its place in more and more of the organization and management theory literature, it too facilitated a new focus on leadership. While traditional approaches to leadership tended to focus on the nature of style, the culture metaphor encouraged us to look at the role these styles play in the construction of reality. Essentially the culture metaphor granted us an opportunity to understand existing leadership styles in new ways. The new focus offered insight about creating environments that would produce more efficient and effective workers.

As expected, the literature reveals that organizational culture as a research focus is also heavily influenced by mainstream industrialized thoughts about leadership. Clearly, the corporate culture research offers additional insights about ways to better control the contexts in which leadership, as defined through the industrial school, occurs. The culture research also offers additional support to 20th century views on great man leadership and leadership as excellent management. Both views support the notion of one person leadership. Culture creation, shaping and changing is something done by heroes, great persons and/or excellent managers to manipulate and control how people experience the world in order to increase worker productivity.

Corporate culture in relation to great man leadership has to do with the use of symbolic artifacts that "a leader" can use to shape, change, manipulate or control the organizational culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Essentially, great leaders shape great organizational cultures in order to reach higher levels of performance. Kotter and Heskett (1992) stated that "strong cultures are also often said to help business performance because they create an unusual level of motivation in employees" (p. 16). Never once did Kotter and Heskett mention the word *relationship*. Leadership as a process is mentioned, and indeed they articulate a process of establishing direction, aligning, motivating and inspiring people, all for the production of change. However, this process of leadership is still described as something an individual exercises in order to accomplish major organizational change. In conclusion, Kotter and Heskett (1992) noted "it requires an effective leader on top" (p. 101). It requires great men or women!

Schein (1985a) believed that leadership is intertwined with culture formation, evolution, transformation, and destruction. He recognized that the unique and essential function of leadership is the manipulation of culture.

It is this function that provides the most difficult challenge for leadership. . . . Leadership externalizes its own assumptions and embeds them gradually and consistently in the mission, goals, structures, and working procedures of the group. Whether we call these

basic assumptions the guiding beliefs, the theories-in-use, the basic principles, or the guiding vision on which a leader operates, there is little questioning that they become major elements of the emerging culture of the organization. . . . The leader needs both vision and the ability to articulate it and enforce it. (pp. 316-317)

Once again, vision is essentially the symbolic tool through which a great leader manipulates the organizational culture to create a productive work environment.

Dilenschneider (1992) also noted a strong connection between leaders, culture, and organizational performance.

Changing culture quickly. . . requires a master stock of planning and execution. . . . The idea that a culture can be overhauled over night is a fallacy. . . . Corporate cultures truly do exist in many companies. Strong colorful founders underpin the most vibrant organizational cultures. (pp. 25-26)

His message is directed toward the executives in an attempt to direct them away from quick fix approaches to culture change toward a more strategic focus on the leader's role in culture overhaul. Again, the message is clear--a vibrant organizational culture, a productive environment, is the result of a great person leader--such as a strong and colorful founder.

In addition, corporate culture as viewed in relation to leadership as excellent management sees leaders as meaning

managers. Leaders define the reality and followers accept their definitions (Smircich & Morgan, 1982, p. 270). Traditional management theory suggested that managers are more or less rational men and women designing structures and job descriptions, coordinating activities, or developing schemes for motivating their employees. The research dedicated to corporate culture sees these same managers as symbolic actors whose primary function is to foster and develop desirable patterns of meaning. Hence, the current enthusiasm for the idea of managing corporate culture as the "normative glue" that holds the organization together.

Morgan (1986) noted "by influencing the language, norms, folklore, ceremonies, and other social practices that communicate key ideologies, values, and beliefs guiding action" (p. 135), managers are more likely to create another means of organizing activity. Similarly, Schein (1985a) stated:

Organizational cultures are created by leaders, and one of the most decisive functions of leadership may well be the creation, the management, and--if and when that may become necessary--the destruction of culture. . . . there is a possibility--underemphasized in research--that the *only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture* and the unique talent of leaders is their ability to work with culture. If the concept of leadership as distinguished from management and administration is to have any value, we must

recognize the centrality of this culture management function in the leadership process. (p. 2)

Essentially, excellent managers act as leaders when they successfully manage meaning and ultimately control that meaning in ways that are necessary to foster a productive work environment. Schein (1985a) suggested that "leaders do not have a choice about whether to communicate. They have a choice only about how much to manage what they communicate" (p. 243).

Deal and Kennedy (1982) made this point very clear.

We think that people are a company's greatest resource, and the way to manage them is not directly by computer reports, but by the subtle cues of a culture. A strong culture is a powerful lever for guiding behavior; it helps employees do their job a little better, especially in two ways: A strong culture is a system of informal rules that spell out how people are to behave most of the time and a strong culture enables people to feel better about what they do, so they are more likely to work harder. (pp. 15-16)

Deal and Kennedy's book on corporate cultures was intended to "provide business leaders with a primer on cultural management" and to jog these leaders "into thinking about the workplace in its role as a mediator of behavior" (p. 19). Deal and Kennedy's primer is clearly indicative of the excellent management bias in corporate culture research. Business leaders, excellent managers, manage people's

productivity and behavior through the creation of a strong corporate culture.

Ten years later Nanus (1992) noted similar ideas.

Organizational culture includes values but goes further to encompass other dimensions that determine how people act in the organization, for example, beliefs, expectations, norms, rituals, communication patterns, symbols, heroes, and reward structures. In essence, the culture is the present incarnation of all that goes before: the successes, failures, habits, and lessons learned. In this sense, culture constitutes an organizational memory, which not only guides behavior but provides a sense of identity, stability, and organizational boundaries. (pp. 51-52)

Nanus has encouraged leaders to understand the dimensions that determine how people act in organizations. Thus these leaders will have more power in managing those actions and in turn be better able to guide behavior and productivity.

In spite of the research noted, the dilemma of what comes first, the chicken or the egg, remains true for those executives who want to institutionalize a leadership-centered culture. What must come first, the culture or the leadership? The answer is still unclear. In any case, we are inundated with information on how to shape, manage, change and even create culture through leadership. Schein (1985a) posed an interesting paradox "leaders create cultures, but cultures, in turn, create their next

generations of leaders" (p. 313). If there is truth to this paradox, then future thoughts on leadership are likely to remain the same. We can expect to develop a generation of future leaders that are heavily influenced by industrialized, mainstream, thoughts on leadership--cultures created by excellent managers.

Clearly, the literature on culture is only just beginning to identify the complexities of leadership as a 21st century concept. Although there are some references to leadership as a process and as group experiences that knit a community together (Kilman, Saxton & Serpa, 1985; Kotter & Heskett, 1992; Nanus, 1992; and Schein, 1985a), even these scholars continue to muddle views on corporate culture with existing industrial definitions of leadership--a phenomenon that tends to be exercised hierarchically or single-handedly.

Sergiovanni (1992) expressed some impressive futuristic thoughts on leadership and corporate culture. He noted that the concept of culture is similar to that of community, but it is not the same. His point is that all organizations have cultures, but not all organizations are communities. To think of an organization "as community suggests a kind of connectedness among members that resembles what is found in a family, a neighborhood, or some other closely knit group, where bonds tend to be familial or even sacred" (p. 46-47). Sergiovanni called for substitutes for the "follow-me" leadership that enable people to respond from within. He suggested that community norms can substitute for the kind of

leadership that has created and fostered the industrialized metaphors that frame the way we think about managing and leading and thus create the reality we actually live. His thoughts about substitutes for leadership is not a new idea, but it is a radical one (p. 43). Essentially, Sergiovanni suggested that changing the metaphors that we use to describe our social institutions will change the way we frame the way we think about managing and leading and, in turn, create the reality that we ultimately live as leaders.

I believe that Rost's 21st century definition of leadership, with its emphasis on influence relationship between leaders and followers, is truly complementary to the idea of reframing metaphors used to describe our organizations. In order to more fully realize our ability to shape, manage, change and even create organizational cultures, people may have to rethink leadership as Rost (1991) has done. It will take challenging the widely accepted industrialized views of leadership. Clearly, it is important to begin the process of bridging the gap between two concepts that are very relationship oriented: organizational culture and leadership. A shift in one is likely to facilitate a shift in the other. Therefore an attempt to move leadership and corporate culture research beyond existing industrialized views will give us more strength in bringing both concepts to their fullest potential.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) stated:

Companies that have cultivated their identities by shaping values and making heroes, spelling out rites and rituals, and acknowledging the cultural network have an edge. These corporations have values and beliefs to pass along--not just products. They have stories to tell--not just profits to make. They have heroes whom managers and workers can emulate--not just faceless bureaucrats. In short, they have human institutions that provide practical meaning for people, both on and off the job.

(p. 15)

Cultivating organizational cultures is not accomplished by great leaders or excellent managers single-handedly. To more adequately guide us into the future, we need new definitions and new metaphors. Leadership as defined by Rost is the kind of leadership that is essential for shaping, managing, changing and creating the kind of human institutions that we need to move us into the 21st century.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

There are four purposes to this chapter: first, to revisit the purpose of this investigation; second, the methodologies chosen to conduct this investigation are described and explained. The third purpose is to describe the research design and a number of issues relevant to it: the site selection, participants involved, ethics of the investigation, the interviewing process and on-site observations, and additional forms of data gathered. Finally, the fourth purpose of this chapter is concerned with describing the approach taken to review and analyze the data collected.

This study is concerned with operationalizing Rost's definition of leadership within Southwest Airlines and understanding the degree to which the people within this airline company exercised a 21st century definition of leadership as they attempted to create substantive changes. The purpose of this analysis is to discover whether or not the people within SWA have engaged in leadership as a relational process, and if so, what the experience has been like for them. This exploration is an attempt to focus on the collective process of leadership through a naturalistic research design.

The design of a naturalistic study emerges as the investigation proceeds; moreover, it is in constant flux as new information is gained and new insights are achieved (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). While emergent in design, this investigation replicates Freiberg's (1987) original study by drawing from the interpretive research approaches of phenomenology and ethnography and can be characterized as a qualitative case study. Becker (1968) defined the purpose of a case study as twofold: "to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the group under study" and "to develop general theoretical statements about regularities in social structure and process" (p. 211). For the most part, case studies rely on inductive reasoning. Generalizations, concepts, and/or hypotheses emerge from an examination of the data--data grounded in the context itself (Merriam, 1988).

The naturalistic paradigm assumes that all phenomena are characterized by interactivity between the researcher and the subjects (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Qualitative researchers are primarily concerned with processes rather than outcomes or products. Second, qualitative researchers are interested in learning more about how people make sense of their lives, what they experience, how they interpret these experiences, and how they structure their social worlds. Qualitative researchers assume that meaning is embedded in people's experiences and mediated through the investigator's own perceptions. Therefore, a researcher cannot get outside the phenomena (Merriam, 1988). The use of naturalistic

qualitative methods provides a valuable generative function for both researcher and participants. Not only does this research advance leadership studies to a new level of analysis, it also provides the participants involved in the study an opportunity to be introduced to leadership as a relational process.

Phenomenological Research Approach

According to Tesch (1984), phenomenology and ethnography are alike in that they describe subjective experiences, not external events. Both are aimed at interpretive understanding. Phenomenologists seek to understand the intersubjective experiences of people. Rather than understand the world objectively, phenomenologists try to better understand the "life-world" of an individual through his or her own subjective experiences (Husserl, 1964). In order to tap into the intersubjective experiences of another person, to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study, the researcher must enter into a phenomenological interview. This interview is the primary method used by phenomenologists. It is much more complex than a simple question and answer session. Tesch (1964) called this interview a "dialogic introspection" in which the experience is an "immersion in the phenomenon, of intense introspection" (p. 29). Essentially, both participant and investigator become co-researchers in a relationship devoted to gaining in-depth knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon (Freiberg, 1987, p. 104). The researcher and

participant attempt to become one as they make sense of a life-world of experiences. Through the phenomenological interview this researcher attempted to gain a deep and rich understanding of what it is like for the people of SWA as they engaged in leadership relationships to intend substantive changes.

The Ethnographic Research Approach

The aim of ethnography is to understand human behavior through understanding the framework within which subjects interpret their thoughts, feelings, and actions (Wilson, 1983). Ethnographic studies attempt to depict the culture, to create a snapshot of how people organize themselves into interacting units and social systems. The ethnographer is concerned with gaining a deeper understanding of how individuals "come to understand, account for, take action, and otherwise mangle" the social construction of their realities (Van Maanen, 1983).

Participant observation is the primary method used in the practice of ethnography. Thus, the researcher becomes the essential instrument used for the process of ethnographic data collection. The goal of the researcher is to become immersed in the realities of those being studied as well as the context in which these realities are being constructed (Sandy, 1983). Freiberg (1987) noted that as a participant observer, the ethnographer is able to discover the meaning structures of those under investigation in whatever forms they are expressed.

In addition to participant observation, the ethnographic study can employ another approach to gaining access into individuals' conceptual worlds. The informal interview is a principle method used by ethnographers to learn about the things that matter in that particular culture through "casual discussions, and/or nonstructured, open-ended interviews with key informants" (Skalbeck, 1991, p. 168).

Through participant observation and key informant interviews, the ethnographer establishes the kind of empathic relationships necessary to better understand how people within a given social context experience and make sense of their world. Through the use of these methods this investigation attempted to gain a better understanding of the culture within Southwest Airlines--the acquired knowledge that people use to make sense of experiences and guide social behaviors.

Borrowing from methods rooted in phenomenology and ethnography, this researcher attempted to explore the intersubjective experiences of various individuals in leadership relationships as they help to shape and influence the social construction of organizational realities. In other words, in this investigation the objective involves painting a thick description of relationships and networks that occurred in Southwest Airlines, to describe what it was like to be a part of those relationships and networks (a phenomenological concern) and how those relationships and networks contributed to the construction of organizational

realities and the achievement of purpose (an ethnographic concern).

Site Selection

Southwest Airlines was chosen as the focus of this study because there is significant evidence that many people there have been working together in relationships to accomplish extraordinary things. In spite of the fact that most major airlines today are struggling for survival, Southwest Airlines has managed to grow and prosper. It has been consistently profitable over the last two decades. Southwest consistently outscores its competition on customer service ratings as identified by the Department of Transportation. In the DOT's data base to date (September 1987 through December 1992), Southwest has been in second place for on-time performance. However, Southwest remains in first place in on-time performance for the last 12 month period (December 1991-December 1992). For the 1991 year Southwest had the distinction of being the industry's leader in customer satisfaction based on its ratio of complaints per customer score (Staff, 1992, pp. 4-5). Southwest Airlines is the only carrier to have won the Triple Crown Award--best on-time performance, best baggage handling, and fewest customer complaints in a single month. In 1992 the company won the Triple Crown four months in a row and to date the company has ten Triple Crown wins. No other airline has been able to accomplish what Southwest has accomplished over the last

twenty years. Zellner, Andrea and Schine (1992) recognized Southwest as a role model for an untraditional airline.

The spunky carrier, with \$1.3 billion in revenues last year (1991), has been the most consistently profitable over the past decade. Its operations are unlike any other in the industry. Instead of a hub-and-spoke system, it flies point-to-point short trips--at rock bottom fares. If you fly Southwest, you get a cheap ticket, but no advanced boarding passes, no meals, and you can't transfer your baggage automatically to another carrier's flight. The absence of those services, plus an extremely productive work force, gives Southwest a fearsome 43% cost advantage over giant American. (p. 51)

The authors discussed the slow but steady expansion that Southwest has experienced over the past 21 years and suggested that as the airline continues to turn profits while the industry's megacarriers lose money, Southwest has become the airline these megacarriers are trying to emulate.

I selected Southwest Airlines for three reasons. First, in my work I have had the opportunity to observe many organizations, including a number of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award winning companies in a variety of different industries. Few of these companies, if any, exemplify relational leadership as overtly as Southwest Airlines. The corporate newsletter is titled Luv Lines and its twenty year slogan states "Southwest Airlines 20 Years of Loving You." These titles are indicative of the

relationships that exist within the organization and show the special affection that people have for each other at Southwest. Second, Southwest Airlines has become a legend. Within twenty years it has become the seventh largest passenger carrier in the United States and is frequently mentioned as one of the top five best performing airlines in the country. Most recently, Southwest Airlines was rated as one of the top ten best companies to work for in the country. Third, one of the most often thought, yet least discussed questions, among Southwest employees and stakeholders is "What will happen to Southwest Airlines when Herb Kelleher, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, is no longer at the helm?" The time is ripe to find out if this major airline is accomplishing things due to relational leadership or due to this one extraordinary individual leader.

Participants

The participants in this investigation are truly representative of a cross-section of Southwest Airlines. As the literature review illustrated, an overwhelming number of leadership studies in the industrial era have focused on leaders who are positioned at the top of the corporate or institutional hierarchy, for example, there are a number of studies that have focused on CEOs, presidents, principals and superintendents. This study is an attempt to move away from that pattern. Clearly, as previous studies have indicated, interviews and information gained from the executive level are worthy of consideration. However, one of

the primary goals in this investigation is to identify people involved in the change processes who represented as many different functions and levels within SWA as possible. The investigation began with the identification of three substantive changes that SWA has experienced in the last three years. Following the identification of the changes, the next step was to identify people who were known to have participated in affecting the changes. Each interview led the researcher to additional informants and in turn future interviews.

In total the researcher conducted 26 formal interviews with individuals who were identified as having played a role in the change efforts investigated. In addition, a number of informal interviews were conducted with other employees and customers of Southwest throughout the duration of this investigation. Occasionally as the researcher traveled from San Diego to Dallas on a Southwest flight, conversations turned into informal interviews and thus, provided additional data for this investigation. The informants of this investigation ranged from individuals working in areas such as the executive offices, customer service, the people department, ground operations, schedule planning, reservations and flight control, and marketing and advertising. Pilots and pilot trainers were interviewed. In addition, members of GSD&M, an advertising agency serving Southwest Airlines since 1981 were interviewed as were members of another outside communications firm, Camelot

Communications Inc. This cross section of levels, functions and people provided ample opportunities to investigate leadership relationship in areas other than the executive offices (APPENDIX A). The process provided the researcher with broad and rich descriptions and information about the people and relationships involved in the changes that were investigated.

To begin the investigation this researcher met with two key players in the airline, one of the airline's founders and currently the Executive Vice President of Customers and the Director of Training and Development. The purpose of this meeting was threefold. First, to discuss and plan for the process of this investigation. Second, to engage in a dialogue about leadership as a relational process. And third, to identify three substantive changes that would ultimately become the driving forces to determine the degree to which people in SWA are engaging in leadership relationships. The first change to be investigated is the intention to change the on-time performance rating of SWA, the second is the revision of the pilot hiring process and the third is the attempt to further cultivate the SWA culture by establishing the Southwest Airlines Culture Committee.

Following the identification of these three intended organizational changes, these two initial informants also suggested other key informants known to represent a cross section of various functional areas and recognized as key players in one or more of the changes under investigation.

The first cut of informants and interviews served as the starting point for identifying the potential leadership relationships that were perceived to have been involved in these changes. Each subsequent interview helped the researcher identify other informants and further clarify the dynamics that were involved in intending each of these changes. Once the first set of key informants were identified, they were then asked a series of questions to help the researcher determine whether or not the individuals involved in these changes were indeed engaging in leadership relationships. In this investigation, the informant selection process was more like an informant referral process. Each key informant was encouraged to suggest additional people who they believed also played a role in affecting the change.

Ethics of the Investigation

"All contacts between investigator and subjects hold the potential for generating unknown effects. The procedures for insuring the rights of subjects does more than any other experimenter--subject contact These procedures . . . can exercise a measure of control over the most capricious of all variables--subject cooperation" (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 1987, pp. 79-80). In the spirit of building cooperation and adhering to ethical standards, the investigator informed all interviewees of the general nature of this investigation and of their role in this study. Participants were given the choice of maintaining

confidentiality where their activities or comments are reported in the formal written document. In addition, participants were asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix B) and told that upon completion of this investigation, Southwest Airlines Co. will receive a copy of the final document.

This investigation was approved by the Protection of Human Subject Committee at the University of San Diego in the Spring of 1992. The documentation supporting approval and a support letter from Southwest Airlines granting me access into the company have been signed and dated in an attempt to adhere to the conditions and procedures safeguarding the rights and welfare of the human subjects in this research as established by the University of San Diego (Appendices C and D).

Participant Interviews and On-site Observation

This investigation consisted of three formal, two-day visits to Southwest Airlines headquarters in Dallas, Texas. In addition, the researcher conducted two phone interviews with informants that were not located at headquarters. The on-site visits provided the investigator with a more detailed understanding of the organizational context and culture within which these change activities took place. Each site visit was structured with some free time in which to do some on-site observation and allow for any informal interviews deemed necessary and appropriate to the investigation.

Interviewing is a common means of collecting qualitative data within an emergent naturalistic design. In any case study the interview is a conversation that allows the researcher to enter into the other person's perspective. According to Patton (1980) "we interview people to find out from them those things that we can not directly observe We can not observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time We can not observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world--we have to ask people questions about those things" (p. 196). Interviewing is the best technique to use when conducting intensive case studies of individuals (Merriam, 1988). Because the focus of this study is on interaction, relationships and change, interviewing created a context through which the experiences of the people within Southwest Airlines could be better understood.

Prior to each on-site visit, the researcher worked in cooperation with SWA to arrange a detailed itinerary for each two-day investigation. The researcher typically arrived on Sunday evenings and began interviews at 8:00 a. m. Monday morning. Interviews were scheduled back to back for one and a half hour blocks. In some cases interviews were scheduled for longer periods of time. If, for instance, two informants were scheduled for the same time block, a two hour interview was scheduled. Additionally, if an informant had been involved in more than one of the changes under investigation then one hour per change was allocated for the interview.

Interviews typically ran through lunch and continued until 5:00-5:30 p.m. On the rare occasion when a lunch interview was not scheduled, this researcher was able to engage in participant observation and conduct some informal interviews in the cafeteria. SWA employees were always interested in the study and were always willing to talk about what they did at Southwest.

During any free time between interviews, the researcher wandered the halls of SWA headquarters and took pictures to capture as much of the "feel" of this environment as is photographically possible. SWA is like no other organization I have ever experienced, the walls of the organization are not lined with expensive pieces of art. Instead SWA has created their very own art work. The wall of this corporate headquarters are lined with candid pictures of the people of SWA, letters from SWA stakeholders, and reminders of advertising campaigns from years gone by. In essence the walls of SWA are lined with a pictorial representation of all that is important to SWA--their people and their history.

To the degree that it was possible, each site visit and series of interviews were focused on one of the three changes under investigation. On occasion, the researcher was forced to shift focus if an informant had been involved in more than one of the changes and/or if an informant was unavailable during one of the other visits. In any case, the first site visit and series of interviews was primarily focused in the on-time performance change issue. The second series of

interviews was focused on the change in the pilot hiring process. The third interview series was focused on the SWA Culture Committee. This focusing process allowed the researcher to specifically prepare for each site visit.

SWA was also very helpful in granting the researcher access to information and documentation on file relating to each of the changes. Southwest Airlines forwarded information and in-house documentation on each of the issues to the researcher prior to each site visit. In addition, the researcher continued to receive the SWA monthly newsletter Luv Lines and the quarterly news video As the Plane Turns. The accessibility of this information made it possible for this investigator and the informants to focus not so much on the changes but more importantly the processes involved in creating the changes. Reviewing the documentation related to each change prior to each visit granted the investigator access to very valuable insider insight. Thus the investigator and the informants were better able to work together as co-researchers in trying to determine if leadership relationships were involved in creating these organizational changes. Interviews gave this investigator a deeper and richer understanding of many informants' experiences in intending, creating and effecting these changes.

The researcher used open-ended questions that were reflective of the components of Rost's (1991) postindustrial definition of leadership. In turn, the researcher played off

informants' responses and emerging information in order to foster a dialogue and conversational approach to the interview. Informants were interviewed individually and in dyads for approximately one to two hours. The timing varied depending upon the interaction between researcher and informant(s). I used a semistructured interview format which was guided by a list of issues to be explored such as influence, change, purpose, relationships, and leadership (APPENDIX E). This format gave the researcher an opportunity to continuously assess and evaluate the information previously gathered. The process allowed for redirecting, probing and summarizing. The order and exact wording of the questions depended upon the situation and the emerging conversation between the informant and the researcher. I used empathic responses, restating responses and expressions of ignorance for further clarification in order to facilitate rich, full and comprehensive answers from informants. After gaining the approval of the informants, I tape recorded the interviews to build better rapport and enhance conversation and uninterrupted dialogue with the informant. Tape recording preserves everything that is said in the interview and once transcribed provides valuable information for the analysis phase of the study.

Additional Data Gathering Procedures

In addition to interviews and observations, I conducted an historical analysis of the organizational changes under investigation using various forms of information available

through in-house publications such as memorandums, photos, publications, video tapes, advertising, newsletters, etc. Each of the changes investigated had a variety of supportive documentation as additional sources of data. These sources offer a more comprehensive understanding of the internal dynamics of the organization and the specifics of the changes being studied. Bantz (1983) described organizational documents as those messages that are generated by members of the organization and have a permanent structure. He explained that since these documents are produced by organizational members they are indicative of the internal dynamics of the organization.

Data Analysis

All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed so that the information could be preserved and then reviewed and analyzed. Once the manuscripts were completed, the researcher looked for themes and patterns that were consistent with postindustrial leadership as defined by Rost (1991). Specifically, the researcher focused on the components of postindustrial leadership and read through the transcripts with five different color highlighters--yellow, pink, orange, blue and purple. Yellow was used to highlight information that was descriptive of the three changes investigated--on-time performance, pilot hiring, and the culture committee challenge. Pink was used to highlight information that was descriptive of how people used influence within these change efforts. Orange was used to highlight

information that was descriptive of people, the leaders and followers who participated in the change efforts. Blue was used to highlight information that was descriptive of peoples' intentions to effect change and the types of changes that resulted from their collective activities. Purple was used to highlight information that was descriptive of the mutual purposes that related to the company in general and more specifically, the three changes under investigation.

After the information was highlighted in the interview transcripts, the coded information was then rearranged on the desk top into five major files. The data highlighted in yellow created a general information file and included background information on each of the three change efforts. The data highlighted in pink, orange, blue and purple created four additional files that were reflective of the various components of the postindustrial definition of leadership. Data from each of these four files were then transferred into the general information file following the change the data described.

At this stage it was discovered that the pilot hiring change had very limited data that were reflective of the components of the postindustrial model of leadership. In other words, a review of the transcripts provided very few clear descriptions of influence that was multidirectional, noncoercive, substantive and transforming. After a first cut analysis of the data collected, it was determined that this change effort was more likely a management issue rather

than an example of postindustrial leadership. The information was descriptive of coordinated activities between managers in the People Department and pilots who were interested in designing a more structured and formal process for hiring pilots into the Southwest system. Thus, it was decided that a management change was not worthy of further analysis in light of the relational leadership focus of this research project for the following reasons. First, the purpose of this study was to determine how relational leadership is operationalized as opposed to how it is not operationalized. Second, this was not a study designed to investigate the difference between management and leadership. Third, currently, there is a plethora of information inundating the literature with excellent management investigations and as we move closer toward the 21st century this researcher did not want to contribute to this overabundance of industrialized leadership models.

Therefore, all the remaining information was arranged categorically according to either on-time performance or culture. Each change effort became a major file and had four sub-files reflective of the components of Rost's (1991) model--people's use of influence, leaders and followers as the people involved in the relationship, intended changes, and mutual purposes. These files became the foundation for Chapter Four. In addition, the researcher used the same color technique and looked for themes of leadership as a relational process in the organizational documents

referencing the on-time performance improvement effort and the culture committee challenge.

In summary, an interpretive case study of organizational documents and history combined with interviews and observation constitutes the process and methods through which the data were gathered and analyzed for this investigation. Although the findings of this study may not be generalized to all organizations, these findings may provide further insight into a much neglected line of research, thus fulfilling a need to gain more insight into the essential nature of leadership relationships. It was Rost (1991) who stated that a high priority for the 1990s is to reach a consensus on a clear, concise, easily understandable, researchable, practical, and persuasive definition of leadership (p. 8). This is one attempt to bring us closer to achieving that priority.

Chapter Four presents a thick, rich description of the realities of the change processes as presented by informants and organizational documentation related to the on-time performance improvement effort and the culture committee challenge. In this chapter the key components of Rost's 21st century model of leadership will be used to determine the degree to which people within SWA have engaged in leadership relationships to create substantive changes.

CHAPTER IV
RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP AT SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

Introduction

As Rost (1991) and so many other authors and researchers have illustrated, leadership is truly a concept that needs more expression than a word definition can provide. Over the centuries, authors, philosophers, Oriental masters, and the like, have used definitions, stories, parables and living examples in their attempts to bring life to leadership. Kim and Mauborgne (1992) stated:

Students of management have sought for years to understand why the very same activities lead to renewal in one company and to more-of-the-same performance in another. Almost always, the answer is leadership, the ability to inspire confidence and support among the men and women on whose competence and commitment performance depends. Yet while we intuitively recognize leaders whenever we meet them, it has never been easy to answer the question: What is leadership? The essence of leadership cannot be reduced to a series of personal attributes nor confined to a set of particular roles and activities. It is like the challenge of describing a bowl: we can describe the bowl in terms of the clay from which it is made. But a true picture must include

the hollow that is carved into the clay--the unseen space that defines the bowl's shape and capacity. (p. 123)

The unseen space defining the bowl to which Kim and Mauborgne eluded is much like the unseen presence of the wind that was described in Chapter Two. In their search for ways to capture the unseen space of leadership, Kim and Mauborgne were consistently reminded of the parables used by the Oriental masters to teach the lessons of life. Ancient Oriental parables gave these authors a fresh understanding of the essence of leadership and provided the inspiration and insight they needed to create a series of leadership parables that captured what they considered to be the unseen space of leadership.

Kim and Mauborgne (1992) wrote an article entitled "Parables of Leadership" to "show the essential qualities of leadership and the acts that define a leader: the ability to hear what is left unspoken, humility, commitment, the value of looking at reality from many vantage points, the ability to create an organization that draws out the unique strengths of every member" (p. 123). Thus, the essence of leadership, like the unseen space defining a bowl and the unseen presence of the wind moving objects in its path, is very difficult to fully experience in words or definitions alone. In response, I invite the reader, the student, and the learner of leadership to read the stories in this chapter as yet another

attempt to gain further insight into the unseen space of leadership.

This investigation is not about bowls, wind or even Oriental parables. Rather, this investigation is about stories, stories that add life and a deeper understanding about the nature of leadership. These stories serve as the real, life-giving, organizational experiences that were described to me by members of Southwest Airlines and are considered to be personal experiences and expressions of leadership. These stories are about people and teams of people who inspired confidence and support among the men and women of Southwest Airlines. The performance, the competence and the commitment expressed by the men and women in these stories is what Southwest Airlines depended upon in order to effect two significant organizational changes. What follows is an analysis of these two changes.

This chapter focuses on the degree to which individuals within Southwest Airlines have operationalized Rost's model of leadership for the 21st century. This analysis attempts to go beyond what Freiberg (1987) and Skalbeck (1991) presented by offering a more relational perspective of how people in Southwest Airlines intended real, substantive organizational changes.

Three major sections make up this chapter. The first section is a short history of Southwest Airlines. This history will provide a general overview of the lore associated with Southwest's beginning and the incredible

growth it has experienced over the last 22 years. The remaining two sections each include a summary and some background information about the organizational changes investigated: a change in on-time performance and the efforts of a culture committee. Each summary is followed by a descriptive analysis including journalistic accounts of how leaders and followers at Southwest Airlines manifested leadership relationships in their attempts to create substantive and transforming organizational changes.

The journalistic accounts, a form similar to that used by Freiberg and Skalbeck in their efforts to operationalize the Burnsian model of leadership, provide examples and illustrations that exemplify the relationships in which people engaged to create the changes investigated in this study. These examples will serve as the basis for a discussion about how the people of Southwest Airlines have brought life to the unseen essence of leadership.

A Short History of Southwest Airlines

Perhaps nowhere is the reality of change more evident than in the American airlines industry today. Wrought with bankruptcies, acquisitions, mergers and hostile takeovers, the airline industry is a highly complex and shifting environment. It is characterized by competing corporations trying to capture more market shares by reducing fares, cutting costs, shaping and reacting to governmental policies and finding newer and better ways to service their customers. (Freiberg, 1987, p. 120)

Since change is a major component of the 21st century model of leadership, it is fitting that Southwest Airlines, one of the most successful players in the airline industry, was chosen to serve as a case study for gaining some new insight into the study of relational leadership. For more than 22 years now, Southwest Airlines has successfully operated in the midst of incredible change.

What follows is a short history of Southwest Airlines. This history is meant to give the reader some additional insight into the internal changes Southwest has experienced since its shaky start as well as the fighting spirit that manifests itself in the people of Southwest Airlines. In addition, this history will offer further explanation about the willingness of employees to engage in relational leadership in order to effect the changes researched in this study. As Freiberg (1987) noted:

The history of Southwest Airlines is a story that is often told by members of the company at every level. It powerfully portrays the indomitable spirit and perseverance of two men, Rollin W. King and Herbert D. Kelleher. Even today, the legendary beginnings of Southwest Airlines have become a ritual in the company's personnel department. During orientation, every new employee is shown a videotape that depicts Southwest's first years of operation. The purpose of this ritual is to instill within each new member of the company the values upon which Southwest was founded. From the video

tape, new employees see that Southwest Airlines became a cause for which King, Kelleher, and the original members of the organization fought. Consequently, they begin to learn that the same spirit and perseverance of the earlier years is what makes Southwest such an outstanding company today. Thus, the history of Southwest is terribly important not only because it represents particular values that are operative for the organization today, but also because it is a story of which every member of the company is extremely proud and loves to tell. (p. 124)

In early 1967, the visionary behind the success of Southwest Airlines, Rollin W. King, a San Antonio entrepreneur, literally brought a brainstorm idea to the desk of Herbert D. Kelleher, an attorney with a San Antonio law firm. King approached Kelleher with the idea of starting an intrastate airline servicing Houston, Dallas and San Antonio for the frequent, short-hall, business traveler. Kelleher responded to the idea with "Rollin, you're crazy. Let's do it!" (Freiberg, 1987, p. 125). The successful formula of a three-city route was sketched out on a napkin and today the napkin has become the "symbolic representation of the day the idea for Southwest Airlines was consummated" (Freiberg, 1987, p. 127). Thus began a five year battle to get this three-city intrastate airline off the ground.

By June 18, 1971, Southwest Airlines was actually off the ground and flying on schedule. However, it was by no

means a financially stable enterprise. During its first year of operations Southwest had lost \$37 million and the future didn't appear to hold any new promises. It wasn't until late 1971 when Southwest was failing miserably that a breakthrough occurred. Southwest took a gamble and moved into the Houston Hobby Airport, which all other carriers had vacated in 1969 to move to the new outlying Intercontinental Airport. Hobby was located in downtown Houston, a location perfectly suited for the business traveler. However, the question remained, would passengers use an airport occupied by only one carrier? The answer was yes as the passenger load factor almost doubled overnight.

Not long after the initial gamble, Southwest moved all of its remaining Houston service from the Intercontinental Airport to downtown Hobby. The competition was infuriated and thus, Braniff and Texas International also transferred parts of their Houston service back into Hobby and instituted similar fare structures. Through a series of battles on the marketing front between Southwest, Braniff and Texas International, the fares held equal, but Southwest still emerged triumphant. The reason as Kelleher explained, "we were simply giving them better service--prompter, faster, with no late planes and no slow lines at the ticket counter and a ten-minute turn around" (Freiberg, 1987, p. 135). Throughout its history of operation Southwest has committed prompt, fast and on-time performance to its customers. Although brilliant marketing strategies and prompt service

enabled Southwest to gain and maintain a competitive advantage in the Dallas, Houston and San Antonio market, the battles were not over.

In early 1972 the construction of Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport (DFW) instigated a series of courtroom battles over Southwest's desire to remain at Love Field. Similar to the Houston Hobby Airport, Love Field is located only 10 minutes from downtown Dallas, again a very desirable location for Southwest's targeted business passengers. In 1973 Southwest avoided a forced move from Dallas's Love Field to the new Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, 30 minutes farther from downtown. However, courtroom battles totaling thirty-one separate judicial and administrative proceedings continued until February 14, 1975. On Valentine's Day the United States Government indicted Braniff and Texas International for conspiring to put Southwest out of business. At last, this young and progressive airline was free to focus its attention on expanding its markets rather than fighting for its existence in current markets. In 1977 five new service areas in Texas were established.

Once again, in 1978 Southwest experienced some more rather distracting legal turmoil. The Deregulation Act of 1978 allowed Southwest to become an interstate carrier enabling the organization to service cities and states outside of Texas. As the competition for markets inside and outside of Texas intensified, Southwest found itself in the midst of a monumental legal battle. The competition

attempted to have Congress bar flights from Love Field to anywhere outside of Texas. Despite their fighting power, Southwest lost the battle. However, Southwest was able to turn their loss into an opportunity. From this loss was negotiated a compromise known as the Wright Amendment which allowed flights from Love Field to four states contiguous to Texas. By late 1979 the company was serving New Orleans, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Albuquerque. Thus was born the key to Southwest's success, a strategy for short flights from which many other successful business and operational strategies evolved.

More significant changes occurred between 1978 and 1981, Lamar Muse, the industry veteran whom King and Kelleher originally hired to be the chief executive officer of this upstart airline, left Southwest to start a new airline called Muse Air. With Muse gone, Kelleher temporarily took over as chairman of the board and Howard Putnam from United Airlines came in as the president. Four years later in 1981, Putnam left to become the head of Braniff International and Kelleher took a leave of absence from his San Antonio law firm to take over as full-time chairman of the board, president and chief executive officer and remains in the position to date.

From an innovative, struggling, 3-airplane carrier operating entirely within the state of Texas, Southwest has grown into the eighth largest airline in the United States. In 1993 Southwest operates a fleet of over 125 variants of the Boeing 737, filling the skies with images of Shamu, Sea

World's killer whale, the Texas Lone Star and Heroes of the Heart, all planes painted to symbolize the values, heritage and fun-loving nature of business as unusual at Southwest Airlines. While other airlines are cutting budgets and reducing the workforce, Southwest is approximately 12,000 employees strong. Southwest hired at a rate of 200 new employees a month in 1992. According to Rose Ann Tortora of County NatWest Securities, "the opportunities in front of Southwest are spectacular. Most major airlines realize they don't have the cost structure, and probably never would have the cost structure to compete with Southwest on a cost basis" (Hayes, 1993, p. C-3).

In 1993 Southwest Airlines services more than 36 cities including California and 14 southwestern and midwestern states and "Where Southwest flies, it dominates. Of the top 200 U.S. routes, Southwest has more than 50% of the business in 54 of them. American and Delta can boast domination on fewer than 30 routes each" (Jones, 1993, p. 3B).

Southwest Airlines has been profitable ever since its second year of operation in 1972. While the airline industry in general suffered from combined losses of more than \$10 billion between 1990 and 1992, Southwest Airlines continued to make money. Southwest Airlines earned approximately \$91 million in 1992, and profits for the first quarter of 1993 are estimated at \$13.5 million compared to last year's first quarter losses of \$8.2 million. Interestingly enough, this comparatively small carrier is the airline many of the

nation's larger carriers want to emulate. Today Southwest is recognized as the airline that does so many things differently. And history has proven that SWA's competitive presence in the airline industry drives fares down in many commonly served city-pair markets--so Southwest's lower fares means lower fares even on other airlines. Southwest has been known in the airline industry as the low-cost, low-service, low-fare, short-distance carrier with a no-frills strategy for success, a strategy the airline was founded upon and a strategy the airline has stayed with for over two decades. For more details on the history of Southwest Airlines refer to Freiberg (1987).

A Change in On-Time Performance At Southwest Airlines

In 1991, as a whole, the twelve largest airlines in the United States improved their services by approximately four percent and provided the highest levels of service in the industry in years. This service increase was accomplished by actually setting a record for on-time arrivals and bringing in the fewest consumer complaints since 1970. For the twelve largest airlines, statistics indicate that 82% of their flights arrived on time in 1991. According to the United States Department of Transportation statistics, on-time performance means that flights arrive within 15 minutes of scheduled landing. The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) publishes the Air Traffic Consumer Report, which divides airline performance into four categories: on-time performance, mishandled baggage, over

sales, and consumer complaints. Over sell information is reported quarterly and focuses on the number of seats sold after no more seats actually exist. The purpose of over sales is to minimize the losses that result from cancellations. The remaining three categories, on-time performance, mishandled baggage and consumer complaints are reported monthly. More specifically, on-time performance is listed monthly, quarterly, and yearly for the data base to date, which began in September of 1987.

According to a spokesperson of Northwest Airlines, the number one airline in on-time performance for 1991, "the on-time performance statistics are useful to consumers, particularly business travelers. . . . People want to know: Will I arrive at airport X on-time to make my meetings? Will I be able to meet my friends and relatives?" (Maxon, 1992). On a similar note, Richard Spear, Vice President of a Tulsa, Oklahoma oil research firm, stated "Southwest does everything they can to get you to the right place on time, and that's most important. . . . So long as Herb keeps his prices low and his planes exactly on time, I can promise I'll be a regular" (O'Brien, 1992, p. A7).

Southwest's prices and on-time performance have made it possible for travelers like Spear to live and work in different cities, cities that are serviced by Southwest Airlines. Southwest is able to keep prices low and achieve on-time performance goals through close attention and adherence to its basic operating philosophy:

to provide a solid spread of frequencies in all of its markets, generally going into a new market with 10 or more trips per day. The goal is efficiency. There is no advance seat selection; seats are given as passengers arrive, first come, first served. The reason is to keep the transports in the air as many hours as possible each day, with short turnaround times at airports. (Staff, 1992, p. 51)

Southwest's method of operation is to quickly unload and load airplanes. When flights are on schedule, Southwest's airplanes are utilized more than 11 hours daily which is considered incredible because most of Southwest's flights average just over an hour each. However, within Southwest's operating philosophy there is little room in the schedule for error. Thus, one late flight can delay an airplane for the rest of its flights that day.

There was a brief period in time when Southwest's basic operating philosophy was called into question. Schedules, delays and on-time performance were well below industry averages. According to the DOT statistics and the 1991 yearly on-time performance list, when Northwest finished number one, Southwest finished fifth, despite leading the industry in the third and fourth quarters of the year. Statistics revealed that Southwest descended in the ratings because of poor performance in the last quarter of 1990 and the first two quarters of 1991. Southwest placed eleventh

out of twelve carriers during the first quarter of 1991 and eighth in the second quarter.

These ratings indicated that there was a significant gap between Southwest's operating philosophy and its actual practices. In an effort to close the gap, Southwest immediately began to address the on-time performance problem and increase its ranking from eleventh to first in just one year. Clearly, the move from eleventh to first in a twelve month period is worthy of investigation. When Southwest's performing averages are not near or at the top of the on-time performance list, customers like Spear have cause for concern. This investigation focuses on the changes and the leadership processes that enabled Southwest to regain its top ranking position with on-time performance and finish the year with unprecedented leading averages for the month of December 1991.

In a review of the statistical documents published by the DOT, SWA was the leader in relation to the other eleven major airlines in January 1990. SWA ranked on the top of the list with 82.5% of its flights arriving on time, well above the industry average of 77.6% on-time arrivals for the month of January. However, as the industry averages continued to rise from February to November 1990, SWA's averages continued to decline. In fact, SWA's on-time performance averages went from number one in January to an all time low of number 11 only ten months later. By December of 1990 SWA had reached its lowest performance level since March of 1989, only 67.2%

of its flights arrived on time. However, during this same month, December 1990, only 70.3% of the twelve largest carriers' flights arrived on-time. Thus, the industry as a whole also experienced its worst performance since December of 1987. Southwest refused to accept the industry's decline as an excuse.

Despite a temporary decline in on-time performance, Southwest Airlines has become the seventh largest airline in the United States. As the short history revealed, Southwest started out as an underdog servicing three Texas cities and targeting the business traveler. In its attempts to service the needs of the business market, Southwest initiated the ten minute turnaround which became symbolic of Southwest's attention to on-time performance. Southwest, literally, was able to turn its 737s around in ten minutes. The turn involved getting passengers off, on and the aircraft back in the skies in ten minutes or less. This kind of efficiency enabled business travelers to get to their destinations on time. As traveling has increased throughout the years so has air traffic. Consequently the ability to make ten minute turnarounds has become nearly impossible. As a result the airline industry as well as SWA has had to adjust to the congestion in air traffic.

More than twenty years has past and Southwest continues to target the business traveler, yet they also serve a variety of other travelers, children, senior citizens, families and vacationers. However, Southwest's attention to

on-time performance hasn't dwindled or changed. On-time performance became a profit strategy, as well as a service strategy. In spite of the industry growth and the difficulty in achieving ten minute turnarounds, Southwest continues to strive for above average industry ratings in on-time performance. Thus, the infamous ten minute turnaround has become the still infamous fifteen minute turnaround. Being on time is to Southwest as being "the real thing" is to Coke-A-Cola. Just as Coke-A-Cola has become known by its customers for being the one and only real coke, Southwest has become known in the airline industry for getting its passengers to and from their destinations on time.

Southwest was so serious and committed to on-time performance that its importance is stressed in hiring, orientation, training, advertising, and in various forms of internal communications throughout the system. In twenty years of service Southwest never really had cause for much concern regarding on-time performance until a ninety day period of decline confronted the Airline between December of 1990 and March of 1991. At that point the executive planning committee decided that on-time performance was declining at an alarming rate, a trend that when allowed to continue could devastate the company.

In May of 1991, Jim Wimberly, Vice President Ground Operations and Provisioning, was asked by the executive planning committee to chair a committee with representatives from all operating departments to come up with

recommendations to help improve this critical area of customer service. This was a process, an initiative that gained immediate support from the field. It was not about putting out a list of new directives and rules in hopes that they would be followed and implemented. Rather, according to a memorandum from the executive planning committee to the on-time performance committee, this "is the biggest problem by far that Southwest currently faces if it wants to retain its number one position in the airline industry." The committee was commissioned to lead the charge and try to educate all Southwest employees as to the absolute necessity of teamwork and working collectively to claim the airline's number one position in on-time performance once again.

By the end of May a number of recommendations were developed and an incredible amount of information from all departments on ways to improve on-time performance was presented back to the executive planning committee. Only three months into the process, a number of recommendations were approved and implemented, and employees in the field became owners of the issue. At the end of July, Southwest was number one again in the on-time performance category of the DOT report. Southwest continued to hold the top position in on-time performance and had successfully accomplished its purpose of turning a declining trend into a long-term rising trend. By the end of 1991 the on-time performance committee was dissolved due to successful third and fourth quarters of 1991. These trends continued well into the next year and

Southwest was honored as number one for on-time performance for all of 1992. For purposes of this research the question must be asked, "How did Southwest effect such a dramatic change in such a short period?"

The on-time performance committee blazed a trail and the entire organization worked together collectively and paved the way toward improved on-time performance. The employees of Southwest Airlines described a number of in-house initiatives in which they participated in order to correct the lull in performance. "Among the measures taken to correct on-time problems, Southwest changed schedules, rerouted aircraft and built in 'rest time' for some equipment at midday" (Maxon, 1992, p. 12D). However, these measures involved more than schedule changes. The improvements involved more than the members of the on-time performance committee. The problems in on-time performance were not unique to any one employee group; they were problems that required the efforts of each and every employee within the airline.

Clearly, on-time performance is significant to the survival of any airline. This is why SWA dedicated so much time and so many resources to the close tracking and analysis of the statistics in the DOT reports. This issue was also significant enough for a group of SWA employees to commit themselves to a full-force, turn-around effort. According to Jim Wimberly, "On-time performance is the root of all evil and the root of everything we do. And when it's good,

customer satisfaction definitely comes through. It's refreshing." Similarly, another employee noted:

The on-time performance issue was very, very important to me because when we had poor on-time performance and our flights were delayed, regardless of the reason, the customers would be dissatisfied . . . because they didn't leave on time. They have more time to pick us apart, to find faults and to complain about other things that would have never come up. It is amazing that when we were going through our struggle and it had gotten to a point where we really needed to work on it . . . all the other type of complaints went up.

Employees sensed the relationship between on-time performance and other aspects of Southwest's service and business operations. One employee commented about the significance of the problem: "We knew that after we had ninety days of that poor performance . . . we had some problems. You couldn't attribute it to weather." Yet, SWA wasn't able to clearly identify the causes of the problem because 135 airplanes making 1,400 departures a day made the problem quite complex to say the least. "Everyday we have 1,400 opportunities to be late. Everybody was trying to get the system back on time." For example, a ramp agent in Sacramento, California recounted what it meant to Sacramento if a Houston flight starts the day off in the hole. "I see it from a systems standpoint. What Houston does has a huge effect on the

entire system from on-time performance to how they handle the bags."

As SWA employees owned the problem and recognized the implications of working within such an integrated system, they responded to the decline in on-time performance in a very personal way. Interviews revealed that being a part of an on-time performing airline is personally gratifying for the people who work at SWA. Thus, when the performance ratings started to decline both personal and corporate gratification was threatened. When the reputation of Southwest Airlines was at stake, that sense of personal pride and personal accomplishment that many employees at SWA experienced was at stake as well. "It got real tense" at Southwest when the Airline was in last place. An employee passionately expressed his faith in the committee's efforts and stated "We have the wherewithal and the knowledge and the desire. That [low-time performance] hurt! It hurt people's pride to see Southwest in last place."

The effort to change the on-time performance at SWA is exemplar of 21st century leadership. The following four sections of this chapter highlight data that are illustrative of Rost's leadership model. More specifically, the illustrations serve to support the conclusion that collectively, leaders and followers at SWA engaged in influence relationships as they attempted to effect change and improve on-time performance. Additionally, the examples

demonstrate the collective and mutual purposes behind Southwest's on-time performance improvement.

On-Time Performance and Influence-Based Relationships

It was very intriguing to search for the influence behind the types of relationships in which people engaged at SWA to improve their on-time performance. When asked to describe how influence occurred in this effort, people were baffled, sometimes at a loss for words. Although unbeknownst to many with whom I spoke, the stories and examples that were imparted to me were profound illustrations of mutually coordinated activities that were influenced based, as opposed to authority based. What follows are examples and illustrations of the ways in which leaders and followers at SWA used influence-based relationships to facilitate the kind of collective effort Southwest needed to improve its on-time performance record. More specifically, the reader will gain a better understanding of the persuasive appeals, the multidirectional influence strategies, the recommendations, and the intangible power resources that the on-time performance committee used to solicit the collective participation of Southwest employees.

According to Rost (1991) "management is an authority relationship between at least one manager and one subordinate who coordinate their activities to produce and sell particular goods and/or services" (p. 145). In contrast, Rost identified leadership as a relationship based on influence. Although Southwest's on-time performance

initiative did involve coordinated activities, the activities were not initiated through authority-based relationships alone. At Southwest both managers and nonmanagers appeared to be concerned with and involved in the on-time performance change effort.

As a symbolic attempt to express the importance of on-time performance and challenge all employees at Southwest to take heed, the committee recommended that Herb Kelleher, Chairman, President and CEO, do something that was considered very unusual. The committee recommended that Kelleher send a memorandum to all employees at their homes (see Figure 1). However, the memorandum was not only from Kelleher, it was also from a concerned employee, Harry Ehmann (see Figure 2). Ehmann sent an interoffice memorandum to Jim Wimberly expressing his concern about Southwest's recent performance problems. In the letter Ehmann passionately expressed the need for SWA employees to collectively respond to the challenge of improving on-time performance. By sending both memorandums to the homes of Southwest employees, the committee symbolically illustrated the concern and influence coming from both managers (Kelleher) and nonmanagers (Ehmann) at Southwest. Colleen Barrett, Executive Vice President of Customers pointed out that, "We rarely do it. It's very seldom that we send mail to people's homes. But I do believe, within a few months we saw dramatic improvement!" The memoranda involved the use of persuasion, not authority.

Chairman of The Board
President & Chief Executive Officer
P O Box 36611
Dallas, Texas 75235-1611
(214) 904-4110

May 30, 1991

MEMORANDUM

TO: Fellow Employees
FROM: Herb Kelleher
RE: Ontime Performance

As I'm sure you already know, our Ontime Performance has suffered critically during the past several months, and I believe that this is the biggest problem by far that Southwest currently faces if it wants to retain its number one position within the airline industry.

It is also my belief, as is so eloquently stated in the attached memorandum to Jim Wimberly from Harry Ehmann, that the only way we can correct this problem is with immediate support from every employee.

THANKS for that support.

Best personal regards,

Herb Kelleher

4

Figure 1. Memorandum from Kelleher

INTEROFFICE MEMO

TO: Jim Wimberly
 FROM: Harry Ehmann
 DATE: May 30, 1991
 SUBJ: Team Spirit

While we strive to find areas where we may streamline certain procedures and alter current policies, it is my belief that our efforts must have immediate support from the field in order to effect those changes which we seek.

By this I mean that all our efforts may be for naught if they lack the impetus that can only come from each individual's attitude and personal effort. The most important changes we may hope to achieve are those intangibles which occur within each individual's heart and mind.

We must highlight the area of concern; if necessary explain the detrimental not just to the Company in general, but how each employee's livelihood may be affected. We must then accentuate the fact that while Southwest Airlines' most valuable asset has always been its employees, it is our collective efforts on a daily basis which continue to make Southwest Airlines a leader within a highly competitive industry. It was not dumb luck that allowed Southwest to survive while 17 major and regional carriers either merged or ceased operations entirely. Rather, it was the superior productivity offered by the employees of Southwest Airlines. Each should be reminded of this fact and also of the fact that their individual responsibilities continue to have a direct impact upon our current and future status. I feel this is a very important issue since I am really speaking of our ability to draw a paycheck twice a month. We must establish this correlation within the minds of each employee. We must convey a sense of responsibility not only to ourselves, but to each other. On-time performance is a side issue without the full cooperation and support of all Southwest Airlines employees. All must be a part of the solution. We must, therefore, promote, nurture and so preserve an environment of "Team Spirit," for only a team effort can realize our goals.

If we merely acquiesce when the going gets tough and shrug it off as "business as usual," we provide all our Customers with less than Legendary Customer Service. We may end up making another employee's job more difficult and we certainly allow our competition an opportunity to overtake us. It is fitting that as we celebrate our 20th year of service, we should hereby re-dedicate ourselves to the notion of helping each other day in and day out.

Excuse me if I have overdone it. It's easy for me to pay lip service to our need for on-time performance; it's easy for me to second guess solutions which will see everything improve. Yet, I truly feel we must first scrutinize our attitudes.

We may better serve ourselves and our Customers if we take some time to stop looking for blame on delays and delay codes and instead focus on offering praise when we work, as we always should, as a team.

Regards,

Harry Ehmann

Figure 2. Letter from Harry Ehmann, a concerned employee

Kelleher's memorandum appealed to the company's competitive nature, to Southwest's reputation in the industry. This approach was also illustrative of multidirectional influence from the bottom-up (employee to Vice President), top-down (CEO to employees) and horizontal (employee to employee). This act of symbolism exemplified influence that relied not on a CEO's perceived power, authority or any dictatorial actions to convince employees to get involved. Instead, the memoranda appealed to the emotions of the employees at SWA. In addition, Ehmann's memorandum was also symbolic of the personal commitment that manifests itself in the unique culture of Southwest. It appeared that Ehmann truly recognized that SWA goals could only be realized through a team effort. He encouraged all employees of Southwest to promote, nurture and preserve an environment of "Team Spirit." Ehmann was encouraging employees to rededicate themselves to influence-based relationships, "to the notion of helping each other day in and day out."

In addition to the memoranda sent to the homes of Southwest employees, there was a need to create an environment that would grant employees the latitude and freedom to make recommendations and changes that would improve on-time performance. The committee recognized the importance of soliciting input from the employees at SWA, knowing full well that the answers would come from the employees, not from the committee alone. The mission of the on-time performance committee was to report back to the

executive planning committee with its findings and recommendations. As the on-time performance committee chair, Jim Wimberly discussed his multidirectional approach to facilitating the committee and accomplishing its mission.

I told them at the first meeting, I don't know what the answer is. We are in this quagmire together. And If I knew what we could do to fix it, we wouldn't be sitting here. So number one, the only thing I do know is we are in last place. And we have the talent and the desire to be back in first place. Secondly, I told them there is nothing sacred here. If we need to do things radically different, Herb and Gary said we'll do it. So we've got all the latitude we need. We've got to find out why our airline is not operating on time.

Thus, the executives granted the on-time performance committee considerable flexibility to change the low performance ratings. This flexibility stemmed from the willingness of Kelleher and Senior Vice President Gary Barron to help create an environment where collective leadership could flourish, where ideas and feedback from various locations in the system could be operationalized and acted upon.

Some of the ideas generated through the on-time performance committee's activities became immediate changes, others involved a modification to scheduling that occurred on a gradual basis. For example, through committee recommendations, the purchase of new Arinic radios were

approved in order to improve the communication time with flight crews. Closets in the rear of the plane were modified to accommodate some of the pillows and blankets in order to free more space in the overhead bins making it easier for passengers to load and unload their belongings. Prior to the poor performance ratings gate games were used to keep up the fun spirit at Southwest gates and were used to pass the time if flights were delayed. However, based on feedback from station managers, department managers, agents, pilots, and flight attendants, Southwest discontinued gate games to give employees time to concentrate on getting flights in and out on time.

By granting "all the latitude needed," the executives of Southwest symbolically committed themselves to the turnaround effort. Yet, they did not use an authority-based approach to direct SWA employees to take this issue into their own hands or require that employees simply obey executive driven policy. The executives tended to play more of an encourager/influencer role rather than an authority/director role. Memoranda, plus the flexibility that Wimberly and the executives granted to the committee and the organization as a whole, were symbolic appeals used to demonstrate the seriousness of this issue to the company. However, the question still remains. How did the on-time performance committee influence so many people in so many operational areas of the company to get involved in the turnaround effort? This analysis reveals that multidirectional

influence was paramount to involving the entire Southwest system. In order to effect the kind of change needed to improve on-time performance, Committee members and other interested SWA employees soon realized that to spread the word to more than 10,000 people they needed to establish multidirectional influence-based relationships.

Various attempts to build influence-based relationships throughout the Southwest system included talking over drinks in a bar, discussions of the financial impacts on the company and employees, appeals to job security (Southwest's unprecedented record of no furloughs), threats to SWA's reputation in the airline industry, increased internal communication and personal contact, and even more focused attention to the mission and purpose of the organization. These efforts included both purposeful and some more or less automatic influence appeals from committee members and other employees. As a system, the organization needed to rally around this issue.

The committee members provided the necessary linkages to the entire organization, making sure that everyone understood the problems in addition to the part each played in generating possible solutions. One employee commented on these important linkages.

The committee got a lot of feedback. They got a lot of good suggestions from people and they acted upon those suggestions. They certainly did not let any suggestions, regardless of how small, go unnoticed and

unevaluated. Every employee knows that if they have a suggestion that is going to improve performance, it doesn't matter if it is a baggage handler, a skycap or whoever. That suggestion will be addressed by this company.

These linkages were critical to getting more than 10,000 people to realize how important individual effort was to Southwest's collective success. In just a few short weeks, the committee accumulated a massive amount of information from all departments on ways to improve on-time performance. On May 30, 1991 an interoffice memorandum summarized the recommendations for changes made by the committee. The memorandum illustrated the degree of systemwide attention and change this issue demanded. The following departments were encouraged to participate in improving on-time performance by making some targeted changes: operations, customer service, inflight, ramp, maintenance, scheduling and dispatch, and flight operations.

In addition, various forms of communication provided a number of different influence functions within the company. Communication was one of their key strategies.

I think everybody consistently knows what we want to do, where we want to go, what the time frame is that we need it done by. We spend a lot of time communicating in a simple fashion that way.

In another conversation, a Southwest employee mentioned the importance of communication but also noted the value in communication as well.

The committee was concerned of how [poor on-time performance] would financially impact the company. And so we felt it was very important that we get some information out to the employees as quickly as possible to give them some sort of indicator.

Another change recommended by the committee involved reporting on-time performance in one format, consolidating all statistics and communicating them to all employees. Keeping the communications open and awareness up were major factors in continuing to motivate and influence Southwest employees to get involved in the on-time performance effort. As one employee suggested,

It really goes back to an awareness issue. We need to get that message to everybody. . . Do you know that we were in last place as far as all the airlines? America West beat us, Delta beat us, United beat us, Continental beat us, and Pan Am beat us. Yes, so getting that message out to everybody is pretty easy to do. . . and it really worked.

One employee noted the use of presentations to new supervisors as a persuasive tool. Supervisor briefings involved monthly visits to new managers and were specifically designed to help these managers focus on their individual efforts and how these efforts related to on-time performance

and consumer complaints specifically. In addition, these new managers were encouraged to impart the same message to the individuals they supervised as well. Supervisor briefings became a forum through which on-time performance was stressed and re-emphasized. One employee noted the information he imparted to new managers through supervisor briefings.

I go out once a month and speak to all of our new lower management people. I talk to them about the DOT reports and particularly consumer complaints and let them know how everything is measured. And again, part of what they are passing on to the people they are supervising is how each person can influence these figures.

Another employee commented on influencing employees through personal communication. The on-time performance initiative was truly an effort that involved reaching out to anyone and everyone. The on-time performance committee was designed to reach out and get suggestions from employees who had a variety of different stakes and stands on the issue.

There's nothing that will ever replace that human contact--being able to physically touch people and answer questions and try to explain why and what we are doing. You can't do that with a conference call or with a memo. It takes that embassy of being with people. Sitting down and having a drink in a bar and talking through why we are doing what we are doing. Asking for suggestions on what else we can do. It just takes that one-on-one, or two-on-one, or three-on-one--a small

group interaction. That way you can hear what employees have to say, and they in turn, hopefully have a better understanding and vision of what we're trying to do.

On a similar note, another employee made this comment.

Communication with our employees is the key to everything. We're honest with them. If we're not doing so well, we let them know. And we try to let them know in a way that does not come down and beat them over the head, slap their hands or anything. But we're honest with them and say, "OK, here are the areas that we need to focus on. Here are some of the things we can do to try to fix this particular thing." And we let them know when they have done well, and we give credit where credit is due.

Written communication played a role in the influence process as well. Although the DOT reports provided industry wide public statistics, Southwest also generated in-house reports that were analyzed and then distributed throughout the company (see Figure 3). The information presented in the in-house reports was more specific to Southwest's performance. Thus, the employees gained more relevant information and were able to make better sense of the figures as they related to them specifically. Both the DOT and in-house reports were very powerful persuasive tools to the on-time performance turnaround. One employee noted the connection between the reports and the degree of participation in the turnaround effort.

February 26, 1991

MEMORANDUM

TO: Distribution
 FROM: Susan Yancey
 RE: February DOT Report

The Department of Transportation has issued its February Air Travel Consumer Report, providing December and yearend statistics on ontime performance, baggage handling, and consumer complaints. Last quarter 1990 and yearend statistics on denied boardings will be released in March. Although Eastern is no longer operating, as it was operating during the reporting period, it is included in the statistics shown.

While we did not fare as well in some individual areas of the report as we would all have liked, we made several improvements and we continue to compare favorably among our peers on an overall basis.

ONTIME PERFORMANCE

In December, Southwest's ontime performance dropped 9% to 67.2%--our lowest performance level in the 21 months since March 1989. However, this is not particularly surprising since the industry as a whole experienced its worst performance since December of 1987, with the nation's 12 largest carriers' performance dropping an average of 14.3% from the previous month. Pan Am was the only carrier to exceed 80%; however, its performance dropped almost 9% from November. On the other end of the spectrum, TWA's performance dropped almost 24% to 59.9%. Obviously, December was not a good month insofar as ontime performance was concerned.

Despite our low performance level, our rank among the 12 carriers improved from 11th in November to eighth in December. Hopefully, future reports will show even greater improvements, enabling us to return to our previous status as an industry performance leader.

For the entire year, Southwest finished in sixth place, with 80.5% of our flights arriving within 15 minutes of their scheduled arrival times. Although this is a decrease in rank from our third place finish last year, our overall performance actually improved for the year, rising to 80.8% from 1989's 80.5%. At the very end of the year, Pan Am overtook America West as the industry's ontime performance leader, finishing just a fraction of percentage point ahead of the second place carrier, but, nonetheless, putting an end to America West's ability to claim first place for three consecutive years. Pan Am's 83.8% performance rate for 1990 showed a remarkable improvement over their 1989 tenth place rate of 73.3%. On the other hand, Continental fell from 1989's sixth place finisher with 79.0% to last place for 1990 with 76.9%. The performance of the industry as a whole rose from 76.3% for 1989 to 79.4% for 1990.

Although the nation's ontime performance dropped .2% to 78.2% in the DOT's data base to date (September 1987 through December 1990), there were no changes in rank recorded over the last month. Southwest continues to hold second place in the industry for overall ontime performance with an ontime rate of 82.5%, behind America West's 84.3%.

The following chart provides an overview of the ontime performance of the nation's 12 largest carriers.

ONTIME PERFORMANCE				
PERCENTAGE OF FLIGHTS ARRIVING WITHIN 15 MINUTES OF SCHEDULED ARRIVAL TIME				
	THIS MONTH DEC 1990 % (RANK)	LAST MONTH NOV 1990 % (RANK)	ALL OF 1990 % (RANK)	DATA BASE SEP 87-DEC 90 % (RANK)
Alaska	65.2 (11)	75.0 (12)	79.7 (7)	78.9 (5)
America West	71.3 (4)	78.2 (10)	83.8 (2)	84.3 (1)
American	65.2 (10)	82.7 (7)	79.0 (8)	80.6 (3)
Continental	70.0 (7)	82.2 (9)	76.9 (12)	78.0 (8)
Delta	66.4 (9)	85.1 (5)	77.1 (11)	78.4 (6)
Eastern	71.9 (5)	89.8 (1)	81.2 (4)	79.5 (4)
Northwest	73.8 (3)	87.8 (4)	82.1 (3)	78.4 (7)
Pan Am	80.3 (1)	89.0 (3)	83.8 (1)	77.5 (9)
Southwest	67.2 (8)	76.2 (11)	80.8 (6)	82.5 (2)
TWA	59.9 (12)	82.6 (8)	77.1 (10)	76.7 (12)
United	70.6 (6)	83.9 (6)	77.4 (9)	75.2 (12)
USair	78.6 (2)	89.0 (2)	80.0 (5)	76.3 (11)
Industry	70.3	84.6	79.4	78.2

Figure 3. In-house report regarding on-time performance

The reports let our people know when they have done well. . . or what areas they need to work on. In communicating that information to the employees, we were able to get a lot of group effort into meeting any particular challenge that needed to be met.

Another change suggested by the on-time performance committee was to include the on-time performance figures and a graph in SWA's weekly Employee Update publication (see Figure 4). This newsletter served as a means of communicating Southwest's performance throughout the entire organization on a weekly basis, which was critical to awareness building in the midst of crisis.

This newsletter goes out weekly. This one is from May 27, 1992. But we've been doing this on-time coverage ever since the recommendation from the committee that we tell everybody. This newsletter goes to all employees every week. It shows how we are doing as far as our on-time performance goes. And it shows a little graph. So you can see how we've been doing. Here is where we were when I started with the committee in February, 1991. And we were operating at about 62% on time, which just sucked. You can see where the committee did their recommendations. So then in a month or so, we were up to 78%. And we had a little pick-up, and as you can see, we've been way above it this year as well. So people can see every week how we were doing.

Figure 4. SWA's weekly Employee Update

Another employee commented on the use of the Update to keep the issue alive and circulated.

We have other ways that we communicate and keep it in the forefront. Each week we put out a weekly Update and it gives news about different areas and so forth. And there is an item that is attached to this [the on-time performance graph and figures] and this is distributed to every employee at their work location.

In addition, each issue of LuvLines, a monthly SWA publication, also had a special section entitled "How Do We Rate" which summarized Southwest's ranking in the DOT reports (see Figure 5).

We have a publication, LuvLines that comes out and tells how our group does and there was an article about being number one in all three categories for the first 90 days of this year [1992]. So again, it's important feedback that we pass on.

These were all attempts to spread the news and keep the employees aware of their performance and efficiency.

Basically, various forms of communication were used to increase awareness and served as persuasive tools that played a significant role in many of the on-time performance, influence-based relationships. Through communication in a wide variety of forms, the on-time performance committee influenced and informed other Southwest employees to get involved. In addition to the more tangible forms of influence used to get employees to participate collectively

HOW DO WE RATE

The Department of Transportation's December and January Airline Consumer Reports have been published, providing statistics on airline ontime performance, baggage handling, and Customer complaints for October and November, and on denied boardings for the third quarter of 1990. Unfortunately, in many aspects, Southwest did not do as well in comparison to our competitors as we have in previous months, and this may cost us dearly when results for all of 1990 are published. Because of the national media attention given to the DOT statistics, the reports make a significant contribution to the public's perception of the quality of our service. With the airline industry in its most precarious state in many years, the necessity to generate and keep every Customer possible is more important now to our Company than ever before. Each delayed flight, each lost bag, and each dissatisfied Customer makes a difference. In order to maintain the reputation for high quality and dependability we have worked so hard to establish, the extra efforts of every Southwest employee to bring our DOT rankings to their previous high levels will be essential during the remainder of 1991. ♥

ONTIME PERFORMANCE

In October, 80.8% of our flights arrived at their destinations within 15 minutes of schedule, placing us tenth in ontime performance of the nation's 12 largest carriers. In November, our ontime performance fell to 76.2% and our rank for the month dropped to 11th. In October, only United, with 79.1%, and Delta, with 80.5%, had lower performance records than Southwest, and in November, we were kept out of last place only by Alaska's record of 75.0%. October was led by Pan Am, America West, and Northwest, while November's leaders were Eastern, USAir, and Pan Am. America West had the biggest drop in ontime performance and rank from October to November, and Eastern the most improvement, as reflected in the chart displayed in this summary.

For the year to date, Southwest maintained third place through October with an average ontime performance

record of 82.5%, but dropped to fifth place with 81.9% as a result of November's ontime performance. America West remains the leader in this category; however, Pan Am is definitely closing in and could take over first place for the year if its December performance again significantly outweighs America West's. Needless to say, this would be a tremendous blow to America West, as it has highly touted its performance as number one for each of the last two years.

In the DOT's data base to date (September 1987 through November 1990), Southwest remains in second place with a record of 82.9%, preceded by America West, which has a record of 84.7%. Third place remains with American, which has a record of 81.0%, and last place still goes to United, which has an overall record of 75.3%.

ONTIME PERFORMANCE
PERCENTAGE OF FLIGHTS ARRIVING WITHIN 15 MINUTES OF SCHEDULED ARRIVAL TIME

CARRIER	THIS MONTH NOV 1990 % (RANK)		LAST MONTH OCT 1990 % (RANK)		YEAR TO DATE JAN-NOV 1990 % (RANK)		LAST 12 MTHS DEC 89 - NOV 90 % (RANK)		DATA BASE SEPT 87 - NOV 90 % (RANK)	
Alaska	75.0	(12)	84.8	(4)	80.9	(7)	80.2	(6)	79.3	(5)
America West	79.2	(10)	87.2	(2)	84.8	(1)	84.0	(1)	84.7	(1)
American	82.7	(7)	83.1	(5)	80.1	(8)	79.7	(7)	81.0	(3)
Continental	82.2	(9)	82.7	(6)	77.5	(12)	77.1	(12)	78.2	(8)
Delta	85.1	(5)	80.5	(11)	78.1	(10)	77.6	(10)	78.7	(6)
Eastern	89.8	(1)	82.1	(8)	82.1	(4)	81.1	(5)	79.7	(4)
Northwest	87.8	(4)	85.5	(3)	82.5	(3)	82.3	(3)	78.5	(7)
Pan Am	89.0	(3)	87.7	(1)	84.2	(2)	83.1	(2)	77.6	(9)
Southwest	76.2	(11)	80.8	(10)	81.9	(5)	82.0	(4)	82.9	(2)
TWA	82.6	(8)	79.1	(12)	78.6	(9)	77.7	(9)	77.1	(10)
United	83.9	(6)	81.3	(9)	77.9	(11)	77.4	(11)	75.3	(12)
USAir	89.0	(2)	82.5	(7)	81.0	(6)	79.2	(8)	76.3	(11)
Industry	84.6		82.4		80.1		79.4		78.4	

Figure 5. "How Do We Rate?"

(i.e., memorandums, multidirectional influence-based relationships and communications), the on-time performance committee also gained support through other more intangible appeals (i.e., reputation and credibility).

The committee consisted of various representatives of the company, people who held positional, personal, technical, and symbolic power.

We picked the right people, people who knew where our foul-ups were and were willing to talk about it openly. The people we chose had the technical expertise to recommend solutions to it, so if there was any magic involved, it was getting the right people together to attack a problem.

Regardless of the power resources individual committee members had, it was clear that their individual resources added to the committee's collective reputation and credibility. Thus, power resources enhanced the committee's ability to influence other members of Southwest to take initiative and get involved.

When Southwest employees were asked in retrospect, why so many people willingly took the initiative and spent so much additional time assisting SWA in its efforts to turn the on-time performance rating around, consistently they noted a hate for being beaten by the competition. Freiberg (1987) noted that Southwest Airlines was born in the heat of competition and conflict and Kelleher's opinion was that competition and conflict kept the company alive. He pointed

out that had it not been for the competition, Southwest Airlines would have folded. Although the pressures of today are different, the energy, momentum and the tendency of employees to pull together and build strong, powerful relationships to overcome the challenges of doing business in such a competitive industry still exists within Southwest today. Southwest's improved on-time performance provides a clear example of its organizational commitment to working together in an effort to beat the competition. It became clear that the notion of being beaten by the competition was indeed a threat to Southwest's reputation and thus served as an intangible form of influence.

For Southwest employees competition regarding on-time performance was a threat, not only to the company's reputation, but to their own reputations as well. According to one employee, working for the airline companies carries with it a certain type of intrigue, and working for Southwest adds that extra "pop."

You know there is a certain sex appeal about working for an airline, whether its the excitement of travel, or the romantic kind of jetset image people have when you say you work for an airline. When I introduce myself I immediately get a reaction--"*You work for Southwest Airlines!?*" And I think 99% of the employees get that kind of reaction, regardless of what they do.

Being beaten by the competition and losing SWA's reputation as an industry leader in on-time performance was a very

powerful form of influence for SWA managers and employees. It was powerful enough to influence people at various levels in different positions to get involved and to take action. In two separate interviews, the pressure from being beaten by the competition was linked to reputation and SWA employees' willingness to get involved. The first focused on competition and involvement.

Hey, we're in last place. Southwest employees don't want to be last, and we don't want to be thought of as not being the best airline out there operating. It didn't take much to get that ball rolling once everybody knew we're getting our asses kicked by some carriers that really overall can't hold a candle to what we do.

The second, focused on competition and reputation.

We do have such a good reputation, both from a consumer standpoint and even industry insiders know that we have something unique going on here. The employees know it, I know it and I feel it. To see us at the bottom of what we consider to be the priority--operating flights on time--I mean that hurt. We were on the bottom!! It stung a lot of people's pride. It didn't take a whole lot to. . . I mean "We were in last place last month. How does that make you feel? UGH!" "Last place?" "Yes, last place!" Then you start rattling off the competitors who beat you. And it's--"we've got to fix this!"

The persuasive appeals used to increase awareness caused SWA employees to focus more intensely on the competition and this focus influenced all levels of employees at SWA to get involved in leadership activities based upon their individual and collective desires to be the best airline in providing on-time service to customers.

In light of the fact that many of Southwest employees have ownership in the company through a profit-sharing plan that was introduced in 1973, it is understandable why so many employees were also very willing to own the on-time performance problem. One thousand dollars worth of SWA stock in 1973 is worth about four-hundred thousand dollars today. Southwest is recognized as the first airline in the industry to offer a profit-sharing plan to their employees. Today, 10% of the company is owned by employees. Clearly, in light of the incredible financial success Southwest has achieved over the last twenty years of operations, some of the initial participants in the plan were profoundly aware of the direct relationship between Southwest's profitability and their own personal profitability. Therefore, with the increased focus on the woes of a declining on-time performance record, most people at SWA became keenly aware that there was a lot more at stake than the on-time arrival of the airplanes. More importantly, Southwest's reputation was at stake. The reputation for being on time had taken nearly twenty years to

establish, and employees were not willing to let a ninety day decline destroy their twenty year priority--operating flights on time.

The on-time performance committee formed in February of 1991. In less than six months Southwest Airline's on-time performance statistics had improved. Southwest moved from number eight in December of 1990 to number one in July of 1991. The on-time performance initiative was successful due in part to the influence-based relationships that formed in response to Southwest's declining statistics. The focus on and the attention drawn to team spirit, competition, and reputation created an environment that influenced employees of Southwest Airlines to collectively fight for what they had created, and temporarily lost--an airline that operated on time.

Symbolic persuasive appeals and intangible power resources served as important tools used to influence Southwest employees to individually and collectively turn their performance ratings around. In summary, influence played a major role in the leadership relationships in which Southwest employees engaged to improve their on-time performance and to regain their top position in the industry.

Leaders and Followers Involved in the On-time Turnaround

In Rost's definition, the leaders involved in influenced-based relationships are not always equated with managers and executives. Likewise, the followers involved in

influence-based relationships are not always equated with subordinates or nonmanagers. To the contrary, as the preceding section demonstrated, the on-time performance initiative was rich with examples and illustration of influence-based relationships in which executives, managers and nonmanagers joined together in a collective effort to effect change. This change initiative involved people with various titles and job descriptions from all levels of the company. The players ranged from executives to skycaps and ramp agents, among many others, who in turn became the leaders and the followers who were involved at various times, in varying degrees and through a variety of different activities.

With the lull in on-time performance and the embarrassment that accompanied a last place standing, Southwest employees engaged in relationships and, as needed, became both leaders and followers who worked in a coordinated and concerted team effort to make the system run efficiently and on-time. The following examples and illustrations better identify how Southwest's nonhierarchical environment made it possible for people to act as leaders and followers in influence-based relationships. Secondly, the reader will gain a better understanding of how managers and nonmanagers alike became leaders and followers in the on-time performance change effort.

Since the early beginnings of the airline, employees at all levels in Southwest have rallied around organizational

initiatives and have all contributed to significant change efforts through a collective desire to accomplish the mission at hand.

It started out where Southwest was such an underdog. It was a small group of really dedicated people that were trying to get the job done. But we have never lost sight of being "that little airline that could." And from the top of this company, all the way through, you won't find the attitudes among anyone that puts management in some kind of superior place of decision-making capabilities, above all else. I don't think they would keep a manager or an executive like that. We have a group of people-oriented people who realize that every person does make a difference, and they have seen how even a skycap can come up with a suggestion that will benefit this company in some way. Or even your aircraft cleaners can think of ways for the aircraft to be cleaned more efficiently because they are doing the jobs day in and day out and they know more about the job than anybody, and [management] accepts feedback and works with it. That's just the attitude here, and it always has been [that way].

Even twenty years later, for new and old employees alike, the on-time performance effort became an issue that demanded the attention of everyone to get the job done. On-time performance was not something that the executive planning committee could control by policy decisions alone.

Everyone knows the issue of being on time is not a departmental issue. If there is one thing that we do that requires that overlooked phrase "teamwork," on-time performance is it. I mean [on-time performance] has flight attendants helping stow, [it] has maintenance people getting the airplane to go.

Southwest employees seem to be very comfortable with the notion of developing relationships with other members of the organization rather than simply relying on a title to gain the respect of others. One thing that seemed to pervade the Southwest system was to play up committees and downplay hierarchy. Rather than simply rely on hierarchy and executive clout for decision making, Southwest chose instead to tap into the talents of all its employees, through their commitment and belief in committees. One Southwest employee noted the strength behind the on-time performance committee.

We have tons of committees here that try to do incredible things like the on-time performance committee. If that had been driven just by flight operations, I don't believe we could have done it. Or if it had just been driven by ground operations, I don't think it could have been done. Rather, it was put together by people who all had an equal stake.

Another Southwest executive discussed his dislike for titles and position.

I tell them I'm not going through life as a vice-president. If I fail, it's a nice fancy title and it's

understood, but I want people to know that [his name] is here, not the vice-president. It takes a lot to overcome that sometimes. It's that title thing.

In yet another conversation, a different Southwest manager was commenting about time in the field, about the need to better understand the needs of the people one supervises. In a sense this manager was describing the process he used to create an environment that fostered the reversal of roles between himself and his people, thus granting subordinates and executives the freedom to exercise leader and follower roles accordingly.

I have five directors here and each one has a different part of the country. I mean they understand me as well as I understand them, and they in turn have to impart that same list of what is important every day [to their people]. They spend a lot of time at the station and we all travel [to different stations]. It gives us a chance to talk one-on-one to ramp agents and customer service agents, to talk to them about what we can do for them. We're not out there to talk and preach. We're out there to listen to what they have to say.

The process of listening to and serving the needs of subordinates is critical within industries that rely heavily on front-line employees to carry out a service strategy. Rost stated that the relationship between leaders and followers is inherently unequal because the influence patterns are unequal. Interestingly, one manager of

Southwest commented on the amount of influence front-line employees tend to have in industries like the airlines.

In our business the people in the front-line already have a tremendous amount of power. And in some senses they already have much more power than I have. I don't see eight hundred to a thousand customers a day. They all are making decisions from the front-line on up. So I think that in this sense, everyone is a leader.

Keeping in mind Southwest's heavy reliance on its front-line people, it was quite disturbing to one member of the executive planning committee when she discovered that one of SWA's key service strategies had slipped not only in the DOT reports, but in the minds of Southwest's front-line employees as well. In a rather serendipitous way, it was discovered that on-time performance wasn't being stressed to the degree it had been stressed in the past.

I think that we at the top continued to talk about it [on-time performance], but we forgot to talk about it in training classes, to mention it to new hires. I can remember being shocked when a ticket agent who had gone from being a ticket agent to a flight attendant told me that our on-time performance was not even mentioned in her training class. When she told me that not one word had been mentioned in her flight attendant training class, it just amazed me. I couldn't imagine how we could have a class and not mention on-time performance.

This became the evidence needed to re-inject the troops with on-time priority--once again on-time performance became the priority of all priorities. Within the on-time performance committee recommendations, operations, customer service and inflight departments were asked to stress on-time performance in all new-hire and recurrent training at Southwest.

It was noted that many of Southwest's managers believe that when employees are given the opportunity to feel a sense of personal and collective contribution, they are more eager and much more likely to chip in and lend a hand when the going gets tough. Thus, they are better able to do leadership as they share in the overall purpose of the company. Southwest employees are consistently encouraged to recognize the importance of their own personal and individual effort. At Southwest, employees are led to feel important. One employee noted the special philosophy within Southwest.

We have a philosophy around here that's MMFI (make me feel important). And that's what we try to do with all of our employees. It's a spirit of individuality that somehow walks a fine line between individuality and teamwork. And I think by necessity we have to function as teams here because we have so few, so many fewer employees as with a comparable size airline. So you've got people who are trying to do a lot more, and the only way to do that is you get together and you work with the people that work around you. Leading is a verb. As opposed to managing something, I think leadership is

making things happen. It's putting things into action, it's moving things by influence as opposed to control. I mean essentially it's doing whatever it takes to have people follow. So I think in that sense that everyone is a leader. They all are making those types of decisions, from the front-line on up.

Another employee commented on the truly stellar stations he visited where relationships among Southwest's managers and nonmanagers were exemplary of leadership as defined by Rost. In these stations everyone was working together to get the flights in and out on time.

The common thread in these stations seems to be teamwork. Often, two operations agents are in the jetway, sometimes the station manager is helping. There is a sense of urgency and a sense of mission. It is amazing but these stations have an attitude which pervades from the manager downward. The managers are active and frequently helping.

From these examples and others that were reported back to the committee, several other changes were recommended. The committee noted that operations agents and supervisors played a significant role in on-time performance, and, as team leaders, they should be allowed to manage their flights. Thus, as often as possible, Southwest operations agents were encouraged to work in twos to turn flights around, especially when dealing with multiple passengers needing special assistance.

As noted earlier in this chapter, there is a movement away from Lone Ranger/heroic/great man leadership in the literature on leadership. Instead, the trend is moving toward shared and collaborative leadership. Thus, executives and nonmanagers alike were in the leadership relationship together.

We had mechanics on the committee, we had pilots, we had flight attendants, we had flight schedulers, we had ramp agents, we had ticket agents, we had dispatchers, we had everybody that had a piece and still has a piece in operating on time represented.

During Southwest's effort to correct their on-time performance record, managers, nonmanagers, and executives alike realized that on-time performance was worthy and needed both individual and collective action. As much of the correspondence and feedback illustrates, both individuals and teams of employees were sending ideas and suggestions to the on-time performance committee in an overall attempt to correct Southwest's lapse in on-time performance.

Again, Rost noted that in the leadership relationship the degree of involvement varies from person to person. In addition, the leader and follower roles can be interchanged. In other words, leaders are not always leaders and followers are not always followers. The key, however, is that people in the leadership relationships have chosen to get involved and are able to exercise considerable influence in the relationship. The environment within Southwest fostered

freedom and dedication to building relationships and to working together in teams toward the collective achievement of results. Thus SWA employees were able to exercise influence in a variety of ways. Some employees took on leader roles and wrote memos (see Figure 6), some joined subcommittees as followers and others as leaders, others served as critical listeners and spent a day in the field to ask questions and solicit recommendations (see Figure 7).

When asked what drove the performance improvement, one employee commented that it had a lot to do with the representatives of the committee.

It was the people we had. They had the respect of their peers. It was getting the right group of people who had good communication skills, had good knowledge of the business--what it takes to operate an airline--and getting a good cross section of people from all over the country that met that criteria.

In summary, a number of Southwest's managers, nonmanagers and executives became leaders and followers who actively formed a wide variety of influence-based relationships throughout Southwest to improve its on-time performance ratings. As Wells (1992) stated: "In an industry noted for its fractious labor relations, Southwest and its workers make peace, because employees know they have a large stake in the efficient operation of the company" (p. 46). In Southwest's on-time performance initiative, leaders and followers were anyone. Many parties, many titles, many

TO: GARY BARRON
FROM: JIM RUPPEL
DATE: APRIL 4, 1991
RE: ONTIME PERFORMANCE - STIMULUS FOR THE TROOPS

Since I am seeing so many complaints about our ontime performance, I thought you might be interested in sharing the attached letters with the appropriate employee groups. I received Ms. Maranda's letter on March 20, 1991 and got the 1976 Lamar memo / Frank Lorenzo letter from Kay Porter. It didn't take me too long to get the MESSAGE by comparing the old with the new. Anyway, I thought if I could get it, most everyone else could too.

What do you think ??

Jim R.

Figure 6. A memo regarding on-time performance--stimulus for the troops

Julie Miranda
2910 Grants Lake
Sugarland, TX 77478

150C
-350I

To whom it may concern:

It is with a great deal of disappointment that I write this letter. Over the last several years, I have flown Southwest Airlines almost exclusively, since my region entails the entire southwest portion of the country. In the past I have been both impressed and pleased with the courtesy of your employees and professional crews. In fact, I was so satisfied, I urged my eleven representatives, who cover the southwest, to fly only you. As of last week, I put an abrupt halt to anyone in your billion dollar company to use your organization.

In the last two weeks, I have flown you eight times. All my flights were delayed, which caused me to miss connections and in turn missed all three important business meetings. I do not appreciate being made a fool. As if this were not enough, your ticketing agents were rude, unresponsive and did not want to be "bothered." And let's not forget the disappearance of my luggage twice in that same time frame. Never, in all my years of travel, have I been more dissatisfied with an airline.

I enjoy Southwest because it is convenient and cost effective. I truly hope you can find a way to soothe me and alter my decision about you. If not, hello Delta, American and yes, even Continental. I anticipate your reply and thank you in advance for helping my situation.

Sincerely,

Ms. J.A. Miranda

Figure 6 continued

MONCRIEF-KILLIAN INTERESTS

1400 W. T. WASHINGTON BUILDING
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102
(817) 338-3686

R. B. MONCRIEF, JR.
WILLIAM A. KILLIAN

(800) 873-6444
1000 BRADY AVENUE N.E.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30316
(404) 527-6226
1043 POST OAK PLACE DR., SUITE 200
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77027

November 11, 1976

Francisco A. Lorenzo
President
Texas International Airlines, Inc.
P. O. Box 12788
Houston, Texas 77017

Mr. Lorenzo:

How delighted we were upon your announcement of service from Dallas/Ft. Worth Regional to Houston-Hobby. As very frequent travelers to Houston, and as Fort Worth residents, we decided immediately to use this new service, personally, and to instruct our employees to also choose T.I. Knowing that a trip to Love was no longer necessary, and knowing that we no longer needed to prostitute ourselves by supporting an airline who was refusing to support our new airport, we were excited about the availability of your new service.

Since October 1, 1976, we have personally made six trips to Hobby on Texas International. Our first trip was disappointing. The departure from D/FW was 35 minutes late, the boarding pass line was long and slow, the hostesses on board were unconcerned, drinks weren't offered until fifteen minutes before touch down, we even endured the other passengers' comments of "never again"; "It's just the same old bad T.I. service"; "To hell with this, I'm going back to Southwest". We decided to give you a fair chance. In the following five trips, we have yet to leave D/FW or Hobby on time, we have been completely "bumped" off of the reservation list once and forced to drive to Intercontinental to take a Braniff flight (without any concern, apology or assistance from T.I. personnel), have had baggage lost once, and, when in Houston, cannot get past a busy signal on your reservation line.

At this point, Mr. Lorenzo, we are tired. Tired of being late for business appointments in Houston due to your delayed service; tired of being served a drink (at a cost of \$1.50 when your competition offers cocktails without charge) without enough time to finish; tired of being scared to book out of town clients on your airline for fear of the service they might receive and the connections they will surely miss on other airlines; tired of the general "could care less" attitude of your employees; tired of trying to our best ability to support an airline that we have avidly followed in it's court battles to protect the financial stability of our new airport. Quite frankly, we just are plain tired of trying.

Therefore, we must tell you that, as of this date, we, and those in our employ, are going back. We're going back to "on time" flights, a great positive attitude, free drinks, and a standard of airline service we

think we deserve, and certainly expect, even though it means a little longer ground trip and a little more time. We think it's worth it, and necessary to preserve our business day and to use our energy's to their best. We're going back to Texas' NUMBER ONE airline, Southwest.

William A. Killian

WAK:jav

cc: M. Lamar Muse

Figure 6 continued

INTEROFFICE MEMO

TO: ALL SOUTHWEST AIRLINES EMPLOYEES
FROM: M. Lamar Muse
DATE: November 17, 1976
SUBJECT: ATTACHED LETTER

The attached letter from a prominent Fort Worth citizen to the President of Texas International Airlines with a copy to me made my day! I am quite sure it will also make your day and should point out the importance of each and every employee of Southwest doing everything possible to maintain the very high standing you and your company hold in the various communities we serve.

While it was making our day, I am sure it ruined Mr. Lorenzo's day, as well as everyone else with whom he came in contact.

Keep up the good work!

WLL/slp
Attachment

cc: Mr. William A. Killian

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

Figure 6. continued

JUL 10 1991

Herbert D. Kelleher
Chairman of The Board,
President & Chief Executive Officer
P. O. Box 30611
Love Field
Dallas, Texas 75235-1611
(214) 904-4110

July 8, 1991

MEMORANDUM

TO: Susan Riddle
FROM: Herb and Colleen
RE: Your June 10th Memo to the Ontime Performance Committee

Thanks for sharing with us a copy of your memo to the members of the Ontime Performance Committee. We couldn't agree with you more. As a matter of fact, that is precisely why we have had the "Day in the Field" program for our Officers and Directors for the last several years--so that they can truly "walk the talk." In addition, all of the Ontime Performance Committee members have been doing just what you suggest and will continue to do visits to the Field on a regular basis until such time as we are comfortable that we have accomplished our goals insofar as our ontime performance numbers are concerned. Furthermore, we have always encouraged all employees to visit as many other departments as they want to in order to learn about other job functions and responsibilities. While we have some more structured programs, (i.e., every year we have Station Supervisors visit our Customer Relations Department so that they can see what this Department deals with on a daily basis), we don't know of any Directors or Managers across our system who wouldn't welcome visits from employees on their own time who are truly interested in learning more about our various jobs and their individual challenges.

We also agree that the Winning Spirit is alive, well, and living at Southwest--as a matter of fact, we receive notes, reports, and letters, everyday verifying that fact--these notes come from Customers and employees alike, and they make us very proud to be part of this evergrowing and fulfilled family.

Finally, we agree that all of us need to spend more time stressing the positive instead of the negative. As a matter of fact, some of our Departments have already incorporated a new procedure of having a "positive" bulletin board--one that only "good news" can go on. We are also working on a new "LUV Report" which will be placed across our system in the same areas that "irregularity reports" can be found so that our employees will feel that there is a more appropriate document upon which to report the "good news" that they see each and every day.

Thanks for sharing your thoughts with us, and, even more importantly, thanks for caring!

HDK/CCB/nv

cc: SMC
Ontime Performance Committee
(with enclosures)

P.S. Incidentally, we are delighted to report that we have already made substantial improvement in our ontime performance numbers since this Committee's initial recommendations have been adopted and enacted.

Figure 7. A memo from Herb and Colleen regarding a "Day in the Field"

M E M O R A N D U M

June 10, 1991

TO: Overtime Performance Committee

FROM: Susan Riddle

SUBJECT: MEMO FROM HERB KELLEHER -- OVERTIME PERFORMANCE

If we (Southwest Airlines Employees) from the top level to the lowest level of employee are truly committed to being the best then each of us needs to truly "walk the talk".

Do you think that the Flight Attendant, Customer Service Agent, Operation Agent, that person at the ticket counters feels that the Managers, Directors and Vice Presidents of this Company understand what those jobs entail on a daily basis? I'm not any of the above, but I can tell you that they don't feel that anyone who hasn't done their job, understands that job.

The old Native American saying, "Walk a mile in my shoes", applies here. If each Manager, Director and Vice President would spend one day a week for one month doing the on line jobs (ticket agent, gate agent, operations agent, customer service representative, flight attendant, baggage handler, etc.) it would not only give them a unique insight into what is really going on out there, but it would also allow them an opportunity to see what was right out there and hopefully reproduce it elsewhere. When they came back to the table there would be a great deal to discuss.

It is not realistic to expect each on these "job visitors" to learn and be qualified to know the technical aspects of these jobs, but at least they would be doing the seating and service on the aircraft, the handling of Customers at the ticket counter, provisioning the aircraft and looking for those lost bags that every airline passenger lives in fear of us not finding. What I am suggesting is putting them in uniform and sending them out into the field, not with their "title on", but with their "investigation hat on". It would give everyone an opportunity to really have "management's ear" (and hands) to see and hear what is going on in the field. This might allow a new level of understanding and the spawn the necessary creativity to reconquer the title of "The Best Airline in the Industry". It would at the very least give credence to the phrase, "walk the talk".

If this technique was successful, it would not be unrealistic to send any willing employee out into the field to do the same thing. This way all of us could learn first hand what our internal Customer and external Customers really need to get the job done.

Coming from a customer service background, I know how isolated a person can come to feel when things are not going as well as they might, and management is looking for "the" solution. The solution seems to always become that the person on the line needs to do it faster, better and friendlier. That may in fact be "the" solution, however, at least all those on line people will feel that each employee got to have a hand in the solution. There will be a solution, I truly feel that.

Since I have only been with Southwest Airlines for six months it doesn't lend much authority to my suggestion, however, look at it like this: Who better to be aware of how different the climate is at Southwest Airlines than someone who has recently been on the outside and has seen other companies from the inside.

That WINNING SPIRIT is alive and well and living at SOUTHWEST AIRLINES. Maybe it has gotten a little tarnished in some areas, but from what I've seen and people I've met here, I am willing to bet that with a little elbow grease we will be and maintain the NUMBER ONE title.

It might also help to have every Southwest employee rate the flights they take on Southwest Airlines with a specific form. These would emphasize the positive actions and let flight crews and gate people know what they were doing right. It's easy to criticize, but it is true that a positive experience gets relayed to one person, while a negative experience gets relayed to twenty. It's difficult to keep a winning attitude when your tired, hungry and your feet hurt, if all you have heard for the last few days was how wrong things were. Lets all start telling the good news every day.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this and giving it some consideration.

Figure 7 continued

positions, many employees did leadership. There appears to be no direct correlation between title and position and leader and follower. There does, however, appear to be a correlation between Southwest's down-play of hierarchy and the employees' willingness to become leaders and followers as the organization collectively pursued an improvement in on-time performance.

Leaders and Followers Intend Real Changes At Southwest

"To say that the airline industry is one that is constantly in flux is an understatement. Half the U.S. Fleet flies under a cloud of bankruptcy, scrambling for advantage --and survival. High debt and the specter of soaring energy costs loom persistently" (Wells, 1992, p. 47). Yet as Southwest continues to make more than 1,400 flights a day, it also continues to turn a profit and at the same time views change as that valuable business opportunity which keeps a successful company from turning complacent. In fact, Kelleher commented on how he feared the absence of change.

In the airline industry you become used to a life of quick change. This is an operating business. There's nothing passive about it when your principle assets are moving at 540 miles per hour. . . . Our job is to never lose focus on keeping our costs low and to never suffer an excess of hubris so we take on too much debt. (Wells, 1992, p. 47)

Essentially, the slip in on-time performance created some unwanted stress and strain on the spirit of Southwest

Airlines. The intended change, improving on-time performance, became the glue that pulled the various different operating departments together in the leadership relationships that developed between February and December 1991. These influence-based relationships served as catalysts for the changes that took place during that time period. The following examples are illustrations of the changes, operational and substantive, that resulted from leaders and followers pursuing improvement in SWA's on-time performance.

According to Rost (1991) intention is in the present and is communicated and demonstrated through words and actions that the leaders and followers use to communicate and prove their intentions. The real changes take place in the future. Since I have the advantage as a researcher of the time lapse between intention and real changes, I can show the words and actions that showed the intent to change as well as the results of the collective intentions--the real changes that took place some months later. As the intention to improve on-time performance was developed, other improvements and changes also began to take effect.

Our people were focusing on pushing those planes out on time. They recognized that their work had an influence on the overall figures. And collectively, they were trying to influence the positive for the benefit of our company. Again, now the feedback, we have been consistently number one in on-time performance for a

while, and now everywhere I go it's, "Hey, how about that on-time performance!"

Changes and improvements were the result of various departments getting involved. The committee recommended changes to numerous departments. Operations agents were encouraged to change various aspects of the boarding process. Customer service agents were encouraged to change oversales and check-in procedures. Inflight crews were encouraged to modify unaccompanied minor procedures and begin supervisor briefings about on-time performance. Ramp agents were encouraged to return to split loading of aircraft and to use more discretion concerning the servicing of lavatories and checking of bags on the jetway. Maintenance crews were increased at some of Southwest's busiest stations. Scheduling and dispatch people took advantage of a newly developed computer program to aid in swapping slots during ground delays. They were also missioned to identify up to twenty lines or series of flights that consistently ran late and were critical to on-time performance because all delays Southwest encounters creates a ripple effect throughout the system. Pilots were encouraged to make greater use of the phone patch capabilities to inform dispatchers concerning the progress of their flights. These recommendations were clearly numerous. Yet, they are merely a part of the systemwide changes that the people of Southwest experienced in 1991 in their collective efforts to improve on-time performance.

While on-time performance was the issue at hand, for many employees at Southwest there were clearly other concerns that were associated with performance and DOT ratings. The Southwest employees were keenly aware that they held a very large stake in the efficient operations of the company. Again and again employees' comments linked their success with the success of Southwest. "If Southwest Airlines succeeds, I succeed." A second employee mentioned that "people [were] involved in [the on-time performance effort] because they wanted to see Southwest succeed." Yet another elaborated in more detail.

They [employees] know they influence the numbers, but it's not just the numbers. When you are number one, you want to stay number one. That is one of the ways we keep the employees focused. They are very proud of being number one. And when you are proud of your position, you fight to keep that position. We have spent a lot of time communicating where we wanted to go so that the guy who is down there throwing the bag on the airplane is more likely to say, "I'm building an airline," rather than just feeding Shamu a bag.

Again, the perception and concern related to on-time performance was a bigger and broader issue than simply planes arriving and departing on schedule. This issue involved the spirit of the airline, the pride of belonging and the value of contributing as a leader and as a follower. Kelleher

commented on the spirit involved in belonging and contributing to Southwest.

I say, when you're with your grandchildren, I want you to be able to tell your grandchildren that "Being with Southwest Airlines is one of the proudest things that ever happened to me." And another thing that I talk to people about is being altruistic. You must be altruistic. When you're doing something that you shouldn't be doing, you're letting down all the other people that work with you and their families. You're jeopardizing their education, you're jeopardizing their food, you're jeopardizing their housing, you're jeopardizing their clothing. Don't jeopardize other people like that.

In addition, Kelleher noted that there is much more at stake than a day's job; he commented on the reasons why people dedicated themselves so willingly to this improvement effort.

I think it's because it builds from a sense of affiliation with Southwest Airlines. Think of this not as a day's job, but as your life's work. I'm trying to get people to look beyond, into the future. This is a crusade, this is a cause! Then people tend to lend themselves to it.

As Rost pointed out, when leaders and followers engage in a relationship they do so to intend real changes that are substantive and transforming. The *intention* to effect change is one thing; however, to actually effect change is quite

another. Southwest did more than intend change, they effected change in a very real and powerful way. Leaders and followers in Southwest intended real, substantive change and in six months their intentions became reality. Southwest improved their performance rating and moved their DOT standing from last place to first place. Through the accomplishment of this real and substantive change, a number of other significant things occurred for the people of Southwest. The sense of security related to working for a number one rated airline returned, customer complaints went down, and in turn, the pride that employees experienced by contributing to Southwest's overall mission and operating strategy was rekindled as well. As Kelleher and a number of others expressed, the Southwest spirit drove leaders and followers to engage in influence-based relationships that led to changes in people's lives, attitudes, behaviors and basic assumptions. Thus, leaders and followers effected substantive and transforming change as they developed and engaged in relationships to change some operational procedures and ultimately improved Southwest's on-time performance.

Leaders And Followers Develop Mutual Purposes At Southwest

Leadership is the common enterprise of leaders and followers and must be done with mutuality of purpose. In 21st century leadership, mutual purposes are the result of influence relationships that are forged together over time in

a multidirectional and noncoercive manner. However, Rost (1991) also noted that there can be several purposes around which different followers and leaders can build a common vision. In respect to Southwest's on-time performance initiative, getting the planes in and out on-time was not the bigger, broader more qualitative vision that Rost describes as purpose. Rather, improving on-time performance was a real, intended change that was reflective of Southwest's bigger, broader more qualitative picture of the future. The formal mission of Southwest Airlines reads:

Southwest Airlines is dedicated to the highest quality of Customer Service delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, individual pride and Company Spirit.

In addition Southwest Airlines commits the following to its employees:

We are committed to provide our employees a stable work environment with equal opportunity for learning and personal growth. Creativity and innovation are encouraged for improving the effectiveness of Southwest Airlines. Above all, employees will be provided the same concern, respect, and caring attitude within the organization that they are expected to share externally with every Southwest Customer.

Employees of Southwest imparted personal commitments, goals and aspirations as they shared their experiences in bringing the airline back to its top position in on-time performance and thus enabled them to carry out the overall mission of

Southwest. Both individual and collective efforts created the influence necessary to drive this change effort toward a 21st century definition of leadership.

What follows are further accounts of the integrated pursuits, individual and collective, that contributed to the achievement of Southwest's improvement regarding on-time performance--the realization of a common purpose.

From individual efforts to collective initiatives, getting Southwest back on-time was the common purpose that worked its way throughout the entire Southwest system. Everyone could see the impact of their performance on flight delays. In more specific terms, one employee commented on the vision SWA employees all took part in achieving.

Southwest wanted to operate the number of delays in single digits and we've done that every month since then. We wanted the number of flights delayed, fifteen minutes or more, to be in something less than the 9% rate.

Another employee noted that "the team signed up. This [was] going to be our focus, the number one thing we talked about every week until we got it corrected." And yet another employee noted the impact that individual effort had on the overall purpose of Southwest:

They [employees] recognized that two minutes did make the difference. These reports [DOT] let people know how individual efforts make the difference particularly when it comes to consumer complaints. We let them know how

the complaints are measured: i. e., by how many complaints the DOT received on Southwest for a particular period. And our employees know that those numbers are so low, that one person can make all the difference.

In order to facilitate the development of a common purpose and rally employees around this effort, "there was follow-up communication that went to all the employees. After we identified what we needed to do, and how we're going to accomplish it, each route communicated in writing to their employees and we just made it a company focus. It wasn't in particular the profit goal. It was the company goal." One employee shared his perception of the effort: "The end result was we were all doing a lot of little things that [could be] tighten[ed] up and improved. Each area had the things the people in that area needed to do in order to improve. And as a result of the communication with all the employees, everybody worked together as a team."

Although this initiative did become a very passionate pursuit for many within Southwest, it did so because of the more consuming vision and purpose of Southwest. The people of Southwest were committed to the collective interests of the company. One employee noted the reason d'être, the purpose driving both the mutual and individual desires, activities and interests leading to the improvement of Southwest's on-time performance.

This is the end of our ultimate goal. We're here. You notice people don't leave Southwest? The needs of many outweigh the needs of the one. Well, I think that's the general theme here. Southwest [is] concerned with us. Every step [Herb Kelleher] takes he really considers the pros and cons: How it's going to affect everybody at this company. And we're going to have our hard times, you know, with the economy. We're all willing to stick together and do whatever it takes so that not one person has to be furloughed or lose his/her job.

Conclusion

As the previous sections have illustrated, leaders and followers engaged in influence-based relationships as they worked collectively to change low performance ratings and realize Southwest's common vision of operating its flights on time. This change effort provided a number of vivid examples of persuasive appeals, multidirectional influence strategies and power resources that were used by leaders and followers at Southwest to tap into the concerns of other employees who were, indeed, interested in operating their airline on time. In addition, it was clear that the leaders and followers involved in the on-time performance turnaround were involved because of their desire to be a part of a successful airline. In other words, their involvement showed no relation to title or position. In fact, Southwest's downplay of hierarchy tended to grant all concerned and interested employees, holding high and low degrees of power and authority, the

freedom to become leaders and followers as the organization pursued the realization of this common vision. Many different departments, many different individuals, many different levels engaged in leadership relationships in order to effect substantive and transforming change in people's lives, attitudes, behaviors and basic assumptions. The on-time performance change effort caused a number of employees to rethink their individual contributions and instead, focus on their collective participation in the arrival and departure of planes. Again, this issue involved more than on-time performance, this issue involved the pride of belonging and the value of contributing to making Southwest Airlines the best airline in the country in on-time performance.

In this leadership process individuals became zealots who were determined and committed to doing whatever it took to get the planes back on time and Southwest back to its number one standing. Many on-time performance changes were reflective of the more collective mission and purpose of Southwest Airlines. The on-time performance committee's intentions became a collective reality that ignited the entire organization into a flame of synergistic activity. On-time performance zealots became the leaders and followers who actively pursued some of the more mundane functional and departmental tasks in addition to their own more personal goals in order to effect some performance changes. One employee noted that "we couldn't have done, seen, or

witnessed the kind of difference we did without people that were consumed with the goal."

On-time performance was "brought to the limelight, brought to the forefront. Everybody was thinking about it." Thus, individuals and collective teams of employees worked in unison to get Southwest back on time. By December 1991 Southwest was leading the industry again. Leaders and followers alike rallied around this common enterprise, improving performance, and they engaged in leadership while intending and succeeding at bringing Southwest back to its number one position in the DOT reports. Their efforts proved powerful. In 1991 Southwest Airlines was recognized as number one in on-time performance. And more than two years later, in 1993, all of Southwest's aircraft adorn a "#1" inscribed in the center of a big, bold, red heart to symbolize and recognize Southwest's consistent accomplishments for the entire year of 1992. In recognition of Southwest's accomplishments the airline became the Triple Crown Winner for the year. Southwest was number one in on-time performance for all of 1992, number one in customer satisfaction for all of 1992, and number one in handling baggage for all of 1992. The on-time performance decline that began in the fall of 1990 instigated a ground swell of leadership activities that brought on-time performance to its rightful focus in the minds of Southwest employees.

Creating A Culture Committee

In the early part of 1990 during the Gulf Crisis, oil prices soared, the American spirit declined and the economy took a turn for the worst. Employees in most major United States corporations were hearing rhetoric about "tightening the belt" and "the tough times on the way." At Southwest, it was much of the same, but unlike many other United States companies who had chosen to "right size," Southwest had already chosen the right people. The employees of Southwest Airlines were rolling up their sleeves and gearing up for survival. One employee in particular, Colleen Barrett, Executive Vice President of Customers and one of the original four founding members of Southwest, was preparing for more than survival; she was gearing up for a fight. Yet, Barrett had more in mind than a fight to keep the airline alive, she was preparing to keep the "Dream Alive." The dream involves the "forever perpetuation of the Southwest culture." *Dare to Dream* is a poem that was dedicated to the dream makers of Southwest Airlines and appeared on the front page of The 20th anniversary issue of *LuvLines - Southwest Airlines' Corporate Newsletter* (see Figure 8). Long before the 20th anniversary of Southwest Airlines the dream had indeed become a reality and the reality had turned into a legend. The tools that moved Southwest from dream to legend were described by Herb Kelleher as being "indomitable spirit, boundless energy, immense goodwill and a burning desire to succeed." These so called tools have become embedded within Southwest's culture

The 20th Anniversary Issue of LuvLines — Southwest Airlines' Corporate Newsletter

Dare To Dream

*Some people only look at life through eyes that seldom gleam
while others look beyond today as they're guided by a dream*

*And the dreamers can't be sidetracked by dissenters who may laugh
for only they alone can know how special is their path*

*But dreams aren't captured easily; there's much work before you're through
but the time and efforts are all worthwhile when the impossible comes true*

*And dreams have strength in numbers for when a common goal is shared
the once impossible comes true because of all of those who cared*

*And once it's seen reality a dream has just begun
for magically from dreams come dreams and a walk becomes a run*

*But with growth of course comes obstacles and with obstacles comes fear
but the dream that is worth dreaming finds a way to find the clear*

*And the dream continues growing reaching heights before unseen
and it's all because of the courage of the dreamers and their dreams*

— John Turnipseed

TO THE DREAM MAKERS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES . . .

Figure 8. Dare to Dream

and are better known as the Spirit of Southwest. Thus, keeping the dream alive involves the creation of a living legend, not just the survival of an airline. The Spirit is free to live on through the perpetuation of Southwest's culture. This Airline has created a revolution that has thrown out the old ways of doing business. Southwest's indomitable spirit has opened the skies and made it affordable and fun to fly.

In the introduction of Chapter Five, Freiberg (1987) stated that "symbolically this chapter describes the members of Southwest Airlines as a family, as individuals bound together by a common purpose in pursuit of a greater societal good" (p. 146). More than six years later, this section of another fifth chapter is also a symbolic description of the family-like culture of Southwest Airlines. More specifically, this section is descriptive of the efforts that have gone into creating, maintaining and embellishing the family-like culture of Southwest Airlines. For this is a culture that has become a living legend for all those fortunate enough to have experienced it. It's a culture that continues to be a nurturing environment within which people are encouraged to grow, prosper and share their good fortune. Employees, visitors, and all special friends entering Southwest Airline's general offices at Love Field, Dallas, Texas are greeted with this message and reminder:

The people of Southwest Airlines are "the creators" of what we have become--and of what we will be.

Our people transformed an idea into a legend. That legend will continue to grow only so long as it is nourished--by our people's indomitable spirit, boundless energy, immense goodwill, and burning desire to excel. Our thanks--and our love--to the people of Southwest Airlines for creating a marvelous family and a wonderful airline!

As an extension to the family-metaphor, one employee noted "the hardest thing in business is to stay true to your niche, Southwest is committed to its short-haul, point-to-point strategy--unlike some floundering competitors. Their focus is global. Ours is the neighborhood. We don't get greedy. Southwest just wants the neighborhood." Clearly, the success of this "marvelous family" and "wonderful airline" is due in part to a focused business strategy and considerable attention and adherence to its market niche. However, unlike the previous section of this chapter, the focus herein is not on business operations. Rather, this section is a descriptive analysis of leadership and whether or not leadership, as defined by Rost (1991) played a role in nurturing Southwest's family culture, a culture serving 36 neighborhoods around the country by creating a hometown presence where ever the airline flies.

As Ann Richards, Governor of Texas, noted in a letter proclaiming June 18, 1991 as Southwest Airlines Day, "the success of Southwest Airlines is legendary and its innovative leadership has changed the airline industry forever," (see

Figure 9). The innovative leadership Governor Richards described is embedded deep within the unique family culture of Southwest. This two-part analysis explores how people within Southwest exercised leadership to keep this family culture alive and nurtured both inside and outside of the company. First, the culture is described to better acquaint the reader with the "family feel" at Southwest and the reason behind the creation of a culture committee. Second, examples and illustrations of this change effort--the creation of the culture committee to maintain the family feel while the Airline continued to grow rapidly--is used to better understand how leadership has served to nurture the growth and power of the culture supporting this progressive and profitable airline.

The Southwest Family

According to Herb Kelleher, "this is a company created by its people. It is a daily celebration here of customers. It is a daily celebration of great employees. It is a daily celebration of positive things that happen." This celebration began in 1971, when the founding members of Southwest, Rolling King, Herb Kelleher, Colleen Barrett, and Gary Baron created a totally new way to fly. Their innovation created the niche for which Southwest is so well known--short trips, low fares, frequent departures and more fun than business as usual typically allows. Now, more than 22 years and 36 destinations later, Southwest is one of the most successful companies and one of the most preferred

OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM
STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

This year, 1991, marks the Twentieth Anniversary of Southwest Airlines, founded in 1971 by Herbert D. Kelleher.

The success of Southwest Airlines is legendary, growing from four aircraft in 1971 to 114 aircraft in 1991, and its innovative leadership has changed the airline industry forever. For twenty years, Southwest Airlines has set the pace in every aspect of the industry.

Southwest Airlines is one of the Southwest's most successful companies, experiencing continuous growth since its founding. It is now the seventh largest carrier in the nation and, since 1989, has produced more than \$1 billion in operating revenues annually. The airline employs more than 9,000 people and has flown nearly 20 million passengers. It currently serves 32 cities in 14 states.

The contributions of Southwest Airlines to the Texas economy and to the entire economy of the region it serves cannot be overestimated. Texas cities have been brought closer together, and businesses have prospered from the frequent, inexpensive, and reliable travel opportunities offered by Southwest Airlines.

They have also provided great opportunities for pleasure travel. There is no question that the tourism industry in Texas has benefited from the services of Southwest Airlines, and many families appreciate the ease with which distant relatives can travel to be together.

Texans should be encouraged to recognize Southwest Airlines as a tremendous asset to the people of Texas. In our large state, the ease of transport they offer is essential, and the convenient link they provide between cities in and outside of Texas is vital to business and pleasure travelers alike.

Therefore, I, Ann W. Richards, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim June 18, 1991, as:

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES DAY

in Texas and urge the appropriate recognition thereof.

In official recognition whereof, I hereby affix my signature this

14th day of June 1991.

Governor of Texas

Figure 9. Letter from Governor Ann Richards

places to work in America. Southwest started out with a mission, to fight against poor service, late arrivals, high fares, and a lack of fairness in the airline industry. From the beginning, the founders and almost every employee thereafter have rallied around that mission. Today, Southwest's success and profitability have led to increasing press coverage and public notoriety, not only in the eyes of its people, but in the eyes of its competitors, its customers and the communities it serves. Now communities are begging for service, they too want to become a Southwest neighborhood. The competition is seeking ways to emulate Southwest but customers are consistently faithful to this novel, little airline that could.

The creation and nurturing of the family metaphor, Southwest's "we" orientation to doing businesses, have contributed to the success that Southwest enjoys today. The employees of Southwest work and play in a culture that embellishes and values family, love and fun. The sense of family is quickly and easily experienced as one wanders the halls of the general offices at Love Field. Apparently, when Southwest built its new corporate headquarters "every art company in Dallas offered to decorate the hallways and reception area. But Southwest bought no art, and instead, put up hundreds of employees' pictures on the walls, many of them taken at a seemingly constant round of parties" (Levering & Moskowitz, 1993, pp. 415-416). The walls and halls are adorned with captivating and intriguing photos,

news clippings, letters, articles, advertisements, promotions, gifts, trinkets, momentos and the like, all framed and exhibited in a symbolic display of Southwest's lore (see Figure 10).

The photos are of employees, or more commonly referred to as family members, at Southwest's Christmas parties, chili cook-offs, Halloween Celebrations, charity benefit games, Ronald McDonald Houses and many other events that were worthy of a candid photograph. Letters from governors, the competition, and other community leaders have been framed and placed among the memorabilia. Articles and news clippings about Southwest, Kelleher and other family members are beautifully matted and framed so these words and stories can live on and serve as constant reminders of Southwest's notoriety. Advertisements and promotions from Southwest's beginnings serve as a constant reminder of days gone by, calling attention to the styles, priorities and values of each era. Gifts and trinkets from customers and friends are encased and displayed in appreciation of their crazy, kind and fun-loving spirits. Cards of all sorts--Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, birthday, holiday and many more--are framed and hung to acknowledge the spirit of the season that Southwest has faithfully spread around the country throughout the years (see Figure 11). The end result of a walk through these halls is a collective and vivid pictorial of Southwest--what is was, what it is and what it continuously strives to be--a fun, loving family! In reference to these halls of

Figure 10. The hallways of Southwest Airlines

We Dearly Hope
That You Will Ring
In This Holiday
Season With Peace,
Love, & Good Cheer.
Seasons Greetings
From All Of Us At
Southwest Airlines.

OUR HEARTS GO A'FLYIN!

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY FROM SOUTHWEST AIRLINES.

Figure 11. Greeting cards from Southwest Airlines

memories, one employee commented that "Herb's philosophy is 'never forget where you came from,' because [Southwest] was struggling in the beginning."

Just as family has become ingrained in Southwest's culture, so too has love. Early on in its legendary and tenuous start, to say that Southwest was birthed through the labor of love may sound hokey. However, this labor of love is not as superficial as it sounds. To the Southwest family, love is a common word. For example the corporate newsletter is entitled *LuvLines* (with a heart to dot the i), and the 1991 20th anniversary company slogan "20 Years of Loving You," appeared on stationery and in ads during Southwest's 18 month anniversary celebration. On the bottom, right-hand corner of Southwest's letterhead is a little red heart. Flight attendants serve love potions and love bites (drinks and peanuts). One of Southwest's employee recognition programs is better known as the "Heroes of the Heart" program and a 737-300 aircraft has been decorated with a large red heart on the lower front panel in honor of the program's recipients. In addition, if you happen to be down around the hustle and bustle of the New York Stock Exchange checking in on the daily rates, Southwest's ticker symbol will flash before you as LUV. Thus, to outsiders as superficial and unusual as it may at first appear, that's the way the people of Southwest love it!

Yet, the love of family and the love of love don't fully explain the unique spirit of Southwest. Another love for

Southwest employees is fun. Within Southwest the passionate pursuit of fun is taken very seriously! Fun is hard to avoid at Southwest, as Levering and Moskowitz (1993) noted:

You grasp the flavor of life at Southwest by seeing how employees dress. Most airlines require employees who deal with the public to be dressed in businesslike uniforms. Not Southwest. Flight attendants and ticket agents typically dress in casual outfits, like golf shirts, shorts, and sneakers. Southwest has run recruiting ads that point up this facet of work life; "Work at a place where wearing pants is optional, not to mention high-heeled shoes, ties and panty hose. . . . Which not only makes Southwest Airlines people look a little more hip, but feel a lot more comfortable. . . . We're always looking for people who take their job seriously, but not necessarily themselves." (p. 413)

And don't think for a minute that flight attendants and ticket agents are the only ones who partake in comfort and casual. Kelleher, too, relishes in the comfort of casual clothes and recognizes the symbolism behind it, even at the expense of executive credibility.

On Friday the general office wears its "funwear," which means they can wear anything they want to work. No matter what I'm doing that day, I dress in my funwear. I walked into a board of directors meeting one day wearing a sweatshirt and everyone there was in suits. . . . Now that might sound crazy, but I want our people to

know that I enjoy them, that I appreciate them, and it doesn't matter who my audience is. (Sexton, 1990, p. 10)

However, fun isn't only about dress, it's an attitude. "Southwest assiduously looks for extroverted people who know that their mission is to work hard and have fun, and who feel that by joining Southwest they're becoming a part of an extended family" (Wells, 1992, p. 46). Fittingly, once people become a member of the Southwest extended family, they typically stay for a lifetime of fun. According to Levering and Moskowitz (1993) "Southwest promotes from within. The airline fills roughly eighty percent of higher-level jobs through internal promotions" (P. 414). In addition, Southwest works understaffed because it has a no-layoff policy. So when the people go to work for Southwest, the company hopes they will feel like its the last job they will ever have to have. One employee commented on working for Southwest.

It's not a job it's an extracurricular activity or a hobby, because there is always something else to do that involves someone from Southwest Airlines. . . . There is always something going on.

According to Levering and Moskowitz (1993) "perhaps because of all this extracurricular activity there are over 300 married couples at Southwest Airlines" (p. 415).

The experience of family, love and fun is not serendipity. The founders were individually and collectively

committed to the vision of creating an airline where family, love and fun are manifested within the culture--in the day-to-day operations of creating an airline "where people have job security, where their humanity is enhanced because they grow as individuals and have a lot of fun, and where profits are made because of an uncompromising commitment to serve the customer through frequent flights and low fares" (Freiberg, 1987, pp. 183-84). When individuals join Southwest, they join more than a successful one billion dollar airline. Southwest likes to say, "Welcome to our extended family." It is a family of people who are committed, invested, dedicated and passionate about the cause of Southwest Airlines. One employee and member of the culture committee noted that the cause of Southwest Airlines is to increase the collective prosperity of all of the employee family.

Although this family metaphor has lived on throughout the years, Southwest continued to grow and provide a home for 11,000 employees, so the family feel became increasingly more difficult to maintain. Thus, in the last few years it has become ever more necessary to carefully plan and consciously integrate people into the Southwest family. The family feel is so much a part of the Southwest lore that the thought of losing that feel was cause for concern. One employee commented on the importance of that feel.

As we have grown from several hundred people to thousands, we are eleven thousand plus now, the question becomes "How can [we] maintain that same irreverence and

family attitude and true spirit that we have gotten so accustomed to and that makes us different from the other airlines.

In addition, Barrett, the visionary behind the creation of the culture committee, stated:

My fear was increasing as the company became more spread out. I could feel a difference in the personalities [at different locations around the country]. I could see it. I could almost touch it. And if you talked to [employees] on an individual basis, you would find that the reason that they joined [Southwest] is that they observe so many good things. They believe in their hearts that it is going to be a different kind of company. They believe they can make a contribution and that it is a family atmosphere. But when they got hired and when they got to work, they found that they *weren't* seeing a lot of history, we *weren't* spending enough time educating and building enough pride in them [like we used to]. If I had my druthers, every time we open a new city, I would fill it with 50% employees that had been here ten years or more. But that's unrealistic, so since we couldn't do that, and I was seeing this traumatic difference, then I knew we had to do something else to try to get that constant excitement and enthusiasm and information going to those [new] areas.

Thus, in the early part of 1990 Southwest's culture committee was created. At that time Southwest was about

ready to launch its eighteen month 20th anniversary celebration, "the longest celebration in history" and what Barrett ended up doing was naming two committees, a culture committee and the 20th anniversary committee.

There were only six people that were different from one committee to the other. I actually combined them and made them one for about a year and a half. And it worked. It worked great, and we saw the rewards. . . . There were 23 people, I think, on this committee. Maybe three were line. The rest of them had some kind of managerial responsibility. But when I saw how well it went, and how it worked perfectly. . . what I intended to do was to have the committee change members every twelve months. These people were so proud to be on the committee and were so into it, they about had a heart attack when I told them "OK folks, now you know this is our last meeting as a group." I mean some of them cried. Some of them wrote notes, "Colleen: you can't do this." [In 1992] We now have a 44 member [culture] committee--the entire original 23 people. And we've added all line people. And it is so exciting!

In essence, the culture committee was created to pull together people who are exemplar of Southwest's culture. Most of the original committee members had ten or so years of tenure and/or spirit invested in Southwest. However, the people--regardless of plus or minus ten years and regardless of position--officer, manager, line, or the like--were hand

picked in the sense that the committee needed people who had Southwest's maverick, caring, really irreverent way of doing things, people that were great in their individual jobs. Memoranda to the committee consistently noted these maverick qualities.

You are the "eyes" and "ears" out there; remember, too, that you were hand chosen to be on this committee because of your creativity, areas of expertise, energy, enthusiasm, and most importantly, Southwest Spirit.

These people became a leadership collective who were committed to leading activities that had been specifically designed to keep the "Dream Alive." Southwest created a committee of individuals from different parts and different levels in the system. This committee of leaders and followers came together to nurture and perpetuate the culture that has contributed to making Southwest successful throughout the years. The leaders and followers on the Southwest culture committee were determined and missioned to keep the fundamental culture as a key to their business success.

The next section is a descriptive analysis of how members of the culture committee exercised 21st century leadership to keep the Dream Alive. Rost's model of 21st century leadership is a template through which we can gain a better understanding about whether or not members of the culture committee engaged in leadership to perpetuate family, love and fun as they fought to keep the dream alive. What

follows are various illustrations and examples of the ways in which leaders and followers on the culture committee engaged in influenced-based relationships and intended real changes that were reflective of mutual purposes. The mutual purposes involved collective attempts to keep the principles of family, love and fun alive and experiential for all key stakeholders--employees, customers and the communities Southwest serves.

Leadership Is Based On Influence

To simply suggest that the creation of the culture committee was a leadership initiative and was reflective of influence-based relationships would be a rather bland description of the initiative and the airline industry in general. In an industry where numerous carriers were filing for Chapter 11, a company offering job security, a successful track record and opportunities for growth has almost become an anomaly. Southwest, in many respects, is an anomaly and not just because of its business success. Rather, in more ways than one, Southwest is a very safe and secure place to work.

The safety and security I'm referring to has nothing to do with operations, maintenance and the like. I am referring to the safety and security that is manifested in the culture of Southwest. This is more than a company, this is a family. According to Kelleher, "A family atmosphere simply means, number one, that you're sincerely interested in everyone who's a part of your family. Number two, that you forgive

some eccentricities, some departures from the norm, because they are a part of your family" (Sexton,. 1990, p. 11). The Southwest culture committee was fertile ground for studying multidirectional influence relationships based on persuasive behavior and the use of power resources such as reputation, prestige, personality, purpose, status, and motivation, just to name a few. The following examples illustrate the ways in which members of the culture committee influenced others at Southwest to experience and live-out the family lore. In addition, the examples that follow are illustrations of the committee's efforts to foster Southwest's spirit of family which encouraged an attitude of unconditional love and appreciation, and in turn, allowed the expression of individuality to flourish.

The influence used frequently, freely and naturally within the Southwest culture is not the kind of influence one typically experiences in many business contexts. The culture at Southwest is not reflective of coercive, authority and power-based influence. One rich example of relationship building and the practice of multidirectional, noncoercive influence is reflected in one employee's description of a "Southwest Day In The Field" experience. Not only was this activity encouraged among culture committee members, it is clearly a widely endorsed practiced within the Southwest system. An employee from the Executive Office wrote a summary of his experience during his three days in the field. This summary highlights the importance of on-time performance

and the significance of the Southwest Spirit. However, this letter also offers a few remarkable examples of the ways in which influence is operationalized at Southwest Airlines in order to build the kinds of leadership relationships described in this study (see Figure 12).

In fact, the culture committee was formed to foster the development and creation of relationships reflective of multidirectional, non-coercive, caring, and empowering forms of influence. Southwest's culture committee consisted of zealots, "missionaries"--leaders and followers dedicated to the continuation of Southwest's family feel. One member of the committee stated:

Our culture committee has about fifty people on it. Everything from flight attendants and reservations to Colleen Barrett [Executive Vice President Customers] and Jim Wimberly [Vice President, Ground Operations and Provisioning]. And our task is to try to hold on to the unique culture of Southwest Airlines and not let it go as we continue to grow larger and larger.

This was not a committee of Southwest's general office executives who were missioned to tell the rest of the organization how they ought to think and behave while working for Southwest Airlines. Rather, it was a committee that the founders and executives at Southwest endorsed. More specifically, Barrett created the committee to spread family, love and fun around a growing system. Another committee member noted:

A ■ DAY ■ IN ■ THE ■ FIELD

As you know, most of our departments encourage our Employees to visit other departments on their own time in order to build relationships between departments and in order to learn about other areas of the Company. Because we felt that the report shown below was so indicative of the wonderful spirit that abounds "out there," we wanted to share this particular report with you. Barri Tucker is a Senior Communications Representative in the Executive Office, and Kathy Pettit is the Director of Corporate Communications. Incidentally, the Employee named "Joe" in this report is Joe Mark Taylor, who is a Dallas Mechanic. Read and enjoy.

August 23, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kathy Pettit

FROM: Barri Tucker

RE: Three Days In The Field . . . or
Three Flight Attendants and a Chick from the Executive Office

God, I LUV this Company! Where else could you work that allows you the opportunity to experience all aspects of its operation firsthand??? Nowhere, I tell you, NOWHERE!!!

I am, of course, referring to my three-day trip as a Flight Attendant. I flew with some real veterans! All three Flight Attendants (Eileen Lopez, Pam Morgan, and Fran Chance) have been flying with us for 18 years, although you'd never guess it. All three exhibit Southwest Spirit, zest, and passion for their job. Burn out after 18 years??? Not these girls. What examples. Incidentally, after flying for three days, the importance of positive attitudes in the sky has never been clearer.

I cannot stress how much I have been enlightened. You know, spending so much time reading letters "indicative of dissatisfaction" made me start to wonder if everything was starting to "unravel." I just experienced three days that let me know that we're doing a whole lot more "good" than "bad." Three days of ontime (if not early) arrivals. Three days of flawless operation. Three days of some of the most incredible internal POS I've seen.

From the Provisioners to nonrevs, everyone I encountered was cheerful and helpful. Kudos especially to a guy named Joe, who works in Maintenance. He was nonreving out of Dallas on the 7:00 a.m. enroute to Las Vegas. When he boarded, he had breakfast (sweetrolls) for the entire crew. At every stop, he got up and helped pick up the trash on the airplane, cross seatbelts, fold blankets, etc. The "A" Flight Attendant told me that he does this on every flight he gets on. If there was any room for doubt, on Wednesday, he boarded the first flight out of Vegas, once again, with "goodies" for the whole crew. As soon as I get positive ID on this guy via Naomi, I will send a commendation. Naomi is trying to figure out exactly who he really is since she informs me that the guys over there go by different names (like Moose, Wolf, Alien and Butthead). Nevertheless, I'll track him down.

As I told you when I returned, some of the things that keep spirits up are downright "hokey." Example: the little sticky notes the Provisioners leave for the Flight Attendants. "Southwest FA's are the best." Sound a little like "Go Tech! Beat the Horns!" to you???? Darn right!!! What a great little thing to do. The notes are never the same, but they are always there, at every stop. All I kept thinking was, "bet that doesn't happen at AA" (or anywhere else for that matter).

The appreciation for the job at hand—indeed! I know I don't have to tell you, you've done the job—but it is hard work! On a 45 minute flight, just getting drinks for a full plane is a chore. Oh yes, and the unaccompanied minors that we had on virtually every flight, and the elderly folks who need extra care, and a few white-knuckled people, and the guy who decides at pushback that he has to go to the bathroom and then unzips his pants and threatens to relieve himself on the floor if you don't let him go!

Honestly, I could go on and on about things that encouraged me. When you hear (via letters) so much we're doing wrong, the statistics are easily forgotten. But the bottomline is, 2,250,000 Customers use Southwest each month, and when you compare that to our complaint ratio, we do a bang-up job out there. My perspective is renewed, and what I've seen makes me proud(er).

I do have something to report that sounds like I'm "beating a dead horse." Our lavs are terribly offensive. I don't know what can be done, but it is definitely a problem. We asked for the lav to be serviced at one stop because it was to the point where if the door were opened, the smell would permeate the last three rows of the aircraft. Not good. I'm happy to hear that we now have a special Task Force assigned to this problem.

I can't tell you how much I enjoyed sitting in on the Inflight training classes, as well as experiencing the job firsthand. For the most part, I'd have to say that our Customers are very responsive and impressed with what they see. They like us. They are very complimentary. They LUV the casual uniforms. They thanked us when they deplaned, and some would just thank us for the service. One guy said, "The service on this flight was the best I've ever had. You guys were great." Another guy stopped just to say he thought Southwest was better than any other airline . . . always ontime.

The most memorable comment was made by a pilot from another airline. As I was standing in the jetway at the end of our day, a pilot was getting ready to board the aircraft I had just deplaned (couldn't see his ID, don't know who he flies for, but it doesn't matter). He was just peering around the windows taking it all in. He looked over at me and just shook his head. "You guys do turn a plane faster than anyone. It's amazing, I've never seen anything like it." Nor is he likely to.

Thanks again for including Inflight as part of the training for this position. I can assure you that it was most informative. I don't suspect I'd ever want to leave the Executive Office for Inflight . . . but I can tell you one thing . . . I'd LUV it!

Figure 12. Letter regarding three days in the field

Colleen was farsighted enough to realize that as the company continues to grow she couldn't personally. . . . Colleen and Herb couldn't personally, touch everybody new that came on board. So instead, Colleen was trying to get lieutenants to help her do that, but lieutenants that have the Spirit.

This was a committee of lieutenants who were missioned to empower the entire airline through very creative influence-based initiatives. As one committee member put it,

Everybody becomes somebody of power through the missionaries. The missionaries [members of the committee/lieutenants] have a forum through which they can voice things, change things and get some action taken on issues. So we [the culture committee] go about attacking the different areas of interest so that we can adjust things that seriously improve the various different aspects of our culture, our business operations and customer service. What we can do through the culture committee is find the power--the employee(s) who can make the necessary changes happen. All lines of employees, there are no boxes and lines here, when you get in the culture committee everything is open. In most organizations there are very few subjects that you can discuss with all levels of employees, but the culture committee has been designed to make all subjects open subjects. So the result . . . the culture

committee has become the leadership agent of our company.

Essentially, members of the committee served as channels through which other members of the organization could voice their ideas and opinions. The committee met on a quarterly basis to report on subcommittee activities and to address new issues. The culture committee was like a family council. In many family businesses, the purpose of family council meetings is to focus on the family and to discuss what is and is not working within the family structure. The Southwest culture committee serves a similar purpose. A major part of the process of perpetuating the Southwest culture is a very detailed and structured approach to reviewing and gaining access to what was and was not working within the company. One committee member commented about this purpose.

Not only is my role as a committee member a formal "asking for information role," but people have come to learn that I am a conduit through which their ideas, opinions and concerns can be voiced. People send me notes that indirectly influence what I take back to the committee by telling me things that they have done in the market, things that have worked, things that haven't worked, complaints they've heard. In fact, I have a friend in another department who knew I was on the committee and literally came to me and said, "I want to tell you about something that the committee is doing

that isn't working out in the real world[at the stations]."

The culture committee was all about facilitating multidirectional influence, influence flowing in all directions, to the executive office, from the executive offices, to various field locations and from various field locations--bottom-up and top-down.

The creation of Southwest's culture committee gained even greater credibility as it was the vision of one of its founders and executive officers. Thus, the people selected and invited to participate understood the value of involvement and the priority placed on this initiative. One employee commented on the value of this committee.

Any company's culture is about how well they communicate with each other. Southwest's culture committee gives the executive office, the real keeper of the culture, fifty more people who help spread the word and communicate and feed information to and from the people of Southwest.

Although, the idea of the culture committee may have spun out of executive level concern, the activities and changes resulting from the committee's efforts have had an impact on all levels in the company. "Everyone in the company is encouraged to make station visits, especially managers and above. You are supposed to make them once a quarter and go to departments where you don't normally do anything with them so

you can learn something." One employee commented on the process involved in these visits to the field.

You have this ground swell happening, information is filtering from different stations back to the general office. One of our jobs is to ask questions when we visit different stations around the country. We ask questions like "Hey, how is it going? What have you guys seen? What about this thing we have been doing, how has it been working for you?" We try to get feedback in very informal, conversational, and non-threatening ways. We show them we are interested! Then we bring that information back to the committee, basically with the intention of solving any problems that may have come up, righting any wrongs, and improving any flaws in the system. We use the ideas and insights that come from the people directly involved. . . . So far, there hasn't been any real territorial behavior or defensiveness going on in the committee. It's been real open. It's kind of like, we all have a common purpose.

The leaders and followers within the culture committee consciously and deliberately chose to engage in influence-based relationships as they attempted to perpetuate the Southwest culture. Influence flowing in all directions was clearly one critical component to the strategic efforts of the culture committee. However, multidirectional influence was not the only strategic component to this very

intentionally orchestrated initiative. The perpetuation of Southwest's culture is also about the use of power resources. In essence, leaders and followers within Southwest's culture committee used various power resources to build leadership relationships as they attempted to spread the Southwest spirit.

In a memorandum regarding the minutes and assignments from one of the first 1992 culture committee meetings following Southwest's 20th anniversary celebration, Barrett recognized the power resources used by the leaders and followers on the culture committee. She wrote:

Each of you was selected because you bring something special to the table by way of expertise, energy, and enthusiasm, and because you exemplify what the Southwest Spirit and Culture is all about--thus, in my opinion, you are the best qualified to represent our company among the work forces at large insofar as the Company's culture is concerned.

Expertise, energy and enthusiasm are representative of the possible resources Rost (1991) noted in his discussion of persuasive tools used in leadership relationships. Barrett seemed keenly aware of the importance of these qualities in the committee's ability to have an impact among other members of the company. One newly appointed member of the committee sent a "spirited" letter to employees at the Houston Station, the letter is a clear and vivid example of the kind of energy and enthusiasm that Colleen referenced (see Figure 13). As

To: Hou Station Employees
From: Rolando Lopez
Date: July 9, 1992
Subject: Culture Committee Update

I have been selected by Colleen Barrett as a member of the Culture Committee. The committee is designed as a liaison between employees and the Executive Office.

I am very proud and excited for the honor of being your representative. We have a highly talented and spirited group with many new and exciting things in store. Our goal is to continue being #1 in Customer Service as we have for seven consecutive months. The hats distributed is our way of saying **THANKS!** for your **POSITIVELY OUTRAGEOUS SERVICE**. Our hats off to you!

If you have any ideas, information, or if you wanna just plane talk, I'm all ears.

"CATCH THE SPIRIT"

Rolando Lopez
 Operations Supervisor HOU

pc: Colleen Barrett
 Wenden Hildebrandt
 Richard Ferry

Figure 13. Spirited letter from a Houston Station employee

the letter indicated, the committee was a liaison between employees and the executive office. The members were selected because of their personalities, the credibility and the special qualities that they utilized in their attempts to persuade, manage, interact and relate with the entire Southwest system. One employee compared the culture committee with other types of committees at Southwest.

We have a lot of committees at Southwest, and some of them can get territorial and people sometimes have a tendency to point the finger and cast blame. But the culture committee is very different. A lot of it has to do with the people that are on the committee. The people have real positive attitudes. We are all problem solvers.

Just as the committee members were recognized as leaders and followers who were skillful at using certain power resources to impact others, members of the executive office were also successful in their attempts to influence through their use of various persuasive appeals. Executives at Southwest are not given a whole lot of perks. Symbolically, when executives are given special perks, an organization fosters the perception of differentiation and inequity among the organizational members. One Southwest employee noted:

The only perks our executives get are parking signs because we are here at night and have to park in a special zone. It really is the only thing. We all have

the same health plan . . . the same life insurance When Herb travels he does all the things we would expect him to. He stays where the flight attendants stay. First of all we all love to see our fellow employees in the hallways. At Southwest we believe that executives shouldn't stay at the Waldorf when everyone else is staying at the Holiday Inn. It doesn't work that way at Southwest.

Managing the perception of equality is a powerful form of symbolism, yet it is also a powerful form of influence. Executives at Southwest have a lot more impact and influence on other employees because the employees feel that the expectations that executives have for themselves are very similar, if not the same, as they are for other members of the organization. Another employee stated that Herb Kelleher is a servant leader, he serves his people and by doing that he leads. Symbolism and managing perceptions at Southwest are business issues. One employee noted that creating a fun environment is a symbolic business issue that is also taken very seriously by executives at Southwest.

I think that our entire senior management group has adopted a culture that we are serious about, a culture that works. We're here to do a job, but we can have a good time while we're doing it. It's a rather refreshing experience. I think that they make the employees, rank and file, or whoever feel comfortable. Senior managers at Southwest are all approachable and

it's not the good old boy's club. Our senior managers don't have their own washrooms, and their own cafeteria area, and those type of things. We just don't have that here. And so it comes across as a very informal atmosphere, its like that comfort you feel when you're at home . . . and it is special.

And when I asked another employee to comment on Kelleher's reputation and style, the following response followed:

He is such a fun loving guy. It doesn't matter if he is talking to another Chairman of the Board, an employee of Southwest, or somebody from another carrier, he makes them feel comfortable. You can't help observe this; it is so easy and so fun to be around him. He likes to cut it up. He loves to laugh. And he has a sense of humor that is contagious. I'm sure that if everyone sees him doing this day in and day out, then they say, "Hey its okay for us to do it too. Its okay for us to be casual, its OK for us to have fun." And its important for us to have fun, so the folks who work for us can have fun too and enjoy their jobs. I think that's what really makes us at Southwest different. Everybody enjoys being here.

Southwest's culture is not only representative of an environment rich in examples of multidirectional influence and persuasive resources, but Southwest is also considered to be a very freeing place to work. One culture committee member discussed the Southwest family culture as an

environment that encourages individuality and free expression of personality.

One of the things we stress is we want the [employees] to be individuals. Southwest encourages people to use their own personality to do their job the best way they can. Now if that personality happens to be that they are a great singer, or a great comedienne, or a great whatever, we encourage them to perform their job through the free expression of their own personal talents and gifts. But we don't want anybody doing things that they are not comfortable doing. Because in the long run if employees are doing something they are uncomfortable with it will produce too much stress in their lives, in the work they do, and in the people they work with. And that kind of stress can be infectious to the company and kind of culture we have at Southwest.

At Southwest professionalism in no way hinders or puts a damper on personal style. Employees at Southwest are encouraged to be REAL. It is a freeing place to be. Unlike many organizations that encourage people to be professional and business-like by day and demand that employees check their personal and emotional baggage at the door before coming into the office, at Southwest professional and business-like alone, just won't cut it! In fact, according to Kelleher "anybody who is called a professional probably shouldn't be around Southwest Airlines. Because we want people who can do things well with laughter and grace." Now,

the point here is not to offend professionals. The point is, Southwest Airlines is full of professionalism, but with an added flare. The type of professionalism people experience within the culture of Southwest is not to be confused with a stuffy, serious professionalism which is guarded by the philosophy that "the business of business is business." Instead, the professionals customers experience at Southwest are remarkably free and encouraging individuals who believe that the business of business is people. "Kelleher's philosophy is that a corporation is an organization of people who are striving for cooperation and coalescence in the pursuit of a common goal If you don't pay attention to your people, if you don't respect your people, you're going to find that the best idea in the world and excellent management and adequate capitalization is of no avail" (Freiberg, 1987, p. 171).

A passenger on one of Southwest's flights referenced a "new kind of professionalism" in a letter commending a memorable flight and "most entertaining flight announcement routine." The following is one passenger's description of a "memorable flight to Albuquerque."

I flew in early May to Albuquerque on a flight that began with the flight attendant welcoming us and then telling us that we have a VIP on board. He welcomed Leonard Nemoy, the actor who played Dr. Spock on Star Trek. We all clapped and turned to see him when we were told this was all in fun. Instead we were the VIP's on

board! Then he graciously welcomed each of us as the most important person to Southwest Airlines. And, he added, we hope our good service always lets you know how much we appreciate your choosing to fly Southwest. He then treated us to the most entertaining flight announcement routine, telling us we were flying over 7,943 hot tubs, swimming pools, etc., so here was the water evacuation information. Please wave to his mother on cue. He had a great sense of humor and mixed fun several times into our flight. On arriving he and the crew sang a song, and he closed by saying if we enjoyed our flight, their names were Reggie, Sam and Pete. However, if we didn't enjoy his foolishness, their names were Fred, Tom and Harry. Everyone was laughing and in a great mood by the time we deplaned.

In addition, this passenger noted the fun that results from Southwest's kind of professionalism.

Now I realize that not everyone has Reggie's personality and showmanship. But I think many people don't risk this kind of playfulness because they fear that it will be seen as unprofessional. There is a new kind of professionalism that Southwest is becoming known for all over the world--Southwest is known for great service with lots of fun mixed in.

Employees at Southwest are not only free to influence the uniqueness of Southwest, they are encouraged to express

themselves in a real and creative fashion in order to perpetuate the culture in which they work.

The spirit of fun encourages humor, and the spirit of we-can-do-it because of a love for this Airline are all strategic keys to keeping the Dream Alive. People from all cities all over the system got involved in these initiatives through 34 subcommittees that spun off the original committee. "And each subcommittee had a task that it was responsible for during the first year. Some people were involved in a number of tasks and sat on sometimes three or four different subcommittees." Through the various subcommittees, everyone had the opportunity to reach out and empower other members of the Southwest family. Leaders, followers, line employees and executives alike, seem to be keenly aware of the power involved in building influence-based relationships. As one member of the committee put it "this was not a committee made up of Big Shots, this was a committee of Big Hearts." Thus, the power resource offering the most value and influence to members of this committee came from the Southwest spirit that flowed from their big hearts. As the illustrations have shown, this is not an organization that depends heavily on authority and position-based influence. Instead, this is an organization that depends on relationships to effect change and to add value to the successful perpetuation of a very unique and family-oriented culture. The next section will focus more specifically on the leaders and followers who chose to get

involved in the initiatives related to spreading the Southwest spirit.

Leaders And Followers Perpetuate The Family Feel

Was it really a choice or was it a requirement to be on the committee when asked to do so? This is one question that may come to mind after learning that people were selected and invited by a member of the executive office, Colleen Barrett, to participate on the culture committee. However, despite the selection process, the culture committee is still fertile ground for gaining a better understanding of 21st century leadership. The leaders and followers of the Southwest culture committee provided numerous examples of leadership, of relationships based on shared and collaborative activities. These relationships evolved out of a group of 40 or so "spirited" people holding varying degrees of responsibility. Some with, yet many without, executive clout, and all representing different cities and functions in the Southwest system. In the beginning the committee was made up of mainly managerial people. However by 1992, the second year, Barrett invited in new members in order to spread the spirit further and faster throughout the system. However, after only a year or so of activities and involvement, many of the original members were not quite ready to let go. In fact, many members of the original committee felt as if they had just gotten started when it was time to pass along their baton. In essence, they enjoyed the relationships they had developed through their committee

responsibilities too much to let go after only one year into the process. One committee member commented about the transition between the first and second year.

This year's group [1992] is much larger. I think you would see more of a cross section of personnel from Southwest Airlines in this group. The first year it was more middle managers here at the general offices, a few people from the out markets, but not that many. Now it's a very strong cross section, all departments are represented. They may be an in-flight person, or a director, or a Southwest Spirit Winner. In any case, their day-to-day job might not be as leader, but the fact that they have that spirit, that Southwest spirit and they know and live the culture that we want to perpetuate . . . that makes them a leader.

It became clear that an invitation to participate on this committee was both a commitment and an honor. The Big Hearts selected didn't participate for extra pay and for public recognition. Their efforts, for the most part, occurred behind the scenes. Thus, the efforts and involvement of those with the big hearts were truly done out of a "labor of love." This committee consists of people who knew the importance of relationships. The leaders and followers on the culture committee have dedicated themselves to investing in relationships in order to perpetuate the "art of caring." Caring for their company, caring for their customers and most importantly caring about one another. As

Roy Spence, a member of the culture committee and a principle of GSD&M, the advertising firm that has served Southwest since 1981, said "this is truly an employee congress . . . whose goal is to perpetuate the idea that on a daily basis we must dedicate ourselves to Positively Outrageous Customer Service in order to keep the Dream Alive." What follows is a description of leadership relationships at Southwest Airlines. Second, examples serve to illustrate how the Southwest culture encouraged employees to engage in leadership relationships regardless of title and position. Finally, additional examples show how these relationships perpetuated the family-feel at Southwest.

Embedded within Southwest's culture is the notion that effectiveness is highly dependent upon one's ability to build strong and caring relationships. Regardless of position or title, employees at Southwest are expected to be available to one another. One committee member shared an interesting interaction he had with a manager at Southwest.

While I was out in the field visiting one of our stations, one of our managers mentioned to me that he wanted to put up a suggestion box. And I responded to that manager by saying, "Sure. . . why don't you put up a suggestion box right here on this wall and admit that you are a failure as a manager." Our theory at Southwest is--if you have to put up a box so people can write down their ideas and toss them in, then it means that you are not doing what you are supposed to be

doing. You are supposed to be setting your people up to be winners. To do that you should be there listening to them and available to them in person not via a suggestion box. And, for the most part, I think that we have a very good sense of this at Southwest. I think that most people employed here know that they can call anyone one of our vice-presidents on the telephone and get heard, almost immediately.

For this committee member the purpose behind a suggestion box just didn't make sense in the broader context of perpetuating a fun, loving, family culture. In essence, this manager's intentions were not to be shamed. In fact, his intentions were admirable. As the size of any organization begins to increase, the time and availability that any manager has for his/her subordinates is inversely affected. Thus a suggestion box becomes a tempting alternative. However, it still made no sense to the culture committee member, striving to develop and improve the quality of relationships at Southwest.

The suggestion box gives managers an out, it relinquishes their responsibility to be accessible to their people and that's when we've gotten in trouble at Southwest--when we can no longer be responsive to our flight attendants or our ticket agents, when they can't gain accessibility to somebody who can give them resources and answers and so forth. Then what they invariably do--they turn to the next person who will

respond to them in the manner that they want. At Southwest employees understand that they need to spend at least a third of their time out of their office, walking around. And another thing we encourage and do is go out and do days in the field. Load bags, sell tickets, serve drinks, serve peanuts, these jobs give us all valuable insight. They give us a better understanding of how our decisions here in the glass palace [general offices] affect people that are actually delivering the product or the service. When I do go out there in the field, I am much more likely to find that some of the decisions I've made are stupid decisions, and I've seen how my decisions have terribly affected and inconvenienced some of our people. And they definitely pay you with some kind of currency, and if you are incapable of changing things or fixing things or simply doing a self-audit, if you consistently try to sell your employees something that they don't want, then what your employees are going to do is fire you! And the problem is, some managers have been fired and don't even know it! But their people won't do business with them anymore. They go around them, they're not as committed, they don't have as much energy. When that happens our culture is in trouble.

This committee member was passionate about developing relationships and keeping the Southwest Spirit alive. The influence discussed was indeed unequal. The message was,

managers have a different set of power resources available to them. However, these power resources need to be used appropriately so their people will want to continue to do business with them. Suggestion boxes are antithetical to relationship building in this description. Leaders and followers must work together to meet each others needs in order to build the kinds of relationships that the Southwest culture is designed to perpetuate.

The people of Southwest Airlines pride themselves in their abilities to build relationships. Again and again, the leaders and followers involved in the perpetuation of Southwest's culture referred to a committee that had no titles and no hierarchical boundaries. One committee member stated.

I think we have a good culture here; it's very strong. Our culture demonstrates that good customer service starts with the way you treat each other. And we simply do not tolerate people that are disrespectful to one another in the organization, regardless of title. There are an awful lot of committees here at Southwest, and there is a shrewd business decision behind putting together a committee. When you put together multidisciplined committees that are formed with line level employees and managers all from different departments, it breaks down the tendency to have any turf wars. So the committee is licensed to do things a department does not have the license to do. And lots of

big things happen around here very quickly through committees like this.

The approach to creating an environment made up of open and caring relationships was a concern for members of the culture committee and members of the company at large. Another employee commented on people's willingness to get involved regardless of title and position at Southwest. The employee worked as a temporary employee before joining Southwest on a full-time basis.

Once I got into Southwest it was unlike anything that I had ever experienced before. I was working in the marketing department, and I saw the vice-president of marketing sitting at a table with every other marketing employee doing a mail out--stuffing envelopes. At Southwest whenever a job needs to be done, everyone pitches in to get the job done. There wasn't anyone from the top of the company on down who wasn't willing to pitch in and do the most menial task to get things done. I didn't see the petty little office conflicts that I saw in so many companies that I had worked at in the past. It was so different from anything I had ever experienced on the outside, that I thought, I want to be a part of this plan. And I never left.

As the examples and illustrations show, at Southwest people are free to change organizational places without changing organizational positions. Thus, to the degree that they are interested in doing so, leaders and followers in Southwest

were able to exert considerable influence and mobility in their attempts to perpetuate the Southwest culture.

It starts from the top to the bottom. You know the idea that you give what you get--well at Southwest you get what you give. If you have people who care about you, then you care about them. I don't know which one is the chicken and which one is the egg, but one doesn't work without the other here. When people feel good about their leaders, and the leaders feel good about their people, it becomes an environment where work isn't measured by hours, it's measured by *heart size*.

In addition, members of the culture committee encouraged other members of the company to lead and follow in their own attempts to perpetuate the Southwest culture. Members of the committee were selected because of their ability to engage in leadership relationships. Their activities varied from group to group and from issue to issue.

Our hope is that the peers of the committee members look up to them, and particularly look to help [the committee members] lead the Southwest Spirit in their own ways of doing things so that they too can influence the people back in their departments. We've seen that different people on the committee do it in different ways. For instance, on their own initiative some committee members formed subgroups within their own departments.

The leaders and followers on the culture committee did leadership together as they engaged in multiple tasks and

activities that contributed to keeping the Dream Alive through the perpetuation of a spirit rich culture symbolic of family, love and fun. Their activities included organizing deck parties and "spreading the word." Deck parties were designed to be fun events scheduled once a month on Friday afternoons. At these events culture committee members and other employees from around the system can informally get to know each other over beers and soft drinks on the deck of the general offices. Another activity involved the investigation of Southwest's recognition programs. This subcommittee discovered that there were as many as 58 internal and three external employee/customer recognition programs across the system. Yet, there were some locations which didn't have any recognition programs. Thus, the subcommittee was missioned to encourage these locations to adopt such programs. Employee incentive programs was another focus. As a result, employees across the system were given "WOW" pins for "Positively Outrageous Service" as an incentive to keep up the spirit. Another subcommittee was responsible for making the reservations agents "feel more part of the family" and assist these centers in implementing a recognition program along with periodic group visits by pilots, flight attendants, mechanics, ramp agents, etc. With the creation of "Cohearts," Southwest's Adopt a New Employee Program, culture committee members not only encourage office relationships, they do the match making as well (see Figure 14).

**WE'RE NOT
ONLY ENCOURAGING
OFFICE RELATIONSHIPS,
WE'RE DOING THE
MATCH MAKING.**

Southwest's Adopt a New Employee Program.

Figure 14. Adopt a new employee. Southwest *Co-Hearts* program.

Various members of the culture committee reported that in the work force at large--especially those who live outside the Texas system--have no idea who Southwest officers, directors and managers were and what they looked like. Thus, the committee decided to proceed on securing the necessary pictures for a Southwest Yearbook. Numerous copies of an in-house video entitled "Let the Good Times Roll" were distributed to each member of the culture committee. Committee members promised to pass their respective copies along to new or disgruntled employees for viewing and then follow-up to see if the video had been successful in getting the employee "turned on" or "turned around." If so, the employee would then be asked to pass the video along to another employee with the same hope in mind. As another direct result of culture committee discussions, Mission Statements have been matted, framed and proudly displayed throughout Southwest's "home office." In addition, location visits were a very powerful means of exercising leadership for culture committee members. By making personal visits to every station in the Southwest system, the committee was better able to spread the spirit and perpetuate the culture. Committee members went on station visits with specially designed culture committee business cards in-hand and looked for new ways in which to help (see Figure 15). These activities were just a few of the ways in which Southwest's culture committee worked as a leadership team to spread the Southwest Spirit.

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.

We are a team of 44 employees
from all departments dedicated to
keeping our special Southwest Spirit
alive and well. How can we help?

Joyce Rogge
Culture Committee Member

Ext. 4489 M/S HDQ5AD

Figure 15. Culture Committee business card

Yet, because so many of the culture committee's activities have been low-key and unassuming, there were still many who continued to describe leadership at Southwest in Lone Ranger terms. Kelleher himself is self-effacing when it happens. As Roy Spence noted:

There's not been an interview, a time when Herb's been in print or on TV that wouldn't be praised as a great example of loyalty to his people. He's always the first to say "It's not me, it's the 10,000 plus employees that make it happen every single day." It is a genuine thing. He's so genuine and he really believes that his people are responsible. There is an admiration there, Herb has a true appreciation for their commitment, dedication and Southwest Spirit. He adores them and therefore they adore him.

Kelleher is considered the industry's maverick, and the press continued to develop Kelleher's character as a Lone Ranger leader. Kelleher's notoriety has done a lot for the continuation of an industrial definition of leadership. Sadly, even some members of Southwest are quick to say "Yes we do have a leader--Herb." Although the industrial definitions have conditioned the continuation of leadership in Lone Ranger terms, there are employees at Southwest who know and have experienced the difference between Kelleher and many of the other so-called Lone Ranger leaders that have been chronicled in business today. One Southwest employee noted:

We do have a leader. The difference is he's our friend, part of us. And I tell you, you do hear it a lot, Herb, Herb, Herb, everybody genuinely loves him. You can't not love somebody who loves you first, unconditionally. I don't know if we're all leaders, but we're all part of the team.

This employee, in particular, was keenly aware and certainly comforted by the relationship that Kelleher had established with members of the Southwest team. Another employee commented on Kelleher's style and the influence it has had throughout the organization.

Most people are very uncomfortable with being singled out here. I mean we have awards and recognition programs, but I guess its just part of the culture. It starts at the top. I mean Herb is very self-effacing. He won't accept a compliment, it is very uncomfortable for him. And if he has to, he usually defers it on to the people of Southwest. And I think that runs down into the organization.

Not too long ago another big corporation invited Kelleher in to talk about what his secrets to success are and Kelleher told them "I say hello to everybody, I stop and talk to everybody and everybody is important to me." At Southwest, although other executives and managers have different abilities and commit different skills to influence their staff, like Kelleher, they all tend to create environments in which employees are free and encouraged to collaborate and do

leadership regardless of title and position. One member of the pilot group talked about the opportunities people have to do leadership at Southwest.

It's not just Mr. Kelleher, my boss lets us do our jobs too. Basically I don't worry about the decisions I make or being a leader because that's just part of the job. Just being a Captain, hiring people, flying a \$26 million piece of equipment around the skies--you have to have some leadership skills. So I don't know how you can really define it, except that Southwest lets you do your job. And part of that job is being a leader of people.

First of all, when you first come aboard with this company, they make you feel that you are not just a number. We hire pilots from all over the airline industry, from companies that are still existing to companies that have just gone under from people who have worked for five or six different airlines to people straight out of the military. And there isn't one of them that has come here without a little doubt in their mind as to what this company is all about. But once you get here, it doesn't take you but about a month or so to come to know that this is a different place to work. This is a place where flight attendants and pilots get along, where pilots and maintenance people get along, and where ground operations people and pilots get along.

This place is nothing like the horror stories I hear about in other airlines.

I can get in to see just about anybody I want to. And it's not just because I work here, it's because the people are really interested. I've never been snubbed by any secretary or any officer of the company. It's generally an open door policy. Even to go up to see Herb and Colleen, their doors are always open, you can get in to see them This is family to us, it's like one big whole family.

On a similar note, another pilot commented about how refreshing it was to join Southwest after having worked for another carrier for eleven years.

When I finally made the transition to Southwest, I felt like I was coming home. Even before coming to work for Southwest I used to fly at night and fly Southwest home. I remember sitting down and this man sat next to me and he started talking to me. The flight attendant said, "Sir, would you please leave her alone, she's been flying all night and she really needs to get some sleep." I didn't even work for Southwest at the time. But I thought, isn't that nice. When you're that way to people outside of your family, or your organization, it has to be better on the inside, I'm absolutely positive of that now. The people, they all fit together morally, they all have the same convictions-- their love of

family. In other words, they're family people and they love their work.

Again, it was family, love and fun that the leaders and followers on the culture committee worked diligently to perpetuate. Southwest has created a committee that encourages and empowers people to build relationships that allow employees to act as leaders and followers in order to foster the continuation of Southwest's family culture.

Despite the necessary changes that have resulted from both success and growth, the employees of this incredible airline wanted some things to stay the same, so much so that they were willing to invest themselves and encourage others to do the same in order to perpetuate the culture that they had all grown to love and enjoy. One employee stated: "We're getting to be a very big corporation but we still have a caring family relationship." Members of the culture committee were change agents who dedicated themselves to the Southwest family spirit. Culture committee members and employees alike clearly worked at building family-like relationships, and consistently engaged in family-like relationships in a collective effort to keep their valued culture alive.

Leaders And Followers Intend Real Change

In addition to the preparation and planning for a twenty year anniversary celebration, the opportunity came to revisit the growth, development and changes that Southwest has experienced over the years. The Southwest culture committee

became the designated team of spirited people who were chosen and who willingly accepted the challenge of perpetuating the Southwest dream through a systemwide celebration of change. This committee formally recognized the need for celebration and the importance of celebration in keeping the Southwest dream alive. The effort was about the constant perpetuation of Southwest's culture, a culture that was born out of the mission to keep the airline alive. Although today the employees of Southwest are not fighting to keep the airline alive, they are fighting to keep the Southwest spirit alive in an industry that is rapidly declining. In 1993 Southwest is recognized as number one in Texas, number one in California and number one in the hearts of its customers all over the system. Southwest's growth from a tri-city intrastate carrier in 1972 to a major United States carrier in 1993 servicing 36 different cities in the southwest is clearly the result of significant change, change that is worthy of systemwide celebration.

The culture committee dedicated itself to celebrating-- Celebrating the creation of jobs, good jobs, jobs that have created security for Southwest families; celebrating the contributions that Southwest has made to the communities it serves; celebrating the adoption of Ronald McDonald houses across the system; and celebrating the time and talent that Southwest employees have given to the children in those homes. In essence, Southwest employees celebrate change on a daily basis. One employee commented about work at

Southwest, the celebration and the substantive and transforming nature of this work.

I have a fantastic job that I love that pays good money. I know I'm here until I die. It is the self-satisfaction and the rewarding feeling that I'm not only doing something that I like, but I'm seeing that it really makes a difference.

In keeping with the spirit of Southwest, the culture committee was committed to creating an environment where people are dedicated to the mission of making work at Southwest a constant celebration that adds value both personally and collectively.

Celebration and keeping the family culture alive was the intention that drew the various individuals together in the culture committee's leadership relationships. This intention resulted in a variety of collective activities. In order to keep the Dream Alive and foster the perpetuation of this family-like culture, the Southwest culture committee designed and instigated activities that would allow members of this airline to dedicate themselves to this effort on a daily basis. From day to day, issue to issue, and project to project, the committee focused on how to keep a growing airline from getting too big. One member of the committee noted a couple of examples of how Southwest tried to make its employees feel like they are loved and a part of a caring and interested family, rather than a large impersonal institution.

We had an employee who came back from maternity leave, and we wanted to send her to a station opening as a part of the Southwest Advanced Team. They are the PR group that goes into town to open a new station. She had a brand new baby and leaving that baby was going to be very difficult, I could sense it, but I knew she really wanted to be involved in this project. I invited her to take her Mom. She did, so our employee, her Mom and the baby all shared a room. So it cost us a few meals! That wasn't the issue. You see, it was so important to her and meant so much more than a pass or some additional time-off. In addition, there was this other women, she directs a client program and is still kind of new so she doesn't have much vacation time. When her child was ready to go to school, she really wanted time-off to register her child. When her child had a dance recital, she wanted to go. So we gave her time for those special events. And we tell all the managers to do the same thing. Find out what is important to your people, don't give them all passes. Some may want passes. But do what you find is important to them.

Thus, as Southwest continues to grow, the leaders and followers on the committee continue to engage in activities that are intended to make big seem small and far seem near. The goal is to minimize the difference, the distance between Dallas and the 35 other stations around the system.

In other words, rather than allow the changes that accompanied Southwest's success and growth over the years to change the culture from family to institutional, the leaders and followers on the culture committee dedicated themselves to the intention of perpetuating a culture powerful enough to change the perception of these changes. The goal was to somehow make what had become so big continue to be perceived as small--to keep this growing organization from becoming institutionalized. One major spin-off of the culture committee activities was the new "Heroes of the Heart" recognition program. This program was the creation of the committee and the realization of a rather farfetched idea. The purpose was to select two employee groups each year who seldom get any recognition--employees whose efforts are just as significant as those who are more often in the limelight, but ones that the general public may know little about and ones whom most people often forget to thank. The Administrative Coordinators became the first employee group to be recognized as Southwest Heroes of the Heart. The culture committee devised a special tribute/thank you and dedicated a plane for one year to the Administrative Coordinators because of their daily celebration and demonstration of the Southwest Spirit. In a demonstration of love, admiration and appreciation, these coordinators were rather mysteriously taken to a decorated and festive airplane hanger where a brand new 737-300 aircraft decorated with Heroes of the Hearts/Station Coordinators was unveiled and

dedicated to this special group of spirited Southwest employees. Activities of the like become celebratory events through which this airline differentiates itself from the competition and provides a family-like environment that cares for its people, its customers, and its communities in a fun, loving way.

The bottom line is that these activities were designed to spread the Southwest culture across the system. The culture committee is about creating an extended family that recognizes the value of celebration. Southwest's celebrations are about "attitudes, altruism, dedication and submergence of self to cause," for according to Kelleher, "these things are as necessary as knowledge and expertise is to achieving economic security." The culture committee members have dedicated themselves to the perpetuation of a culture in which employees feel loved, cared for and appreciated for their unwavering fight to make Southwest's vision a daily experience for more than 11,000 employees. The vision behind the leadership efforts of the Southwest culture committee has become the common enterprise around which all of their activities revolve. The vision, the bigger, broader, more qualitative picture of the future, involves increasing the collective prosperity of all by changing the perception of size and distance.

The Culture Committee Challenge and Mutual Purpose

The culture of Southwest has inspired deep loyalty even at the lowest ranks. The loyalty arises from the employees'

keen awareness of Southwest's struggle to get off the ground. The shared and common vision of survival led to a close knit, supportive and all enduring family-like culture. Even though the struggle has long since past, it has become a very powerful part of Southwest lore, and ultimately this lore has led to the creation of an airline that is like no other. The employees of Southwest all know this story:

Well over 20 years ago, a couple of guys said: "Here's an idea. Why don't we start an airline that charges just a few bucks and has lots of flights everyday instead of what the others guys are doing--charging a lot of bucks and having just a few each day." The rest they say, is history.

Today the Southwest lore lives on through the spirit of its people. Throughout Southwest's history the culture has become a home-like workplace within which the people of this family have come to realize that the Southwest Spirit has everything to do with being unselfish, generous, and caring for others before yourself.

Leaders and followers on the culture committee and other employees at Southwest, pursue family, love and fun to perpetuate their fundamental family feel, the spirited culture within this Airline. According to Rost (1991) the word purpose indicates that "leadership has more to do with who we are than with what we do, with the culture of the organization than with its effectiveness, and with how leaders and followers integrate into the community or society

than with how they get their needs and wants met as individuals or as a group" (p. 119). The "we attitude" and the family metaphor used so consistently by Southwest employees are indicative of an organizational culture that has recognized the importance of helping its people better understand who they are and how they in turn can better serve their customers and their communities. What follows are examples of how members of Southwest Airlines pursued several purposes through which they were better able to collectively further the realization of a commonly held vision--to continue forever the family culture within Southwest Airlines.

Mutual purpose and common vision have clearly contributed to Southwest's high degree of loyalty and the kind of spirit that manifests itself in this family culture. Consider the "Fuel from the Heart" program. As jet fuel prices skyrocketed after the Gulf Crisis, ground employees at Southwest's Dallas operations spontaneously--and without Kelleher's knowledge--started a payroll deduction program to defray fuel costs. It served to symbolically demonstrate the loyalty and spirit these employees had for Southwest. In addition, voluntary payroll deductions to aid fellow employees with terminal illnesses and a Southwest Airlines Catastrophic Assistance Charity serve as routine sources of comfort and assistance offered to Southwest employees and their families. These efforts are a result of the collective interest and mutual care that Southwest employees

are encouraged to celebrate everyday. One employee commented about the "common ground" from which so many Southwest people operate.

I always look to see where there is common ground. And there is common ground on Herb Kelleher and on where the airline wants to be--a people-oriented company, a profitable company, and a different kind of company.

The common ground on Kelleher has to do with the mutual respect and admiration that Kelleher and the employees of Southwest hold for each other. According to Freiberg (1987):

Kelleher rarely misses an opportunity to communicate his love and appreciation for Southwest employees. This, in turn, contributes to establishing the family atmosphere at Southwest because the employees tend to model this behavior with each other. Consequently, there is a very giving, sharing attitude at Southwest that facilitates mutual goal attainment among family members. (p. 169)

Even others have commented about the incredible affection that runs rampant within the relationships at Southwest: "There appears to be a genuine sense of affection among employees, toward each other and their larger-than-life CEO" (Levering and Moskowitz, 1993, p. 416).

This affection has become an attitude that lives in the heart and is exercised through the spirit of most Southwest employees. Kelleher stated that he wanted "a Battle of Britain mentality. And what that implies, in essence, is being willing to make a sacrifice, of being less focused on

your own persona and taking joy in the accomplishments of the organization" (Sexton, 1990, p. 12). With regard to attitude, a culture committee member mentioned that Southwest's no furlough policy is yet another means through which mutual purpose and common vision is practiced.

The no furlough policy is about an attitude that says we care about the individuals in the company, and what we want to do is make sure that they all get lives, successful lives, and that they can meet the values that they have in their lives. That's the attitude that you will find here. The no furlough aspect is just a tangible way of saying how we care about our people.

By sincerely caring for the individuals who have made Southwest a reality, by spreading the spirit that inspired the dream of Southwest and by living this legend on a daily basis, leadership at Southwest Airlines is about serving its people, its family culture and its society. One employee with a thirteen year tenure at Southwest commented on one of the most difficult experiences of his life--giving his resignation to Herb Kelleher and Colleen Barrett. The difficulty had nothing to do with fear, it had everything to do with saying farewell. It wasn't surprising to this employee that Kelleher and Barrett wished him success. However, it was somewhat surprising when they offered to leave his position open for three months in order to give him an opportunity to come back. This was a profound example of the kind of unique family culture that people experience at

Southwest. Yes, this individual would be considered a profit producer, but more importantly, he was considered a loved and valuable member of the Southwest family. And to that end, he was given an opportunity to go out and explore and return if his exploration did not meet his expectations.

Examples like this are plentiful. Southwest has created a culture and a set of business practices that nurtures, stretches and empowers people as they collectively contribute to running a business and serving the greater good of society. In a letter written to The Honorable Lloyd Bentsen, United States Senator, in March 1991 to invite Texas delegates in Washington, DC to join in Southwest's 20th anniversary celebration, Kelleher reflected on Southwest's service to the community.

Southwest would not be possible were it not for the entrepreneurial spirit of Texas--a spirit that champions innovation; nurtures dreams; and relies upon private enterprise.

The Dream has come true. Today Southwest, with your support, has become the 13th largest airline in the world in terms of customers carried.

We have taken our customers' hard earned money and invested it in ways that matter: for safety; for on-time performance; for efficiency; and for the convenience of over 570 daily flights to 11 Texas airports and almost 1,100 daily flights across America.

In doing so, Southwest operates the youngest pure jet fleet in the U.S.A.--106 American-made Boeing 737s.

The Dream survives; the dream endures; the dream lives on, thanks to our many friends and valued customers, like you.

In addition to the letter, Kelleher sent a picture of Lone Star One, a very special 25 million dollar airplane that was painted to look familiar to all "True Texans"--the Texas Lone Star (see Figure 16). This very special tribute to Texas involved a "party of the decade." Austin was the host station and the party unfolded in an aircraft hanger decorated Texas style. The festivities were a result of the coordinated activities of leaders and followers on the culture committee. The event celebrated Texas from dinner to dancing. Guests indulged in hometown Texas barbecue and hometown Texas tunes by special guests, the Gatlin Brothers, as they unexpectedly awaited the arrival of the guest of the evening--Lone Star One. This was an event that was designed to celebrate Texas for its unwavering support and assistance in making it possible for Southwest to realize its dream. Thus, the Southwest family served by celebrating and giving back to its people, its customers and its communities.

However, in spite of the family culture--the affection, attitudes and Southwest Spirit--and as the company continues to grow, the need to more purposefully perpetuate the Southwest culture becomes ever more real and ever more difficult, yet to many, no less desirous. When the culture

Figure 16. The Texas Lone Star

committee first started, it was out of concern for the culture.

People were concerned and they were asking questions: Are we losing our culture? Are we losing the dream? Have we lost our way? Do the new people get it? Are they as excited as the old ones? Colleen hand picked the right mix of committee members. All of them had common ground. They loved the company, and they expressed their love for the company either in criticism or in passion.

This hand-picked mix has become a group of dedicated and committed leaders and followers. The Southwest culture committee is now recognized as an ongoing leadership effort dedicated to perpetuating the vision and purpose of Southwest Airlines through its unique and highly valued culture.

The principles that leaders and followers on the culture committee pursued in their attempts to perpetuate "we" and "family" among the rank and file have been tried and tested for 22 years now. These principles have become the benchmarks and hallmarks of Southwest's success and its uniqueness. One culture committee member commented on the one true boss of Southwest Airlines.

If you really want to know the truth about what Herb Kelleher has done, he's made vision the boss. The vision is the boss in this company. And therefore, if you ever betray the vision, then you're out. The vision doesn't cut across relationships: it is grounded in

principle. It's the principles that fly this organization: the principles are the boss.

Clearly, leadership as defined by Rost has contributed to the culture committee's dedication to the boss -- the principles of family, love and fun, and the forever continuation of the Southwest Spirit. Additionally, leadership relationships were responsible for Southwest's incredible improvement in on-time performance. These two change efforts have provided two specific instances of relational leadership, a concept that is clearly different from the industrial definitions of leadership presented in the 1980s and early 1990s. Perhaps, these two examples will serve as inspiration for further studies of postindustrial leadership and in turn, guide us into the 21st century with a transformed understanding of the practice of leadership as a relational process. The concluding chapter of this document will serve as an opportunity to summarize the practice of postindustrial leadership at Southwest Airlines. In addition, the next chapter will offer further implications to the practices of leadership as we move into the 21st century.

CHAPTER V
LEADERSHIP, PERFORMANCE AND SPIRIT AT SOUTHWEST
AIRLINES

This study grants scholars and practitioners an opportunity to use a new lens through which they can gain a different perspective on leadership and increase the likelihood that leadership relationships will become more widespread as we move into a postindustrial model of leadership. Rost (1991) stated:

The shift to a postindustrial paradigm certainly involves many significant changes in our background assumptions. . . . Leadership is one of those concepts and practices that will be transformed as Western societies move from an industrial to a postindustrial paradigm. Indeed, leadership may be crucial to a peaceful and orderly process as people individually and collectively struggle with that paradigm shift. But leaders and followers are not up to that job unless leadership scholars and practitioners begin now to move toward a model of leadership that is more attuned to the postindustrial era. What our organizations and communities need are leadership relationships based on a postindustrial model of leadership. Such relationships will facilitate the transition to the postindustrial

era. But they will not become widespread until scholars and practitioners build a new school of leadership. (pp. 127-128)

In an effort to move leadership scholars and practitioners closer to this new school of leadership, the purpose of this study is to determine whether or not a postindustrial model of leadership has been operationalized at Southwest Airlines. And if so, to determine how individuals at Southwest engaged in leadership as a relational process in order to accomplish two major change efforts.

In this research I investigated the influence involved in two specific organizational changes--improvement in on-time performance and the culture committee challeng--to determine whether or not Rost's model of postindustrial leadership was being practiced by the people involved in these changes. Specifically, the investigation studied the leaders and followers who engaged in these changes, the influence inherent in their relationships, their intentions to effect change and the mutual purposes they pursued in each change effort.

The findings in this investigation revealed that when Southwest's on-time performance declined many people within Southwest Airlines became leaders and followers who engaged in influence-based relationships and collectively pursued the common vision of improved on-time performance. Through a variety of influence-based activities and a commitment to collective responsibility, the employees repositioned

Southwest at the top of the DOT reports within a six month period.

As Southwest did battle for its right to fly in the early days of the airline, employees were fully aware of the value they added to the organization. This is because at that time, Southwest was forced to do a lot with just a little. However, over the years as battles were won, size increased and success achieved, it has become ever more necessary for Southwest to revisit the sense of urgency and the fighting spirit that allowed it to overcome the fear of defeat and take on the big industry giants. The ideals and the values that drove Southwest in its quest to survive have also become the ideals and values that drive its people to overcome the defeats and roadblocks that are characteristic of a rapidly changing and highly competitive industry.

Similarly, many people became leaders and followers as Southwest's culture committee members engaged in influence-based relationships in order to perpetuate the Southwest Spirit of family, love and fun. As Southwest has grown in success, it has also grown in numbers. In the first year of operation there were 198 employees who became the creators of Southwest Airlines. These employees were full of courage and stamina, they took tremendous risks, they possessed the Southwest fighting spirit and they joined in on a very important crusade--the right to survive. The fighting spirit in the beginning has grown into the famous, much-envied, and often feared Southwest Spirit of the present. Today Southwest

is 12,000 employees strong. So, the Southwest culture committee had to become a relational leadership force that was determined to grow the Spirit.

The remainder of this chapter consists of four sections. The first section is a discussion of how postindustrial leadership has been practiced at Southwest. The original research questions, stated in Chapter One, are revisited and answered. In the second section, the strengths and weaknesses of this study are identified. In the third section, the researcher offers some implications to consider for future research dedicated to building this new school of leadership. Finally, the fourth section provides a broader perspective on the importance of this research.

The Practice Of Postindustrial Leadership At Southwest

Movement toward a postindustrial model of leadership certainly began with Rost's (1991) definition. However, in order to facilitate this paradigm shift, the postindustrial definition of leadership must be applied in a variety of contexts. This study attempted to operationalize Rost's definition of postindustrial leadership within an organizational setting. Through this qualitative case study, practitioners and scholars will gain a better understanding about how postindustrial leadership is being practiced in one of America's most successful airlines. The testimonials and journalistic accounts presented in this research describe where, when and how leadership relationships contributed to the mission, vision and purpose of the employees, the

customers and the communities served by Southwest Airlines. Six broad questions were identified in Chapter One and researched during this investigation to better determine how and when the people of Southwest Airlines participated in leadership relationships.

What Real Changes Have Leaders And Followers Intended Through Influence Relationships?

According to the postindustrial definition of leadership, real changes mean that people and organizations are transformed by leaders and followers as they intend specific changes. Through this study it was apparent that three real changes resulted from the on-time performance effort and the culture committee challenge. First, the efforts of the on-time performance committee did, indeed, contribute to Southwest's overall improvement in flight departures, arrivals and scheduling. Second, many of the activities of the culture committee were instrumental in nurturing the Spirit of family, love and fun toward the perpetuation of Southwest's culture. Third, both change efforts generated renewed appreciation and recognition among employees of the importance of personal contributions to Southwest's accomplishment of purpose. What follows is further description of these changes.

The fighting spirit of Southwest persevered and as the employees rallied around a common, mutual purpose, they were able to collectively change operating schedules and change the low morale that had resulted from their poor performance.

As the employees of Southwest engaged in leadership relationships to change their low on-time performance ratings, they depended on the power of that fighting spirit--the same fighting spirit the organization counted on over 22 years ago when it fought to change the way Texans traveled. Following this renewed commitment to collectively pursue on-time arrivals and departures, Southwest Airlines is still recognized, more than one and a half years later, as the number one airline in on-time performance.

The changes resulting from the leadership activities of the culture committee were designed to infiltrate the Southwest system and its members with the spirit, enthusiasm and drive that enabled it to succeed in the early 1970s. As a result, the Southwest Spirit has become the expression of this organization's culture. As employees of this airline work and play with this Spirit in mind, it is no wonder they find so much comfort and security in what is so unique about this airline--the continued dedication to family, love and fun.

In addition, the leaders and followers involved in the on-time performance improvement effort influenced changes in operating on time, but more importantly, the real changes that were intended had more to do with renewal. Employees were renewed with a greater sense of what ownership and personal contribution means to the success of Southwest Airlines, its people and its customers. The bottom line was that through a variety of calculated and collective efforts

the employees of Southwest did indeed improve on-time performance. However, throughout the process, SWA employees' influence-based leadership activities helped to renew many employees' commitment and dedication to this number one performing airline.

The same was true for the efforts of the Southwest culture committee. Although early on, the committee was formed to assist in planning for the celebration of Southwest's 20th anniversary, it didn't take long for the committee members' efforts to become a powerful leadership force. Members of the culture committee were dedicated and committed to engaging in influence-based relationships to further perpetuate the legendary Southwest Spirit that was so important to the initial start-up and survival of Southwest Airlines. Due to many of the culture committee's activities, this Spirit is alive today and continues to be just as important to the airline's success as it was in 1971.

What Are The Catalytic Agents That Ignite Leadership Relationships?

This investigation searched for clues to a better understanding of why the people of Southwest willingly and readily engaged in relationships and activities that were, in many instances, beyond the scope of their specific job responsibilities. In other words, what were the catalysts that caused people at all levels to get involved in these change efforts? This research question explored what caused and/or influenced such commitment and participation. The

postindustrial definition of leadership advocates that leadership must be a relationship based on influence. In addition, leaders and followers do leadership together and can at any point in the process agree or disagree and drop into or out of the leadership relationship. In answering this question the research pointed to people, profit-sharing and the culture as the most consistent catalysts that persuaded people to participate in the change efforts and collectively practice postindustrial leadership.

Numerous people at Southwest served as catalytic agents who ignited leadership relationships in both change efforts. Gary Barron, Executive Vice President of Operations, was a catalytic agent in the on-time performance effort. Barron, knew Southwest needed to come up with some realistic approaches to improving the airline's poor performance ratings. He designated Jim Wimberly to take responsibility for the effort and insightfully so, because Wimberly's approach was to further ignite a collective effort to correct Southwest's on-time performance problem. Wimberly, knew he couldn't solve the problem alone. Instead, he created a cross functional team of representatives from various departments in the Southwest system. This team created a committee forum within which people were free to agree, disagree and drop into and out of the relationships as they felt compelled to do so.

Likewise, Colleen Barrett was a catalytic agent in the culture committee challenge. As the Southwest system spread

further and further from Dallas, Barrett identified the need to further perpetuate the Southwest Spirit throughout this growing system. She was clearly the catalytic visionary behind this effort. Barrett was, indeed, an individual who succeeded in persuading a number of others to participate in the leadership activities of the culture committee. Barron, Wimberly and Barrett are merely a few specific examples of people who served as catalytic agents. These three individuals were persuasive in influencing others to practice postindustrial leadership--they each facilitated collective participation from various other members of the airline.

As was noted, Southwest was the first airline to offer its employees a profit-sharing plan. In both change efforts, people holding authority-based positions were, indeed, responsible for either directing and/or endorsing each committees' activities. Clearly, such endorsement served as a catalyst. However, profit-sharing opportunities also served as a very important catalytic agent. Employees knew that their efforts served collective and personal ends. Thus, they willingly and readily engaged in relationships and activities that were beyond the scope of their specific job responsibilities.

The ownership that employees experience through Southwest's profit-sharing plan sensitizes them to profit goals, but more importantly, employees also become more committed to taking responsibility for the overall success and reputation of the company. Thus, for many of the

employees involved in the on-time performance improvement and the culture committee activities, it was clear that having ownership in Southwest served as an important catalyst in influencing people with authority and lack of it to engage in leadership relationships. Thus, collective prosperity also served as a catalytic agent. Employees appeared to be fully cognizant of the fruits of their labor. As leaders and followers pursued success and reputation for Southwest, they were also keenly aware that collective profitability would more than likely follow.

One very intangible yet, consistently noted emergent catalytic force was the Spirit at Southwest. Southwest's culture is deeply embedded in the work ethic of its people and is perhaps one of the reasons why it was so difficult to fully understand what influenced so many people to get involved in both the on-time performance effort and the culture committee challenge. Again, this is a family culture that is committed to taking care of its own. Clearly, even though the numbers have increased by over 60% since 1971, Southwest continues to hold strong to its unwavering commitment to its people. In turn, Southwest employees have developed an unwavering commitment to the success of the airline. Southwest hires and promotes from within whenever possible, a practice that is consistent with the commitment between the organization and the people. Thus, the unique family culture employees experience at Southwest, most definitely, served as a catalytic force in challenging and

influencing people to take part in the changes investigated in this study. Employees love the company and thus work toward its effectiveness and success when necessary.

How Are Leadership Relationships Formed?

Postindustrial leadership is about the development of relationships between leaders and followers who are synergistically in pursuit of mutual purpose. Three consistent themes emerged in response to this research question. Many of the leadership relationships in the on-time performance effort and the culture committee challenge were formed through both individual and collective uses of power resources. The company's committee-driven decision-making structure also contributed to the formation of leadership relationships. In addition, the leaders' and followers' consistent attention to commonality of purpose also served to facilitate the development of leadership relationships.

Power resources played a significant role in many of the influence-based relationships that were formed for both changes investigated. Many members of each committee were selected based upon their reputation, personality, give-and-take behavior and their interpersonal and group skills. The leaders and followers involved in both change efforts used power resources as they attempted to draw more and more people into the leadership relationships. In reference to the improvement in on-time performance and the perpetuation of Southwest's culture, these activities were not reflective

of hierarchical chains of command nor were they reflective of authority-based influence. Instead, the evidence gathered during this investigation is descriptive of leadership that involved leaders and followers who held various positions yet participated in committees that were free of any authority or position-based boundaries. Thus, on behalf of the committees' efforts, these leaders and followers used different power resources with varying skill to develop leadership relationships both within the committee forum and throughout the entire organization.

In addition, many people at Southwest engaged in leadership activities that were reflective of mutually held common purposes. The leaders and followers involved in the on-time performance change effort wanted to capture, once again, the number one position in on-time performance. The leaders and followers involved in the culture committee challenge had a vision of continuously perpetuating the fundamental principles of love, fun and family within the Southwest culture. In essence, participants in both change efforts used vision and common purpose as a motivator and gained increased participation and involvement in these leadership relationships.

In summary, authority, position and power were all held constant through committee driven change structures. In turn, these committee driven forums granted leaders and followers the freedom needed to form multidirectional, noncoercive influence-based relationships. In addition,

leaders and followers were skillful and discerning in their use of power resources and quite calculated in how they mutually defined end results that needed to be accomplished.

What Are The Underlying Values And Interaction Patterns That Fostered The Interdependence That Is Inherent In Leadership Relationships?

Leadership for the 21st century presents a challenge to scholars and practitioners interested in facilitating the transformation from an industrial to a postindustrial leadership definition. Thus, this transformation will not be possible without careful consideration of the values that drive the practice of leadership within companies. In answering this research question, consider Rosen's (1992) discussion of values and healthy companies.

Healthy companies all possess and emanate a certain vitality and spirit. This spirit is not a religious fervor or a mindless cheerleader enthusiasm but a deep feeling of shared humanistic values at the core of the company. These values are the glue that binds healthy, successful employees with healthy productive workplaces. They influence the way people act and think at all levels of the company and form the foundation for corporate policies and practices. They define roles and responsibilities and dictate how business decisions are made. These principles are expressed and applied at every turn of the business, from receptionists and

loading dock workers, through managers and executives and into the board of directors. (p. 115)

What follows is first, a review of some of the values discovered in this investigation. Second is a discussion about the interaction patterns deep-rooted in the on-time performance and the culture committee change efforts. These are the values that have formed the foundation for Southwest's corporate policies and business decisions. In addition, these values served to facilitate the interaction patterns that were inherent in the leadership relationships and practices described herein.

Southwest values its people. Kelleher always credits Southwest's success to the employees. He claimed that "people are the most important thing in any business operation. Getting employees to join in on a crusade is the most important thing." From Kelleher's office to many other functional areas in the company, the people of Southwest value each other's contributions. This investigation illustrates an absence of hierarchy within Southwest. Employees in both change investigations appeared to form specific leadership relationships as they fought for a common purpose. Whether it was improving on-time performance or perpetuating the Southwest culture, countless employees at various levels engaged in leadership activities as leaders and followers who were dedicated to contributing to the committees' causes. Rosen (1992) stated:

Healthy company values bind people to their organizations. By creating a common language and appealing to principles of dignity, commitment and growth, these values help to create an identity that connects thousands of people around a shared mission. Suddenly, the traditional hard values of business success and the nontraditional values of human development merge into one dream. (p. 116)

This study is supportive of the belief that people are more likely to make significant contributions when they feel valued. Southwest has done an incredible job of creating and perpetuating a common language and a common set of activities and experiences that bind employees to this corporate family. Within this company there is a subtle but powerful integration of the business value of success and human value of personal development. At Southwest most of the important decisions and changes are committee driven. People work collectively toward achieving the value of success and, in the process, reap the benefits of personal and professional development.

Both the on-time performance committee and the culture committee gave the employees of Southwest ownership and contribution opportunities that are typically stifled through the more traditional, structured and defined chains of command. Instead, Southwest created and continues to reinforce a culture that honors, respects and taps into the diverse talents of the people it hires. Rosen(1992) also

noted that healthy companies value the spirit of partnership and recognize the strength of shared effort.

Both managers and employees truly believe that two minds are better than one, and many are best. They make great team players and form strong relationships because they understand the dynamics of giving and taking, leading and following. (p. 117)

Fortunately, as Southwest has grown, the family atmosphere has grown as well. As employees are cared for and nurtured within this family culture, they continue to participate in Southwest crusades. This research is illustrative of the employees' willingness to join in the on-time performance and the culture committee crusades within Southwest Airlines. In the pursuit of a common purpose, employees from the bottom of the company to the top, willingly engaged in leadership relationships to fight for improved on-time performance and the continuation of a family culture. Both change efforts provide evidence endorsing Southwest's belief in the spirit of partnership and its commitment to getting many minds involved.

Southwest not only values survival, it values winning as well. The incredible struggle the organization experienced at its beginning has become a legend. It was a highly spirited crusade that has become the foundation upon which all other crusades have been built. Southwest's legend has become the lore that ignites the spirit and inspires employees to fight for a cause. Whether it be improved on-

time performance or the perpetuation of a culture that has fostered the kind of family feeling that is experienced in the airline, the employees of Southwest are not only survivors, they are winners. After living and learning the legend of Southwest it is not surprising that the people of this unique company have "the hearts of lions, the strength of elephants, and the determination of water buffaloes" (Levering & Moskowitz, 1993, p. 416).

Southwest values family. During the course of this investigation, the values experienced by this researcher were a lot like the values one might experience when in the presence of a family that has suffered hardships, pulled together and grown closer in the process. The leaders and followers of this airline were not only continually improving on-time performance and perpetuating the uniqueness of this growing company, they were also unifying their commitment to work with heart, strength and determination. Heart connotes not only courage, but unconditional commitment to the fight. Strength connotes the incredible fighting power that results from believing in something from the heart. Determination connotes an unwavering dedication and persistence to stay focused on the cause in the face of adversity. In addition, these same leaders and followers developed such relationships freely and gladly because they believed in the vision of this airline and the contributions this airline made to the communities and customers it served. The Southwest Shuffle, a famous Southwest rap video, expressed it best, "What a

team! What a family! From the top to the bottom we're a fun factory!"

Southwest values fun. Originally, having fun on the job may have been a survival tactic, the means through which this airline could achieve "talk value." Early on, with all the start up costs and legal battles, Southwest had no money to buy advertising and promotions. Instead Southwest created a personality that would make it unique in the airline industry and thus, give it as much free ink or press coverage as this personality could generate. Even today that philosophy is very critical to Southwest's success. Southwest operates on the philosophy that flying should not be an ordeal to be tolerated, it should be a good time to be enjoyed. Interviews, articles, advertisements, employees and customers alike all express in one way or another Southwest's commitment to fun. Having fun while working, visiting or flying is taken very seriously at Southwest Airlines and is considered important business. From activities, to uniforms, to advertising and promotions, the spirit of fun pervades Southwest.

These values are at the heart of Southwest Airlines and have allowed Southwest to continuously grow, evolve and renew itself. Both the on-time performance and the culture committee's efforts were designed to reinforce what was positive and productive and minimize the unhealthy and unworkable. These values are perpetually interacting. As one expands another contracts, they are much like a living

cell. Each value positively and negatively depends on and influences the others. The values of people, family, winning, and fun are at the very core of this company. They are manifest in every issue, decision, position and relationship. These values are what bind the people of Southwest to its successes, defeats and dreams.

These values are fundamental to the interaction patterns reflective of the leadership relationships in both the on-time performance effort and the culture committee initiative. Leaders and followers involved in both change efforts engaged in interaction patterns that were reflective of a circular model of centriarchy rather than the more structured and linear hierarchical models of more traditional organizations. The leadership relationships discovered in the efforts to improve on-time performance and to perpetuate Southwest culture, combined values and nonhierarchical interaction patterns through a committee forum to promote the collective good of Southwest and its honored and respected stakeholders-employees, customers and communities.

Are These Influence Relationships Reflective Of Mutual Purposes?

Although the two changes investigated were distinctly separate issues for the people of Southwest Airlines and the individuals who participated in each of the change committees were, in most cases, different people, it is interesting to note the interconnectedness of Southwest's on-time performance activities to the perpetuation of its culture. In

both cases, the members of each committee repeatedly noted that Southwest's success directly tied to personal success. Thus, in answer to the research question, "Are these influence relationships reflective of mutual purposes?" the response is yes.

This investigation clearly illustrates that improved on-time performance and the perpetuation of family, love and fun were reflective of mutual purposes. Both change efforts had everything to do with the continuation of Southwest's success. Southwest's success had become the collective vision of the employees. At this point it is likely that the reader has become quite sensitized to what success means to the employees of Southwest Airlines. Success is clearly an implicit value and can also be thought of as yet another very powerful catalytic agent that ignited some of the leadership relationships dedicated to effecting both changes researched in this investigation.

Clearly, the implementation of Southwest's culture committee had everything to do with continued success. Without the kind of spirit that employees possessed in the beginning, it would be frightening to think of the future of Southwest in such a competitive and hostile industry. Thus, as competition within the industry continues to intensify, it became more and more clear to employees that the spirit that changed this industry twenty-two years ago must live on within the growing number of employees of Southwest Airlines today. The leadership relationships of the culture committee

resulted from the employees' desire to continue to be better while at the same time continuing to be different than the competition.

While investigating the on-time performance issue specifically, it was not unusual for employees to tie their own success to the success of Southwest. Time and time again, this researcher received comments like, "When Southwest succeeds, I succeed." As numerous informants suggested, Southwest is family to its employees, to many it is a part of their heart and soul. When Southwest's on-time performance ratings fell well below its competition, the Southwest Spirit among the employees dropped as well. Perhaps this is because the pride that most employees experience when Southwest is recognized as the number one performing airline contributes to their own personal sense of heroism as well.

In essence, success for Southwest was a consequence of the success of its employees and the success of the employees was a consequence of commonality of purpose. Leadership became the common enterprise. Together leaders and followers served customers through improved on-time performance and by doing business in their uniquely, successful Southwest style.

How Is Influence Operationalized In These Leadership Relationships?

Postindustrial leadership is based on persuasive behaviors, it is not operationalized through authority, power or dictatorial actions. Influence in the on-time performance effort and the culture committee challenge was

operationalized primarily through the practice of integrity, the mix of people involved in each change effort and through various communication sources within Southwest.

Instead of traditional industrial-based authority, leaders and followers used persuasion to operationalize influence as they developed relationships to improve on-time performance and perpetuate Southwest's culture. Essentially, leaders and followers operated out of integrity and thus practiced the values described above. When an individual operates out of integrity, espoused values are equivalent to values in use. In contrast when an individual operates out of hypocrisy, espoused values are contradictory to values in use. Leaders and followers used influence in both the on-time performance change effort and the culture committee challenge through personal integrity. The 20th anniversary issue of *LuvLines* gives the reader a better understanding of how influence is operationalized through integrity within these relationships. It stated:

Herb truly loves the employees of Southwest Airlines. "People are my biggest tie to Southwest. . . . You have to respect your own people, love your own people, if they are going to respect the Customers, love the Customers." . . . Southwest employees feel that love and mutual respect from Herb. That's why we are the most productive group in the entire airline industry, and that's why we've won the Triple Crown for an unprecedented four times! (p. 24)

Again, this concept of love and respect worked its way down into the bowels of the organization. As this investigation highlighted, the on-time performance improvement and the perpetuation of the Southwest culture were efforts that involved people holding various positions within the company. In addition to Southwest's constant and consistent attention to the values discussed above, influence within these two non-hierarchical committees was certainly operationalized without compromising the principles that reflected the values of this company.

To better understand how influence was operationalized in leadership relationships, it is also helpful to revisit the mix of people involved in both the on-time performance committee and the culture committee. Both committees were made up of representatives from a broad cross section of the company. The members of each committee had varying degrees of responsibility at Southwest. However, regardless of committee members' formal job titles, both change efforts gave employees of Southwest ownership and involvement opportunities that would not have been possible had the Executive Planning Committee worked independently to determine solutions to the changes investigated. Thus, the membership of each committee communicated to employees of Southwest at large that input from many levels and positions was needed, valued and desired in order to effect the kinds of changes each committee was dedicated to achieving.

In addition, influence was also operationalized in letters, memoranda, newsletters and other sources of communication at Southwest. I invite the reader to revisit once again many of the figures presented in Chapter IV--a letter written by an employee to his Southwest family challenging people to work as a team, a memorandum summarizing one employee's experience and impressions after three days in the field and a poem written by an employee describing Southwest's Dream. These are just a few of the examples described herein that illustrated the use of communication sources to operationalize influence in these two significant leadership initiatives at Southwest.

In summary, many of the leadership relationships documented in this investigation involved the use of influence operationalized through the practice of personal and collective integrity. The examples illustrated that people treated each other as more than profit producers. Leaders and followers who were involved in the on-time performance and the culture committee change efforts viewed the relationships in which they engaged as more than simply financial contracts and position-based relationships. Rather, many of the leaders and followers involved in each committee's efforts viewed these relationships as opportunities to add value and give back to an organization that has in many instances transcended the ideals and traditions of the industrial paradigm.

Southwest Airlines is a company that has created a formula that has been amazingly successful in integrating hard traditional business values with softer nontraditional humanistic values. The result of this combination is what the people of Southwest are rich with--spirit and vitality. The integration of values, people and the demands of business and competition have contributed to the creation of an indomitable spirit and the realization of a dream that employees not only believe, but have been an integral part of creating and perpetuating.

Summary

Overall, this researcher has been inspired and left hopeful that this generation and generations to come will become more sensitized and thus, more skilled in the practice of leadership as defined by Rost (1991). This research has proven that leadership relationships have been operationalized within one of America's most successful airlines. Moreover, it has suggested that business values such as success, profitability and competitive edge can be combined with more personal values like family, fun and compassion to create a company culture in which the common good becomes, ironically enough, a traditional business practice. Southwest Airlines has in a least two specific changes efforts demonstrated that leadership is more than the achievement of bottom line business goals through the practice of authority-based, one-person-centered, excellent management. As Gross (1993) noted:

There is no way on God's green earth that a single man could honcho the daily activities of a company that is spread over thousands of miles, and more than 12,000 flight attendants, pilots, mechanics and others. The suggestion that Southwest Airlines revolves around the charisma of Kelleher is more than unfair. It's uncalled for. (p. 176)

In response to such absurdity, Colleen Barrett stated, "honestly, in a way, it's almost offensive. I've been here for 22 years, a lot of us have. It's a team effort" (Gross, 1993, p. 176). In addition, Gross described Kelleher's public image as one likened to the wizard in the land of Oz and suggested that he really is a simple man behind a big curtain. "Its not Herb, as employees and customers alike call him; it is a team effort that makes Southwest Airlines the most fun airline in the world" (p. 176).

Clearly, the people of Southwest who became a part of the leadership relationships described herein are trend setters. They have, indeed, paved the way for collaborative leadership and proved that mutual purpose, teamwork and multidirectional and noncoercive influence relationships served as very powerful components to effecting significant personal, corporate and community change.

Strengths of This Study

The strength of this study lies in its focus on leadership as a relational process. This study is one attempt to move us beyond what we have come to know as leadership.

Unlike the studies this investigation was originally modeled after, this investigator did not focus on a leader and how that leader operationalized a particular model of leadership. Instead, this investigator focused on how people at Southwest Airlines engaged in leadership relationships to intend substantive changes in the organization. Specifically, this study moves us beyond investigations that have been heavily influenced by industrialized definitions of leadership. This research focuses on the collective process of leadership. In order to enrich our understanding of leadership as a relationship, this researcher studied leadership through the interaction of people working toward a purpose rather than through influence ultimately derived from positions of authority. As hoped, this investigation gives us more insight into leadership relationships that are non hierarchical.

In this investigation I studied people who empowered and enabled others to act collectively toward the accomplishment of a shared vision or common purpose without holding positional power within the organization. In this study I investigated leadership as something more powerful than what can be done by an individual who is ultimately recognized as a leader because he/she holds a position of authority within a major organization or institution. This study focuses specifically on how people at all different levels in a major American corporation collectively pursued and accomplished a purpose. The methods used in this investigation allowed the

researcher to explore truly interactive leadership relationships that did not include either ultimate corporate authority or a charismatic hero.

Another strength of this investigation relates to the fact that it shows how the various elements of Rost's (1991) model of 21st century leadership have been practiced during two significant changes at Southwest Airlines. It answers the question: "Can this model be applied in the context of an organization, and if so how has it been operationalized?" This study builds upon the work of other researchers who advance a relational model of leadership by analyzing and describing how individuals collectively pursue leadership. In essence, this study moves us toward legitimating Rost's model of leadership by the fact that it was operationalized in Southwest Airlines during two specific change efforts.

This investigation also contributes to our understanding of twenty-first century leadership by offering a more in-depth description of how individuals exercised leadership relationships in order to accomplish long-term, sustained organizational change. This study enables researchers and practitioners to examine the attitudes and behaviors of individuals who facilitated and engaged in significant organizational change in one of the best performing airlines in the United States. In providing a thorough, descriptive analysis of the leadership relationships behind improved on-time performance and perpetuating Southwest's culture, this study moves both scholars and practitioners to an increased

understanding of the nature of leadership as a relational process that contributed to significant organizational change.

The fundamental strength of this investigation, then, is that it provides researchers with an operational model of a theoretical concept. This is valuable because it shows that while the concept of 21st century leadership is prescriptive and ideal--a leadership model for the future--it is not only conceivable but it is in fact attainable as well. Thus, for scholars interested in expanding the field of leadership as an academic discipline, Rost's definition serves as the foundation from which future leadership investigations should stem. For practitioners, this study provides examples and stories that can be used as tools to assist in the process of leadership development. It is crucial that we put an end to the influx of haphazard leadership definitions and begin instead to offer further analysis and validation to this new model of leadership. Through this study we have gained valuable insight about the practice of a new school of leadership and the degree to which the people of Southwest Airlines have engaged in facilitating the transition from the industrial to the postindustrial era.

Weaknesses of This Study

Reflection upon this study and an analysis of the process of inquiry used during this investigation reveals some noted weaknesses. Perhaps the most significant weakness in this study is that the researcher was unable to observe

many of the interactions between the leaders and followers which formed the leadership relationships that effected the changes under investigation. Clearly, a more long-term and intensive participant observation would have been ideal for this investigation. However, the changes investigated were studied in retrospect and thus true participant observation was not feasible.

In essence, I investigated changes that had already occurred and thus the data and responses gained during interviews made the researcher vulnerable to certain elements of distortion. With the exception of first hand participant observation, there is no simple way to account for the inherent constraint(s) some interviewees may have when talking about themselves and their contributions to the Southwest family. It is entirely possible that some individuals may have been overly enthusiastic in their reiteration of the process or too cautious in their criticism of the changes under investigation. However, in spite of this potential constraint there was a tremendous amount of consistency in the information that was gained in interviews with the different members involved in each of the change efforts. Thus, in the case of an ethnographic investigation, the overlapping perceptions and repetition of experiences, stories and illustrations by interviewees and publications helps in confirming the accuracy of this analysis.

Another possible distortion in this investigation springs from the researcher's strong beliefs and biases about

21st century leadership. It has been argued that a researcher attempting to uncover a specific construct, such as 21st century leadership, through naturalistic inquiry, could in fact create a self-fulfilling prophecy in which the investigator constructs a distorted image of the data that is consistent with the concept under investigation. However, this argument is weakened in reference to the present study for the following reasons.

First, the researcher set out to investigate three change efforts within Southwest Airlines. Through the initial examination of these changes, it became apparent that two emerged as evident illustrations of Rost's model of 21st century leadership. The third change was clearly a management issue. Thus, because academic and practical publications on management abound, the researcher decided that it would be more advantageous to focus on the change efforts that were representative of 21st century leadership rather than focus on yet another example of management in a study trying to gain new perspectives on leadership.

In turn, even though the two changes fully investigated and analyzed in this study were not experienced through the eyes of a participant observer, the investigator did in fact discover that not all change efforts are the result of relational leadership. As was discovered in the preliminary investigation of the third change, management is both a necessary and operational process within Southwest Airlines. However, while first hand observation of the two leadership

changes was not possible, the researcher critically compared the behaviors and attitudes of individuals involved in and observing both leadership change efforts to the criteria defining Rost's definition of leadership. Thus, without the opportunity to observe these individuals in the process of effecting each change under investigation, the researcher concluded through the evidence presented by informants, and from the evidence obtained from written and video media that people within Southwest have in at least two specific change efforts exercised 21st century leadership. Moreover, the accounts outlined in this investigation are the most accurate perceptions the researcher has at present.

Finally, the researcher's admiration for Southwest and thus, my selection of material to be presented in this document is another possible cause for distortion. One of the difficulties researchers experience while in the midst of naturalistic inquiry has to do with their ability to remain objective throughout the study and continue to look at the evidence through an unbiased lens. After numerous visits to the organization, it became increasingly more difficult for this researcher to maintain objectivity. Even Freiberg (1989) noted "as is their natural tendency, the people of Southwest were extremely warm and quickly adopted the researcher as one of the family" (p. 378). Unfortunately, the same was true for the researcher of this investigation, possibly even more so because of the longer history I have had in developing a personal relationship with many of the

people within this airline. To many readers, the accounts in this document may appear too flattering and too positive to be real. Southwest, like other major corporations, has its share of problems and is far from perfect to be sure. Yet, in addition to the doctoral dissertations that have been written about this airline, one must ask: "What has attracted news programs such as 60 Minutes, CNN's Pinnacle and numerous national newspapers to report on Southwest Airlines?" This researcher would suggest that it is because of the organization's unique approach to leadership as evidenced in this document.

Future Research

This investigation serves as a foundation for a number of other subsequent qualitative investigations on 21st century leadership. In lieu of the strengths and weaknesses of this investigation, there are a variety of areas in which future research is worthy. The model offered by Rost (1991) should be applied in its entirety to other for-profit and not-for-profit organizational, political, educational and institutional change efforts. This will, in turn, enable future researchers to describe in more detail if and how the model as defined by Rost is operationalized in these various different contexts. Future research studying leadership through qualitative research techniques will produce the kinds of thick, rich descriptions that facilitate the transferability of hypothesis from one context to another. As more studies similar to this one are conducted,

researchers will be in a better position to compare and contrast our findings and thus develop more broad-based generalizations about both the utility and practice of 21st century leadership.

Realistically, through investigations in different contexts, a concept as broad-based as 21st century leadership will not always be operationalized in the same way. Therefore, future investigations that focus on how the concept of leadership is operationalized in other contexts will serve to move Rost's definition of leadership from a prescriptive model to a descriptive one. This will further confirm and disconfirm the utility of this model as a descriptive tool for gaining more insight into the nature of leadership now and in the future.

Whenever feasible, future research on 21st century leadership should build upon this investigation through the methodology of participant observation through an extended period of immersion in the organization. Moreover, these researchers should attempt to examine the individuals in the various leadership relationships in a variety of other contexts. Such studies will grant us further opportunity to better determine the consistency or lack of consistency with which these individuals demonstrate relational leadership and whether or not such consistency is essential to the practice 21st century leadership.

Clearly, there is further need for investigations dedicated to increasing our understanding of leadership as a

relational and interactive process. As Freiberg (1989) stated "if researchers and practitioners are going to conduct studies that truly further our understanding of leadership, they must engage in broad-based studies that transcend the trait (Stogdill, 1974) and situational (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977) theories of leadership" (p. 381). In essence, this calls for studies that incorporate all of the elements of Rost's model and examine the concept holistically in order to contribute to a new and growing paradigm that will transcend the industrial ideals of leadership.

Finally, in spite of many scholarly attempts to shed new light on leadership through innovative ideas and numerous discussions of paradigm shifts, we continue to discover that most practitioners still define leadership as excellent management. Thus, whenever possible it is important for researchers to present their findings in a practically palatable style so we can begin to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Practitioners must be trained to view leadership and management as distinctively different concepts through real life examples and illustrations of institutions and organizations that are successfully distinguishing between the two. This will foster the kinds of changes in mindset and behavior that will move 21st century leadership from a model in theory to a model in action.

Concluding Remarks

Rost's (1991) research offers a new direction for scholars and practitioners frustrated with what has become a

widely accepted industrialized definition of leadership. Throughout the 1980s, scholars and practitioners alike have contributed to the perpetuation of today's industrialized, excellent management understanding of leadership. Rather than a relationship of influence and vision, leadership, to many of the people who serve in business, government, education, healthcare and our communities, is recognized as the more acceptable form of management, as something that a very talented person possesses, or as something a position on the top of an organizational hierarchy grants a person.

Yet, we have moved into a decade of incredible turbulence and change. Government, business, education, healthcare and our communities are in the midst of a decade that is needing more than leadership as an industrialized understanding of excellent management. Just as an athlete is not expected to perform on the playing field without the necessary training and equipment, we should not expect the people of this generation and the generations to come to enter into an incredibly complex global environment without the necessary training and education. This new school of leadership will provide the training and the education that will grant people what Rost considers to be the cornerstone of leadership. People today, more than ever before, are in need of a transformational mindset to assist them in shaping and molding the communities of the 21st century.

As Rost (1991) noted "real transformation involves active people, engaging in influence relationships based on

persuasion, intending real changes to happen, and insisting that those changes reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 123). This case study shows that many of the people of Southwest Airlines effected real, substantive changes and they did so by becoming active and by engaging in influence relationships that were based on persuasion, not authority. They willingly engaged in these relationships because they passionately and collectively believed in Southwest Airlines and the values for which this organization stands. Clearly, the leadership relationships discovered in this investigation were about real change. However, the kinds of substantive changes that result from these leadership relationships are discovered when people, who are touched by Southwest's uniqueness and their constant crusades for worthy causes, take the time to share. A heartwarming letter from a customer illustrates the powerful force behind the incredible activities and ideas that the people of Southwest dream up (See Figure 17). The Southwest culture committee members were the leadership forces behind the patriotic tribute of Lone Star One.

My hope is that the commitment, dedication and collective vision behind the people and stories describing the leadership within Southwest Airlines will inspire scholars and practitioners to further examine the potential of 21st century leadership. More importantly, I hope that these stories will encourage more people to effect real transformation through leadership relationships like those described in the pages of this document. This study then,

THE SHOW STOPPERS

from page 14

flight, money-back guarantee. Between 1987 and 1990, Southwest's annual revenue from cargo and mail grew \$11.5 million to \$24 million, an increase of 94 percent.

WE UNVEILED A FLYING TRIBUTE

Our 20th Anniversary activities took off in high-flying fashion when Lone Star One was unveiled in Austin on November 7, 1990. We believe Southwest Airlines has become as much a Texas Tradition as yellow roses and barbecue. The Austin gala was held to thank the people of Texas for their strong loyalty and support. Without them, none of us would be here today! Lone Star One is a high-flying tribute to the indomitable spirit that makes Texas a true state of mind.

The response from Lone Star One has been overwhelming. We received some outstanding media attention, and

we've received some very heartwarming and touching letters from our Customers.

I am currently flying on a Southwest flight to Austin, Texas and I am taking the time to say a word of thanks to Southwest Airlines. I have flown on your airline fifteen to twenty times a year for 15 years. I appreciate your service and attention to delivering a great product to your Customers. However, that function is expected in this world of consumer service. I really am writing to you so that I can share a special moment that happened to me because of you.

Friday, February 15, I was driving home from work around

6:00 p.m. It had just rained in Dallas and there was a complete rainbow showering the city with vivid colors. Just as I stopped on Empire Central and Denton Drive, by Love Field, I turned on the radio and Ray Charles was singing "God Bless America" (nobody sings it better). Right at that very moment, with a perfect rainbow shining and Ray Charles singing, something very special occurred. Your Lone Star Airplane flew under the rainbow arch for a touchdown at Love Field, spraying up water as she headed down the runway. The sun made the colors so vivid that the plane itself seemed to take on an image of unbelievable pride and greatness.

I pulled over to the side of the road and cried for all the things that are special freedoms in our lives. I thought of your

Christmas commercials with the kids and cried some more. I thought of your billboards, Austin Auften, etc., and started to laugh. I thought of your T.V. commercials about all the flights at all times of the day you fly, and laughed again. I guess you could say your marketing has worked on me.

Patriotism is in these days and it is great that we all are experiencing a renewed dedication to our country. Southwest Airlines was a proud patriotic, American/Texas Company long before the Iraq war made so many others jump on the bandwagon. For that you are to be acknowledged.

In closing, I just want to thank you for doing what you do and while it was purely circumstantial, you were part of a perfect moment in my life.

*Tyler Brown
Dallas, Texas*

Figure 17. A letter from a customer

and more like it, will contribute to facilitating our transition to the postindustrial era. When this happens, we will trust that the collective is much more powerful than the individual. Twenty-first century leadership as documented in this manuscript will minimize the industrial ideals of hierarchy, individual power, and corporate bureaucracy. Instead, 21st century leadership will inspire a more collaborative approach to creating the kind of vision that is necessary for affecting change for generations now and in the future.

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APPENDIX A. TITLES OF INFORMANTS

The informants of this study represented a cross section of the organization. The following is a summary of the number of people interviewed and the title and/or affiliation they held. In total, 26 formal interviews were conducted.

Executive titles -- 5 informants

Management titles -- 3 informants

Staff titles -- 8 informants

Pilots -- 3 informants

Flight Attendants -- 3 informants

Flight Operations -- 1 informant

Partner firms -- 3 informants

In addition, conversations provided informal interviews with the following:

Customers (four)

A pilot's son-in law

A sky cap

A Southwest security guard

A maintenance crew of three

A promotional volunteer group

A job applicant

A flight attendant trainee

APPENDIX B. INFORMANT CONSENT FORM

University of San Diego
CONSENT TO ACT AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT

My participation in this study is completely voluntary. I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without jeopardy to my employment at Southwest Airlines.

I understand that my research records will be kept completely confidential. My identity will not be disclosed without consent required by law. I further understand that to preserve my anonymity only group data will be used in any publication of the results of this study.

I do have the right to request "off the record dialogue." To do so, I simply need to indicate that this is an "off the record" comment and the tape recorder will be turned off and no notes will be recorder.

Jackie Freiberg has explained this study to me and answered my questions. If I have other questions or research-related problems, I can reach Jackie at (619)286-1245.

There are no other agreements, written or verbal, related to this study beyond that expressed on this consent form. I have received a copy of this consent document.

I, the undersigned, understand the above explanation and, on that basis, I give consent to my voluntary participation in this research.

 Signature of Subject

 Date

 Location

 Signature of Witness

 Date

 Signature of Researcher

 Date

APPENDIX D. LETTER FROM SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO.

Colleen C. Barrett
Executive Vice President-Customers
& Corporate Secretary

Love Field
P.O. Box 38811
Dallas, Texas 75235-1811
(214) 904-4112

May 1992

To Whom it May Concern,

Jackie Freiberg has been granted access to Southwest Airlines Co. to conduct research for her doctoral dissertation.

We understand that employees who participate in this study are doing so voluntarily and may decline from participation at any time.

We understand that the data and information collected during interviews is confidential and will not be made available to the organization.

Finally we are confident that this study will adhere to the conditions and procedures with respect to safeguarding the rights and welfare of the human subjects in this research as established by the University of San Diego.

Colleen Barrett
Executive Vice President Customers
Southwest Airlines Co.

APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide

What is it like to work for SWA...

Why do you think SWA is so successful

Tell me what leadership means to you

Tell me about OTP/CCC/PH

Why is this issue important to you

Why is this issue important to SWA

What was the overall goal(s) of the OTP/CCC/PH

Who determined the goal(s)

When was the goal(s) accomplished

How was the goal(s) communicated to other people at SWA

Why did you get involved in OTP/CCC/PH

Why did other people at SWA get involved

What kinds of people took initiative

What did this initiative look like

Describe what people did to work on this issue

What changes have resulted from this issue

How does this issue relate to SWA mission/purpose

Where do you currently stand on this issue

Has the goal(s) for this issue changed for SWA, if so how

Who else should I talk to about this issue

Is there anything else I should see related to this issue

Is there anything else I should know about this process