

## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

WWW.CIKD.CA

journal homepage: <https://www.ijol.cikd.ca>



# Functional Leadership in a Changing and Bounded World: The Relevance of Managerial Behavioral Training

Maria P. Henriksson<sup>1\*</sup>, Martin Grill<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

### Keywords:

Leadership training, CBT, Thematic functional analysis, Bounded rationality, Change management

### Received

12 September 2023

### Received in revised form

12 October 2023

### Accepted

17 October 2023

### \*Correspondence:

[maria.henriksson@psy.gu.se](mailto:maria.henriksson@psy.gu.se)

### ABSTRACT

Successful organizations require functional leadership. This article evaluates a new leadership development intervention, Managerial Behavioral Training (MBT), that targets concrete leadership behaviors associated with flexible, healthy, and successful work environments. Within an applied behavioral analytical framework, managers participating in MBT were trained by a leadership coach during six biweekly sessions in specific functional leadership behaviors. Sixteen managers were interviewed one year after participating in this individualized leadership intervention. Functional contextualism was used as the theoretical framework to analyze the interview transcripts, and a mind-mapping approach was used to illustrate themes. The findings show four success factors and indicate that MBT provides managers with analytical tools and training opportunities for developing functional leadership behaviors, allowing them to successfully manage organizational change. Participating managers described the scheduled time for reflection with a coach as important for adjusting dysfunctional leadership behaviors in new situations. Taking time to listen to employees' perspectives gave managers a way to engage employees that increased productivity. Scheduling time for planning and setting clear goals for the team and for individual employees was found to be important for the employees' motivation and productivity. Stress management, taking time for recovery, and having a meaningful private life were found to enable successful managerial decision-making. The four success factors for functional leadership are discussed and related to theories on organizational management and leadership.

©CIKD Publishing

A rapidly changing world puts considerable pressure on organizations to survive and prosper. Managerial leadership is important in the process of changing and transforming organizations to reach their goals without negatively affecting their psychosocial work environment or exhausting their internal resources. Functional leadership refers to the multifaceted task of

successfully leading teams toward organizational goals (Bass, 1999; Faupel & Süß, 2019; Santos et al., 2015). There are numerous descriptions of important aspects of such leadership, and recent literature on leadership development suggests that existing models must be revised to be of practical use to organizational managers (Posen et al., 2018; Pregmark, 2022; Santos et al., 2015). A prescriptive approach has been recommended for research on how to, for example, assess organizational performance (Posen et al., 2018), set viable goals in a changing and unpredictable world, plan the steps toward these future goals, and engage the workforce in the required change process (e.g., Pregmark, 2022).

This study offers a prescriptive approach to change management and functional leadership by presenting and discussing the results of a qualitative evaluation of a new leadership development intervention known as Managerial Behavioral Training (MBT). MBT targets specific functional leadership behaviors associated with flexible, healthy, and successful organizations (Björnsdotter & Grill, 2021). As described below, MBT takes a step away from the abstract level of descriptions of personality traits and leadership styles, such as transformative and transactional leadership (Bass, 1999; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), and instead uses analyses of concrete leadership behaviors as the input for training on functional leadership in the natural work environment of the specific manager. As also outlined below, MBT shares the same theoretical foundation as Herbert Simon's (1997, 2000) renowned behavioral economics theory of human and organizational performance but offers a prescriptive approach to how managers can adaptively handle organizational change in response to a changing environment without negatively affecting the work environment.

This article introduces MBT and provides a qualitative thematic functional analysis of data from interviews with managers one year after these managers' participation in MBT. The results in terms of success factors for functional leadership behaviors are discussed in relation to the theories of bounded rationality (Simon, 1997, 2000) and of managerial myopia or nearsightedness in decision-making that prevents organizational productivity and growth (Larwood & Whittaker, 1977; Levinthal & March, 1993).

## **The Theoretical Foundations and Functional Analyses in Managerial Behavioral Training**

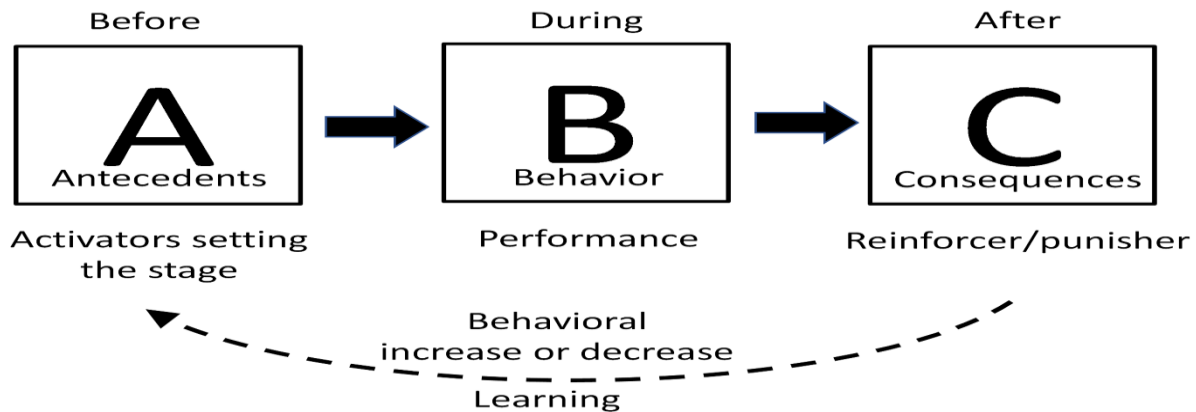
The ways in which organizations learn from and adapt to changing environments have been the focus of organizational and leadership research for decades (Pitelis, 2007). Herbert Simon's research into adaptive decision-making in organizations, for which he was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics in 1978, was an early attempt to address adaptive and dynamic organizations and has been repeatedly revised over the years (1997, 2000). Although Simon's general description of human boundaries and adaptation to environments has merit, the application of this theory to organizational practice and leadership has proved difficult due to its descriptive approach (Foss, 2003; Gigerenzer, 2004). In line with Simon's work, MBT takes functional contextualism as the theoretical basis for understanding human behavior; however, it shifts away from the abstract level of behavior described by Simon and the literature on leadership styles. Instead, MBT provides a more concrete level of behavioral analysis of individual leadership by operationalizing leadership constructs into more manageable and observable behaviors that are trained in the managers' natural work environments (Grill et al., 2023).

The tools used in MBT for training managers in functional leadership behaviors have been adapted from Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT); in particular, functional analysis—the analytical tool used in CBT—has been demonstrated to be effective for solving diverse behavioral problems (David et al., 2014; Dixon et al., 2012; Hanley et al., 2003; Haynes & O’Brien, 1990). The success of CBT depends on the therapist’s and client’s collaborative analytical work, as well as on carefully structured behavioral adjustments to reach desired goals (McGinn & Sanderson, 2001). The aim of functional analysis is to identify the triggers and reinforcing mechanisms underlying the problems an individual encounters in their environment. This analytical tool relies on functional contextualism, which postulates that human behavior cannot be understood without understanding the individual’s environmental context. For decades, functional contextualism has been the theoretical foundation from which applied psychology has sought solutions to behavioral problems (Dixon et al., 2012; Gifford & Hayes, 1999). Functional contextualism is also used in organizational psychology, judgment, and decision-making research to describe performance and experiential learning in organizations (Buchanan & Badham, 2020; Cooksey, 1996; March & Simon, 1993; Payne et al., 1993; Simon, 1997, 2000). However, Gigerenzer (2004) argued that studies in these areas have mostly focused on descriptive analyses of the underlying structures of the environment or on interactions between individual cognitive boundaries and environmental factors that govern irrational decision-making rather than on prescriptive guidelines that help the decision-maker.

In MBT, the leadership coach instructs the managers in the main aim of functional analysis: to understand the ongoing interaction between the individual and their environment or, more precisely, to understand how the manager is shaped by and can shape their physical and psychosocial environments (David et al., 2014; Dixon et al., 2012; Ellis, 1991; Skinner, 1963, 1965). The “ABC” analysis illustrated in Figure 1 exemplifies a basic functional behavior analysis. Here, “A” stands for *antecedents* and comprises the activators or triggers in the environmental context or in the individual that precede the *behavior*, “B,” while B encompasses the conscious thoughts, assumptions, and behavioral responses triggered by the antecedents in the current situation. “C” stands for the *consequences* or outcomes for the individual performing behavior B, which are usually the responses or feedback from the environmental context. The aim of functional analysis is to capture the causal relationships among A, B, and C through behavioral experiments in specific environmental settings. This allows biased assumptions to be tested and behaviors to be adjusted so that they have more positive long-term consequences for the individual (David et al., 2014; Dixon et al., 2012; Ellis, 1991; Haynes & O’Brien, 1990). Causal relationships and partitions similar to those in the ABC model can be found in Brunswik’s (1943) cue model and multiple-cue probability learning (MPCL) (Cooksey, 1996), both of which have been used in experimental research on judgment and decision-making to test assumptions regarding human performance and experiential learning.

**Figure 1**

*The Causal Relationships Between the Three Parts of the Functional Analysis: Antecedents (A), Behavior (B), and Consequences (C)*



Various antecedents—whether in isolation or combination—increase the probability of specific behaviors being performed in a given situation. Antecedents are individual preconditions and existing environmental conditions that set the stage for behaviors (David et al., 2014; Dixon et al., 2012). Individual preconditions include the learned and motivational aspects of performing in a specific setting. For example, if a person has prior experience of a similar situation, the learning experience and memory of previous outcomes will prepare that person for certain behaviors in the present situation. The existing contextual conditions that affect individual behaviors come from the physical and psychosocial environments, where other people's behavior can trigger behavioral responses in the individual that the psychosocial context may, in turn reinforce or punish by generating short- or long-term consequences (David et al., 2014; Dixon et al., 2012). Positive feedback or rewards from the context increase the probability that the behavior will reoccur in similar situations in the future, whereas negative feedback or punishments decrease the probability (Dixon et al., 2012; Skinner, 1963, 1965). People often engage in behaviors with immediate rewards without much deliberate consideration of their long-term consequences (Dixon et al., 2012; Hanley et al., 2003). Avoidance behavior, such as delaying difficult tasks, is one example of a behavior that will gradually increase the problem: The reduced anxiety and stress that are the immediate consequences of avoidance behavior will negatively reinforce the behavior, meaning that procrastination is likely to increase over time (Eerde, 2003). Functional analysis is a first step toward ending vicious behavioral cycles by fostering an awareness of the triggers and reinforcing factors behind leadership behaviors that bring unwanted long-term consequences for the individual manager.

The rationale for MBT is that a manager's leadership behaviors can be antecedents that activate employee behavior; moreover, the manager can provide consequences that reinforce employees' behavior (Gravina et al., 2021; Komaki, 2015). In the ABC model shown in Figure 1, the manager thus becomes an activator (A) and a reinforcer/punisher (C) who can influence employee performance (B). Without an awareness of the functional relationships and codependency between manager and employees that often arise in organizations (McMillan & Northern, 1995), a manager can easily *react* to employee behaviors rather than consciously *acting* in response to them and making decisions that effectively lead the team toward more

functional behaviors (i.e., behaviors that benefit both the employees and the organization). It is important for leaders to be aware of their leadership behaviors because these can affect employee performance, the whole organization, and (of course) the leaders' own performance. A manager with functional leadership behavior can thus be an activator of employee behavior and an enabler of the positive transformation of the organization by resourcefully managing and gradually expanding positive energy within the team in the mutual interests of the organization and individual employees.

### **The Operationalized Leadership Behaviors in the MBT Manual**

Research has offered numerous descriptions of functional leadership that successfully enables organizational change (Faupel & Süß, 2019). Transformative and transactional leadership, two conceptualizations that have gained evidence over the years, have been associated with healthy work environments, productivity, and successful change management (Bass, 1999; Breevaart et al., 2014; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Santos et al., 2015). Transformative leadership refers to the ability to create visions and engage the workforce to perform beyond what is expected. Transactional leadership refers to the ability to use positive reinforcement and rewards to motivate employees to perform as expected. Managers use both leadership styles to some extent, and several studies indicate that both styles have positive effects on performance and in terms of creating a healthy work environment, but transformative leadership is more effective than transactional leadership (Bass, 1999; Breevaart et al., 2014; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

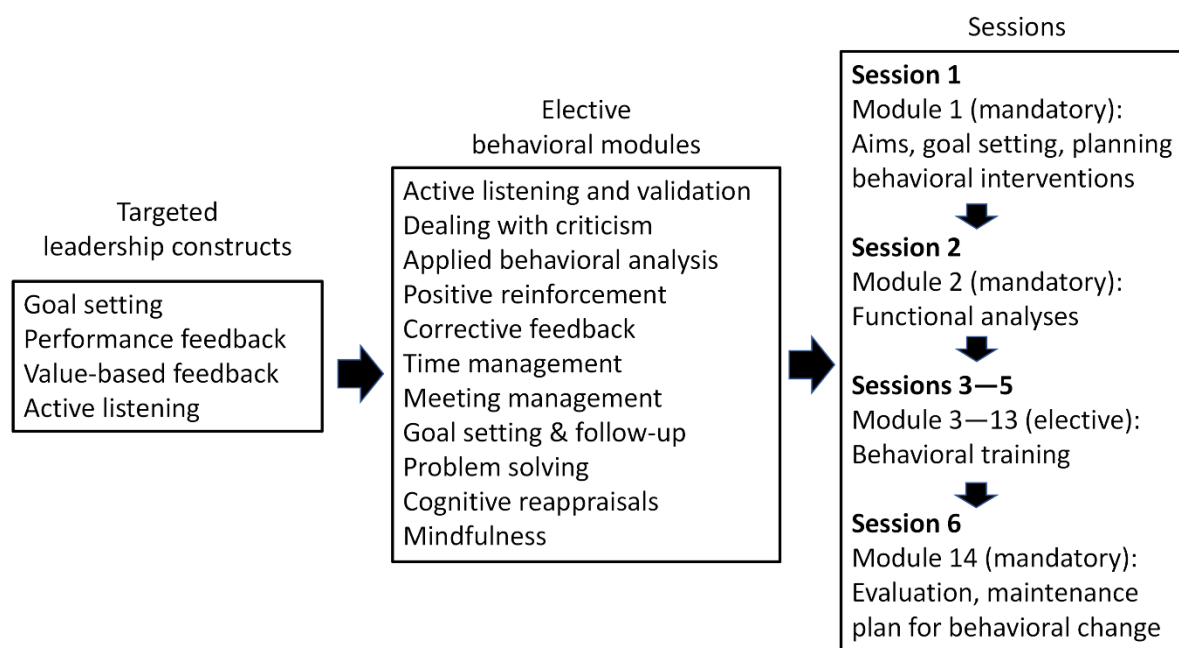
Based on the literature discussing the influence of transformational and transactional leadership on the psychosocial work environment and performance (Dumdum et al., 2013; Jensen et al., 2020; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Yukl et al., 2008), four effective functional leadership areas were identified and used for the operationalization of functional leadership behaviors in MBT: goal setting, performance feedback, value-based feedback, and active listening (Grill et al., 2023). In MBT, *goal setting* comprises leadership behaviors that initiate organizational structures for coordinating work activities and facilitating cooperation, such as clarifying employees' responsibilities and roles in work teams. *Performance feedback* comprises leadership behaviors that involve applying logical arguments and factual evidence to motivate and engage employees in important task objectives. *Value-based feedback* comprises leadership behaviors that emotionally engage employees by appealing to their values and ideals. *Active listening* comprises leadership behaviors that involve employees in problem-solving and decision-making.

Based on these four functional leadership areas, Björnsdotter and Grill (2021) presented a managerial training manual containing 14 modules with concrete behavioral guidelines for functional leadership. Three of the modules in the manual are mandatory in the proposed training, while the remaining 11 modules are used to individualize the training by addressing the specific goals and needs of each manager in their work environment. After analyses of the managers' leadership behavior, each manager undergoing MBT receives leadership training using a specific set of behavioral modules that address the particular problems each manager encounters at work. MBT consists of six face-to-face sessions with a leadership coach, with homework assignments between sessions (see Figure 2 for an MBT flowchart). The three mandatory modules are: "Introducing functional behavioral analysis and setting clear behavioral goals for the participating manager" (Module 1), "Performing functional behavioral

analyses of the leadership behaviors of the participating manager to thoroughly chart the situations in which the new behaviors will be trained” (Module 2), and “Evaluating the behavioral training including formulating a maintenance plan for behavioral change to prevent relapse to previous behaviors” (Module 14, in the final session). The 11 elective behavioral modules are: “Active listening and validation” (adapted from Koerner & Linehan, 2004), “Dealing with criticism” (adapted from Kowalski, 1996, 2002), “Applied behavioral analysis” (adapted from Morris et al., 2005), “Positive reinforcement” (adapted from Johnson, 2013), “Corrective feedback” (adapted from Wilson et al., 1997), “Time management” (adapted from Häfner et al., 2014), “Meeting management” (adapted from Allen et al., 2015; Geimer et al., 2015), “Goal setting and follow-up” (adapted from Latham, 2003; Locke & Latham, 2006), “Problem-solving” (adapted from Nezu, 2004; Oliver & Margolin, 2008), “Cognitive reappraisals” (adapted from Doran, 1981; Latham, 2003), and “Mindfulness” (adapted from Arendt et al., 2019).

**Figure 2**

*A Flowchart of Managerial Behavioral Training*



Functional behavioral analysis plays an important part in all MBT modules (Björnsdotter & Grill, 2021), and the applied behavioral analysis module specifically strengthens managers’ skills in analyzing the triggering antecedents and feedback contingencies that govern behaviors. The aim of the active listening and validation modules, which deal with criticism, positive reinforcement, and corrective feedback, is to train leaders to observe social cues and better manage the unique capabilities of their employees in a way that motivates the employees and improves their performance. The modules on time management, meeting management, goal setting and follow-up, and problem-solving address leadership behaviors that improve structures and routines in the work environment and that engage and motivate employees to work individually and collectively toward common goals. For example, the module on goal setting and follow-up incorporates the important leadership skill of managing individual differences among employees. This is done by planning the steps toward the aspired level of performance, setting tangible goals at each step—that is, goals that are within the reach of the

employees, given their current capacities—and setting the stage for potential rewards when the employees perform specific behaviors (Locke & Latham, 2006). As described above, improved motivation and performance come from rewarding experiences or, in this case, from successive behavioral approximations in which each reached step reinforces and improves the individual's performance (Dixon et al., 2012; Skinner, 1965). Such motivating leadership behaviors may also enable positive self-leadership and autonomy among the employees (Breevaart et al., 2014; Stewart et al., 2019). The problem-solving module addresses leadership behaviors that involve routines and structures accommodating metacognitive strategies; this is achieved by incorporating other people's viewpoints into the strategic process of solving the problems that obstruct the team's path toward the desired goals. Cognitive and emotional aspects of leadership behaviors are further addressed in the cognitive reappraisals and mindfulness modules. As the dotted arrow in Figure 1 indicates, the manager's personal learning history of triggering antecedents and reinforcements/punishments from past environmental settings has a major impact on that person's antecedents, setting the stage for the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors displayed in current situations (Dixon et al., 2012; Skinner, 1963, 1965). The modules on reappraisals and mindfulness address such learning experiences by cultivating an awareness of automatically triggered behavioral responses that are no longer functional and that can be adjusted to produce positive outcomes in new environmental settings. These modules emphasize consciously acting on—rather than reacting to—environmental triggers.

## **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is to identify individual and contextual factors present before, during, and after MBT that determine the development of managers' functional leadership behaviors, that is, to present a qualitative analysis of success factors for functional leadership as experienced by the managers.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The first author of this article conducted semi-structured online interviews with 16 managers in different municipal organizations: five men and 11 women (mean age = 47.9 years,  $SD = 5.6$  years). The average duration of managerial experience was 9.1 years ( $SD = 7.8$  years). The interviews took place in the autumn of 2020, one year after the managers' participation in MBT. Their participation in MBT was part of a randomized controlled study in which they had been allocated to the intervention group (Grill et al., 2023). The first author, who conducted the interviews and analyzed the data, did not participate in the original study and was not given any information about the participants other than their contact information.

### **Qualitative Thematic Method**

A thematic approach was used to identify common topics and patterns of meanings in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Functional contextualism, as illustrated in the ABC model (David et al., 2014; Ellis, 1991), was used as the theoretical framework for a qualitative analysis of themes within antecedents, behaviors, and consequences. Like a thematic trajectory analysis (Spencer et al., 2021), in which temporal relationships between themes in the data can be captured, the

thematic functional analysis in this study was intended to capture indications of causal or functional relationships between antecedents, behaviors, and consequences.

All interviews were transcribed verbatim by an authorized transcription company, and the transcripts were coded and analyzed by the first author following the ABC model—that is, by coding interview responses as antecedents (A), behaviors (B), or consequences (C). The analytical process of coding the transcripts and searching for themes within and across individual transcripts followed the thematic analysis method outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Mind maps were used to facilitate the analytical process and illustrate the results (Wheeldon & Åhlberg, 2019).

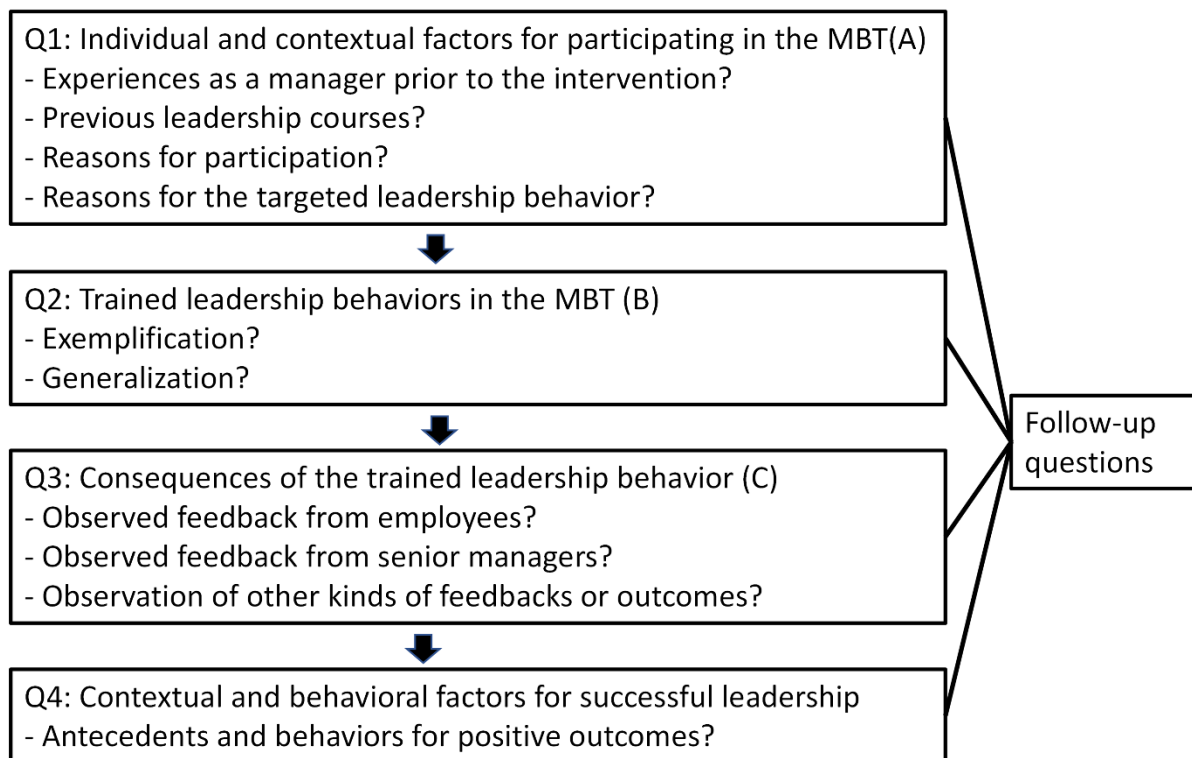
The analysis was used to identify themes related to contextual and individual factors supporting functional and successful leadership development (i.e., all antecedents and behaviors that the managers reported resulting in positive consequences). The analysis was performed by sorting and grouping individuals with similar descriptions of success factors (i.e., antecedents and behaviors) in mind maps with connecting arrows between individuals. When there was uncertainty as to how an individual response should be understood and categorized, contextual information from the whole transcript was weighted to capture the underlying meaning of the response (where the contextual information encompassed other antecedents, behaviors, and outcomes). The final mind map was used to illustrate the results of the analysis.

### The Interview Guide

The interview questions are outlined in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

*Flowchart of the Interview Questions*



The first group of questions (i.e., Q1) concerned potential antecedents that set the stage for developing the targeted leadership behavior. The purpose of the second group of questions (i.e.,



Q2) was to probe for information about the application of the trained leadership behavior. The purpose of the third group of questions (i.e., Q3) was to probe for information about the consequences of performing the targeted leadership behavior. The questions about the consequences of applying the leadership behavior were designed to capture the potentially most important aspect of the managers' operant learning of new leadership behaviors since positive feedback is likely to increase the trained behavior in the future and negative feedback is likely to decrease it (Dixon et al., 2012; Skinner, 1963, 1965). There may be hierarchies, power structures, and co-dependencies within organizations that influence the weighting of different sources of feedback; moreover, the feedback that managers receive from their psychosocial work environments may or may not be valid and representative (McMillan & Northern, 1995; Verhezen, 2010).

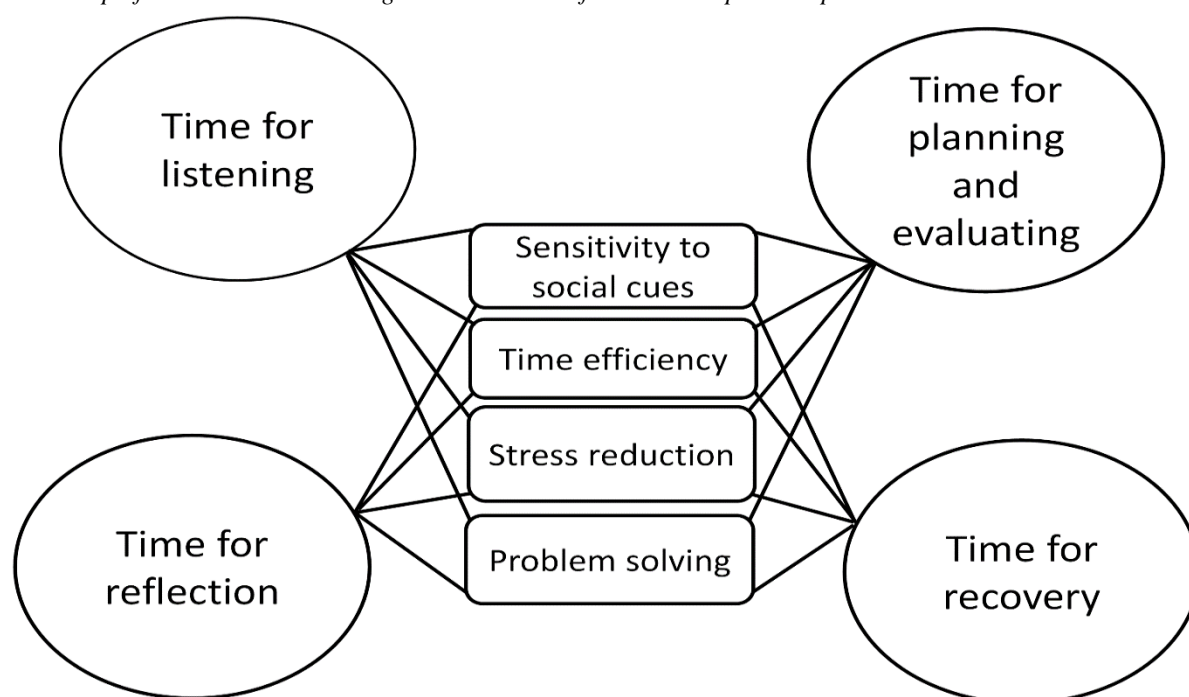
The last question (i.e., Q4) was intended to investigate the managers' experiences of the external environmental and internal behavioral factors contributing to successful leadership development—that is, antecedents, behaviors, and consequences that have positive implications for the organization. This question was designed to provide a deeper understanding of the premises and boundaries of leadership development and of what might improve leadership development interventions in the future.

## Results

*Time* was the common denominator of the four themes identified in the analysis of the contextual and behavioral factors contributing to successful leadership development. The themes identified were *time for reflection*, *time for listening*, *time for planning and evaluating*, and *time for recovery*. Figure 4 shows a mind map of the four themes and the related outcomes, as described by the interviewed managers. The four themes are presented in the oval areas, while the related outcomes are in the rectangular areas.

**Figure 4**

*Mind Map of the Themes Describing Success Factors for Leadership Development and their Related Outcomes*



### **Time for Reflection**

*Time for reflection* was the most dominant theme in the interviews. The managers reported that they needed to take time to reflect on current issues in order to develop successful leadership. They suggested that the leadership coaching and the reflection time that came with the functional analysis in MBT should be scheduled regularly to maintain functional leadership behaviors:

*It was exciting and an opportunity to work on it [i.e., my leadership] based on my own needs and get individualized coaching, instead of sitting and talking about fictitious problems and reasoning. I got to work on it [i.e., my leadership] based on my current situation and to develop myself. That way, it was easier to reflect, and it gave me a bird's-eye view of my own leadership.*

*We talked a lot about the signals I send out. Because I know that I'm quite straightforward in my communication: when I'm stressed, I can be perceived as harsh. [We talked about] how I can think before I talk. Since I have a high position, it's important that what I say is interpreted correctly. We worked a lot on that, [analyzing] the consequences of [different ways of communicating]; I think I learned many helpful tools. I was able to reflect on my situation and got many "aha" moments. I believe you need this kind of leadership coaching once a month. Even though I have been a manager for 20–25 years, you can always improve your leadership.*

The managers also suggested reflection time with a senior manager or a colleague as a way to solve problems, perform well as a leader, and improve decision-making. Many managers reported that conducting functional analyses with their leadership coach was the most valuable part of the leadership intervention because it increased their awareness of their leadership behaviors and the consequences of these behaviors. The individual coaching was acknowledged to be unique and more useful than most leadership courses they had experienced. In contrast, one of the few managers who did not appreciate the reflective part of the leadership coaching found the concrete behavioral tips about active listening to be helpful, reporting that they had contributed to his team's successful and timely completion of a project.

### **Time for Listening**

The theme of *time for listening* recurred in the interviews in various ways. The managers said that the functional analyses had made them aware that their intrinsic goal orientation and fast problem-solving behavior were not entirely beneficial for their leadership. Their reflexive problem-solving behavior made their employees more passive, dependent, and insecure in taking initiative and solving problems themselves. Taking one step back, listening to the employees, and coaching them to solve problems on their own was described by the managers as a success factor that increased the efficiency of their teams and reduced their own workload and stress:

*The thing I have to—and want to—continue doing is to stop and listen more often. This was one of my most important lessons from it [i.e., the training]. I*

*realize today that I have learned how self-centered I am, so preoccupied with my own thoughts. ... my great challenge is to stop and shut off my brain a bit. I don't need to come up with all the ideas and solutions, I can ... I must make room to listen to every else's good ideas.*

*I took the time I needed in order to be very available to the team. I spent time talking to them on a daily basis ... . It was exciting, they really became a team and they supported one another. Yes, it was exciting to see the development, and perhaps it came about because of my presence and the fact that I supported the collaboration.*

Taking time to listen and reach out to employees was also acknowledged as a way to access employees' insights, knowledge, and expertise. This made it possible to better solve problems; it also allowed the managers to earn their employees' trust by being friendly and genuine. One manager described the importance of being humble and a good role model by normalizing the acknowledgment of and learning from errors in judgment, which motivated employees to get back on track after making mistakes.

### **Time for planning and Evaluating the Outcomes**

*Time for planning and evaluating the outcomes* was described by the managers as a means of increasing efficiency in meetings and in daily work, which reduced the stress and workload for themselves and their teams:

*I spend more time on prioritizing, so that I don't need to work that much any longer. I had a longer vacation this summer and I have reduced my overtime a bit, which I believe is a result of my prioritizing better. It's also a matter of goal setting: [determining] what's important and what's not important.*

The managers identified efficient planning as a way to handle unexpected or disruptive events in daily work, for example, by using the buffer time provided in the planning. Efficient organization and planning, as well as active listening, were acknowledged by the managers as ways to increase their sensitivity to social cues, which motivated their employees to finish their projects on time. The managers' descriptions included the positive impacts of their new behaviors on their employees' behaviors, direct or indirect. Reduced sick leave, increased motivation, future orientation, improved effectiveness and collaboration, and projects finishing on time were some of the positive outcomes described by the managers.

A positive interpretation of the outcome of the manager's targeted leadership behavior was present even when there was no direct response from the employees; one manager commented: "It takes some time before the effect appears," while another said: "I only sow seeds," suggesting that positive long-term consequences were expected from the new leadership behavior. A positive interpretation of the outcome of the manager's targeted leadership behavior was present even when there was no direct response from the employees; one manager commented: "It takes some time

before the effect appears,” while another said: “I only sow seeds,” suggesting that positive long-term consequences were expected from the new leadership behavior. Similarly, a lack of response from superior managers was often interpreted as positive feedback. One manager admitted to not wanting to attract attention from superior managers by asking for feedback on leadership. The statements indicated that the managers appreciated independence and that it was more relaxing to keep their superior manager at arm’s length. The rare positive feedback the managers received from their superior manager was described as “general” and was not specifically linked to the leadership behaviors targeted in MBT. The managers reported that they rarely met their superior manager, implying that the targeted leadership behaviors were seldom displayed in the presence of their superior managers, which reduced the opportunities for feedback. Despite the distance from their superior managers, the managers described the importance of having a clear mandate and support from their superiors.

### **Time for Recovery**

The managers reported that managing stress by taking a break from demanding activities and having a private life, as captured by the theme of *time for recovery*, was important for improving their performance, sensitivity to social cues, and ability to solve problems:

*You must put yourself first and, as a manager, I have come to realize that I don't have to be present all the time. I can relax ... and I know I must do so, because otherwise I become a poor employee and a poor manager. It's as simple as that.*

Despite their awareness of the success factors, the managers reported having difficulty finding time for reflection, listening, planning, and recovery. One manager described both difficulties and valuable personal learning being experienced when addressing external organizational issues that were negatively affecting the manager’s team. This manager had learned a great deal about leadership and organizations by experiencing limited success when applying functional leadership behaviors while standing up for his team to higher authority. Another manager suggested that MBT may be important for the whole organization, as it would help the organization to adapt when structural problems prevented effective and resourceful management from working synchronously at different levels and across units in the organization.

### **Discussion**

The analysis indicated that the managers appreciated the unique individualized coaching they received in MBT. The thematic analysis identified taking time to reflect, listen, plan evaluate, and recover as contextual and behavioral factors that are success factors for leadership development. Each theme contributed to similar outcomes, which included improved social skills, stress reduction, time-use efficiency, and improved problem-solving for the team and for the managers themselves.

The identified success factor *time for reflection* is related to several of the modules in the MBT manual, including applied behavioral analysis, problem-solving, cognitive reappraisal, and mindfulness, all of which stress the importance of increasing metacognitive abilities and awareness of environmental triggers and consequences. *Time for listening* is related to the behavioral modules on active listening and validation, positive reinforcement, dealing with criticism, and corrective feedback; it stresses that sensitivity to social cues in the environmental setting and feedback contingencies are important for motivation and performance. The increased effectiveness and improved problem-solving that the managers described as the outcomes of taking time to listen to their employees are similar to the expected outcomes from the modules. The theme of *time for planning and evaluating the outcomes* is related to the modules on time management, meeting management, goal setting and follow-up, and problem-solving, all of which address leadership behaviors that facilitate structures and routines that are important for cooperation and performance in work settings. The theme of *taking time for recovery* was not directly addressed in any of the MBT modules. However, stress management was indirectly part of several modules (e.g., time management). Also, in the mindfulness module, being aware of and handling emotional and stress responses were important factors for performing active (rather than reactive) leadership behaviors. The four identified success factors aligned with the assumptions of the four functional leadership constructs associated with successful leadership behaviors (Jensen et al., 2020; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Yukl et al., 2008) that made up the content of the behavioral modules in the MBT manual (Björnsdotter & Grill, 2021).

### **Success Factors and their Relationship with Theories of Organizational Performance**

Reflection time with functional analysis was the most appreciated component of the training, in line with the results reported from clinical applications of CBT (David et al., 2014; Dixon et al., 2012; Haynes & O'Brien, 1990). This finding indicates that functional analysis can give clients important realizations, valuable environmental information, and insights into possible solutions to their problems. Functional analysis is directly linked to functional contextualism as a theoretical foundation that captures the dynamic and ongoing interaction between the individual and their environment (Dixon et al., 2012; Gifford & Hayes, 1999). The theoretical framework has also been the cornerstone of research on organizational psychology and judgment and decision-making (Buchanan & Badham, 2020; Cooksey, 1996; March & Simon, 1993; Payne et al., 1993; Simon, 1997, 2000). As noted in the introduction to this paper, the standard ABC model for functional analysis has also been proposed as an important tool for change management in organizations (Buchanan & Badham, 2020). The results indicate that managers need to reflect on a regular basis—in isolation, with a coach, or with a superior manager—in order to perform well, which is in line with recent research on coaching (Hopkins et al., 2022). The results also suggest that functional analysis, as applied in MBT, can be important in helping decision-makers avoid poor decisions (Tagliabue et al., 2019) or be part of a problematic search process to better address declines in performance in organizations (Posen et al., 2018).

In CBT, dysfunctional behaviors and biased decision-making are often found to have been rewarded in past environments and to continue automatically despite the emergence of new

environmental contexts that do not reward such behavioral strategies (Dixon et al., 2012; Hanley et al., 2003). The literature on human irrationality contains many arguments regarding the relationships between and outcomes of automatic reactive system-1 processes and proactive analytical system-2 processes when making decisions (Evans & Stanovich, 2013; Gilovich et al., 2002). However, in CBT, this relationship is perhaps more straightforward: The human autopilot consists of automatically triggered behavior, which must be temporarily turned off when error signals indicate that the behavior or strategy is no longer functional (other than in the short run). This permits the necessary proactive behavioral adjustments to be made, supported by functional analyses of the present situation. The new behaviors are then established and gradually become automatic if the environment continues to reward the new behaviors (Dixon et al., 2012; Skinner, 1965). Scheduling time to reflect on current affairs can thus be necessary for a leader to be successful.

The managers described taking time to listen to employees as a success factor and a prerequisite for the resourceful management of employees' capacity to finish projects on time. In CBT, the therapist's sensitivity to the client's needs and the collaborative planning of behavioral changes via small steps undertaken by the psychologist and the client are also success factors in behavior therapies (McGinn & Sanderson, 2001). Sensitivity to environmental cues and handling human limitations and constraints in the environment have been suggested to be important factors allowing decision-makers to successfully act in a "satisficing" way within a changing and bounded world (Gigerenzer, 2004; Schwartz, 2002; Simon, 2000). Simon (2000) argued that people are not as omniscient as rational choice theories suggest; instead, people make mistakes, have limited working memory, and have boundaries that limit their performance. Simon reasoned that the microeconomic models that guide many organizations must be revised because optimizing performance is unattainable since individuals' and organizations' performance is always bounded by the cognitive apparatus of the involved members, the structure of the organization, and the external environment in they act within.

The functional leadership behaviors of active listening, validation, goal setting, and follow-up (i.e., some of the behaviors trained in MBT) may enable the resourceful management of employees' limited capacity. The success factor of taking *time for recovery* suggests that the managers were aware of their own limited capacity and of the potential effect on their leadership behaviors. The result is also in line with a growing body of research that has linked physical well-being to successful self-leadership (Stewart et al., 2019). Matching external task demands to current internal capacity, handling unexpected and random events (e.g., using buffer time), and adjusting aspiration levels may also be adaptive risk-management strategies. For managers, taking time to reflect on current organizational affairs and make strategic adjustments based on an awareness of signs of errors and needs within and outside of the organization may be a first step toward resolving managerial myopia and nearsightedness that have been identified as inhibiting organizational productivity and growth (Larwood & Whittaker, 1977; Levinthal & March, 1993).

## Implications

It has been argued that models of change must be revised in order to be of practical use for managers, for example, with respect to goal setting and engaging the workforce to take steps

toward future goals (Posen et al., 2018; Pregmark, 2022). We suggest that the theory of bounded rationality (Simon, 2000) may provide an important suggestion regarding *why* it is important not to expect optimization as a “gold standard” for goal setting and change management. Rather, it is more reasonable to expect “satisficing” strategies that make use of aspirational levels and the continuous adjustment of demands with respect to the current capacity of the individual and organization. In addition, MBT may provide important suggestions on *how* to functionally act as a manager when setting goals and motivating employees for the strategic adjustments needed to survive and prosper in a changing world. Without functional leadership that enables a healthy and engaging work environment, the positive outcomes in terms of productivity and growth may not come. Not only is human capacity limited, but so is time. The success factors in this study indicate that the investment of managers’ limited time (and limited energy) in different leadership behaviors that are elaborated on in the MBT modules may have positive long-term consequences for their organizations, employees, and themselves.

The theory of bounded rationality (Simon, 1997) has been acknowledged for the psychological realism and humanism it has brought to organizational theory and management (Gigerenzer, 2004; Schwartz, 2002). Although it is a highly cited theory in the management literature, it is rarely used in practice (Foss, 2003). Its unclear descriptions pose problems when trying to apply the theory in real environments (Gigerenzer, 2004). Simon (1997) described this struggle in the foreword to the fourth revised edition of *Administrative Behavior*, in which he encouraged experience-based learning and the application of theoretical knowledge in real environments. Although MBT and the theory of bounded rationality originate from different research paradigms, they have much in common—particularly functional contextualism, which postulates that human behavior and performance cannot be understood without understanding the context (Simon, 2000; Skinner, 1965). The strength of the ABC model is that it offers managers an understanding of how to functionally act and adjust in complex dynamic environments through awareness of the structure of the environment—that is, the causal relations between antecedents, behaviors, and consequences.

## Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The theme *time for planning and evaluating the outcomes* indicated that it may be important to address missing or delayed feedback on leadership behavior in future research. Receiving negative feedback was partly addressed in the MBT modules, but not how to best handle missing or delayed feedback. As research has warned, learning in real environments is difficult (Levinthal & March, 1993). Real environments rarely provide the expected feedback, and we often selectively sample information and choose environmental stimuli that confirm our assumptions, ignoring the possible long-term negative consequences of doing so (Denrell & March, 2001; Gnepp et al., 2020; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Absent or invalid feedback from the environment may cause dysfunctional behaviors to persist and increase, resulting in overconfidence, illusory validity, and risky decision-making (Denrell & March, 2001; Malmendier & Tate, 2015). Depending on the sophistication of the inferences of the absent feedback, positively biased interpretations made by the managers in this study when feedback on their leadership behaviors was absent may pose a risk to organizational growth. However, a positive bias may also unintentionally reinforce functional leadership behavior and the positive transfer of learning in organizations with a fragmented feedback culture. Thus, in future applied

and experimental research on organizational growth and change management, it would be important to address in more detail how managers handle missing or delayed feedback.

The theoretical premises of the functional leadership behaviors in the MBT modules come from global research on transformative and transactional leadership (Dumdum et al., 2013; Jensen et al., 2020; Judge and Piccolo, 2004; Yukl et al., 2008), suggesting that the effects of MBT could presumably be generalized across nations and different types of organizations. However, more studies of the application of MBT are justified in light of the small sample of participating managers in this study. More qualitative studies incorporating thematic functional analysis as a method are also justified.

The thematic functional analysis in this study has similarities to thematic trajectory analysis, which focuses on capturing temporal relationships between constructs (Spencer et al., 2021). In the present study, the focus was on capturing causal or functional relationships between antecedents, behaviors, and consequences as perceived by the managers; these potential causal relationships can then be further investigated in experimental designs. The use of the ABC model as a frame for the analysis provides insight into how the individual and contextual factors contributing to successful leadership development and healthy work environments may be investigated in future qualitative studies.

Applying functional analysis to organizational problems can help identify negative co-dependencies that often unintentionally arise between interacting individuals or units in an organization. An example of such a situation is when one unit unintentionally reinforces other units' dysfunctionality by repeatedly intervening to complete their tasks rather than allowing them to learn to solve their own problems. In addition to reflection on current affairs, communication, and feedback may be the keys to allowing managers to resolve issues of co-dependency within organizations (Buchanan & Badham, 2020; McMillan & Northern, 1995). Some managers in this study described this kind of problematic relationship as occurring across different levels or units in their organizations. What should a manager do when a fully functional team is negatively affected by dysfunctionality elsewhere in the organization? As suggested by one manager in this study, it may be relevant to expand MBT to provide a leadership intervention for the whole organization in such cases.

## Conclusion

Being attuned to environmental changes and signals within and beyond the organization, regularly turning off one's "autopilot," consciously analyzing potential error signals, and adjusting one's behavior strategies are approaches that seem to help leaders improve their performance when leading organizations without negatively affecting internal resources or the psychosocial work environment. The concrete behavioral tools provided in MBT can be part of a prescriptive approach that has been advocated in recent research (Posen et al., 2018; Pregmark, 2022) and the solution to how to apply the theory of bounded rationality (Simon, 2000) in leadership and organizations to address change management, productivity, and conflict.



## Declarations

## Acknowledgements

Not applicable.

## Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## Ethics Approval

This study was approved by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority 1060–18/2019-00590.

## Funding Acknowledgements

Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (FORTE) Grant STYA-2018/0004 funded this work.

## Citation to this article

Henriksson, M. P., & Grill, M. (2023). Functional leadership in a changing and bounded world: The relevance of managerial behavioral training. *International Journal of Organizational Leadership*, 12(4), 349-368. <https://doi.org/10.33844/ijol.2023.60382>

## Rights and Permissions



© 2022 Canadian Institute for Knowledge Development. All rights reserved.

International Journal of Organizational Leadership is published by the Canadian Institute for Knowledge Development (CIKD). This is an open-access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC BY\)](#) License, which permits use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

## References

- Allen, J., Yoerger, M., Lehmann-Willenbrock, N., & Jones, J. (2015). Would you please stop that!? The relationship between counterproductive meeting behaviors, employee voice, and trust. *Journal of Management Development*, 34(10), 1272–1287. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-02-2015-003>
- Arendt, J. F., Pircher Verdorfer, A., & Kugler, K. G. (2019). Mindfulness and leadership: Communication as a behavioral correlate of leader mindfulness and its effect on follower satisfaction. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 667. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00667>
- Bass, B. M. (1999). Two decades of research and development in transformational leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 8(1), 9–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/135943299398410>
- Björnsdotter, A., & Grill, M. (2021). *Chefshandledning: En manual till funktionellt ledarskap. [Managerial behavioral training for functional leadership]*. Studentlitteratur AB.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analyses in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>
- Breevaart, K., Bakker, A., Hetland, J., Demerouti, E., Olsen, O. K., & Espevik, R. (2014). Daily transactional and transformational leadership and daily employee engagement. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 87(1), 138–157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12041>
- Brunswik, E. (1943). Organismic achievement and environmental probability. *Psychological Review*, 50(3), 255–272. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/h0060889>
- Buchanan, D. A., & Badham, R. J. (2020). *Power, politics, and organizational change* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Sage Publications Inc.
- Cooksey, R. W. (1996). *Judgment analysis: Theory, methods, and applications*. Academic Press Inc.
- David, O. A., Matu, S. A., Pinteá, S., Cotet, C. D., & Nagy, D. (2014). Cognitive-behavioral processes based on using the ABC analysis by trainees' for their personal development. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 32(3), 198–215. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-014-0189-0>

- Denrell, J., & March, J. G. (2001). Adaptation as information restriction: The hot stove effect. *Organization Science*, 12(5), 523–538. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.12.5.523.10092>
- Dixon, D. R., Vogel, T., & Tarbox, J. (2012). A brief history of functional analysis and applied behavior analysis. In J. L. Matson (Ed.), *Functional assessment for challenging behaviors* (pp. 3–24). Springer.
- Doran, G. T. (1981). There's a SMART way to write management's goals and objectives. *Management Review*, 70(11), 35–36.
- Dumdum, U. R., Lowe, K. B., & Avolio, B. J. (2013). A meta-analysis of transformational and transactional leadership correlates of effectiveness and satisfaction: An update and extension. In B. J. Avolio and F. J. Yammarino (Eds.), *Transformational and charismatic leadership: The road ahead. 10th anniversary edition* (pp. 39–70). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Eerde, W. V. (2003). Procrastination at work and time management training. *The Journal of Psychology*, 137(5), 421–434. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980309600625>
- Ellis, A. (1991). The revised ABC's of rational-emotive therapy (RET). *Journal of Rational-Emotive and Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 9(3), 139–172. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01061227>
- Evans, J. S. B., & Stanovich, K. E. (2013). Dual-process theories of higher cognition: Advancing the debate. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8(3), 223–241. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1745691612460685>
- Faupel, S., & Süß, S. (2019). The effect of transformational leadership on employees during organizational change: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Change Management*, 19(3), 145–166. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2018.1447006>
- Foss, N. J. (2003). Bounded rationality in the economics of organization: "Much cited and little used." *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 24(2), 245–264. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-4870\(02\)00206-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-4870(02)00206-4)
- Geimer, J. L., Leach, D. J., DeSimone, J. A., Rogelberg, S. G., & Warr, P. B. (2015). Meetings at work: Perceived effectiveness and recommended improvements. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(9), 2015–2026. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2015.02.015>
- Gifford, E. V., & Hayes, S. C. (1999). Functional contextualism: A pragmatic philosophy for behavioral science. In W. O'Donohue and R. Kitchener (Eds.), *Handbook of behaviorism* (pp. 285–327). Academic Press.
- Gigerenzer, G. (2004). Striking a blow for sanity in theories of rationality. In M. Augier & J. G. March (Eds.), *Models of a man: Essays in memory of Herbert A. Simon* (pp. 389–409). MIT Press.
- Gilovich, T., Griffin, D., & Kahneman, D. (Eds.). (2002). *Heuristics and biases: The psychology of intuitive judgment*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gnepp, J., Klayman, J., Williamson, I. O., & Barlas, S. (2020). The future of feedback: Motivating performance improvement through future-focused feedback. *PLoS One*, 15(6), e0234444. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0234444>
- Gravina, N., Nastasi, J., & Austin, J. (2021). Assessment of employee performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management*, 41(2), 124–149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01608061.2020.1869136>
- Grill, M., Pousette, A., Björnsdotter, A. (2023). Managerial behavioral training for functional leadership: A randomized controlled trial. *Organizational Behavior Management*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01608061.2023.2171174>
- Hanley, G. P., Iwata, B. A., & McCord, B. E. (2003). Functional analysis of problem behavior: A review. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 36(2), 147–185. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.2003.36-147>
- Haynes, S. N., & O'Brien, W. H. (1990). Functional analysis in behavior therapy. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 10(6), 649–668. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.2003.36-147>
- Hopkins, K., Meyer, M., Afkinich, J., Bialobrzeski, E., Perry, V., & Brown, J. (2022). Facilitated peer coaching among women human service professionals: Leadership learning, application and lessons learned. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 46(3), 184–201. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2021.1961963>
- Häfner, A., Stock, A., Pinneker, L., & Ströhle, S. (2014). Stress prevention through a time management training intervention: An experimental study. *Educational Psychology*, 34(3), 403–416. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2013.785065>
- Jensen, M., Potočnik, K., & Chaudhry, S. (2020). A mixed-methods study of CEO transformational leadership and firm performance. *European Management Journal*, 38(6), 836–845. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2020.05.004>
- Johnson, D. A. (2013). A component analysis of the impact of evaluative and objective feedback on performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management*, 33(2), 89–103. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12119>
- Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(5), 755–768. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0021-9010.89.5.755>
- Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119(2), 254–284. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0033-2909.119.2.254>

- Koerner, K., & Linehan, M. M. (2004). Validation principles and strategies. In W. T. O'Donohue, J. E. Fisher, & S. C. Hayes (Eds.), *Cognitive behavior therapy: Applying empirically supported techniques in your practice* (pp. 456–462). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Komaki, J. L. (2015). *Leadership from an operant perspective*. Routledge.
- Kowalski, R. M. (1996). Complaints and complaining: Functions, antecedents, and consequences. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119(2), 179–196. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.10095>
- Kowalski, R. M. (2002). Whining, griping, and complaining: Positivity in the negativity. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 58(9), 1023–1035. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.10095>
- Larwood, L., & Whittaker, W. (1977). Managerial myopia: Self-serving biases in organizational planning. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 62(2), 194–198.
- Latham, G. P. (2003). Goal setting: A five-step approach to behavior change. *Organizational Dynamics*, 32(3), 309–318. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0090-2616\(03\)00028-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0090-2616(03)00028-7)
- Levinthal, D. A., & March, J. G. (1993). The myopia of learning. *Strategic Management Journal*, 14(S2), 95–112. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250141009>
- Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2006). New directions in goal setting theory. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 15(5), 265–268. <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fj.1467-8721.2006.00449.x>
- Malmendier, U., & Tate, G. (2015). Behavioral CEOs: The role of managerial overconfidence. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 29(4), 37–60. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1257/jep.29.4.37>
- March, J. G., & Simon, H. A. (1993). *Organizations* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Wiley-Blackwell.
- McGinn, L. K., & Sanderson, W. C. (2001). What allows cognitive behavioral therapy to be brief: Overview, efficacy, and crucial factors facilitating brief treatment. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 8(1), 23–37. <https://doi.org/10.1093/clipsy.8.1.23>
- McMillan, J. J., & Northern, N. A. (1995). Organizational codependency: The creation and maintenance of closed systems. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 9(1), 6–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0893318995009001002>
- Morris, E. K., Smith, N. G., & Altus, D. E. (2005). BF Skinner's contributions to applied behavior analysis. *The Behavior Analyst*, 28(2), 99–131. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03392108>
- Nezu, A. M. (2004). Problem solving and behavior therapy revisited. *Behavior Therapy*, 35(1), 1–33. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7894\(04\)80002-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7894(04)80002-9)
- Oliver, P. H., & Margolin, G. (2008). Communication/problem-solving skills training. In W. T. O'Donohue & J. E. Fisher (Eds.), *Cognitive behavior therapy: Applying empirically supported techniques in your practice* (pp. 101–108). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Payne, J. W., Bettman, J. R., & Johnson, E. J. (1993). *The adaptive decision maker*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pitelis, C. N. (2007). A behavioral resource-based view of the firm: The synergy of Cyert and March (1963) and Penrose (1959). *Organization Science*, 18(3), 478–490. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1060.0244>
- Posen, H. E., Keil, T., Kim, S., & Meissner, F. D. (2018). Renewing research on problemistic search: A review and research agenda. *Academy of Management Annals*, 12(1), 208–251. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0018>
- Pregmark, J. E. (2022). Renewing models for change. *The Learning Organization*, 29(3), 255–274. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/TLO-05-2021-0056>
- Santos, J. P., Caetano, A., & Tavares, S. M. (2015). Is training leaders in functional leadership a useful tool for improving the performance of leadership functions and team effectiveness? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26(3), 470–484. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.02.010>
- Schwartz, H. (2002). Herbert Simon and behavioral economics. *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 31(3), 181–189. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-5357\(02\)00161-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-5357(02)00161-0)
- Simon, H. A. (1997). *Administrative behavior* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Simon and Schuster.
- Simon, H. A. (2000). Bounded rationality in social science: Today and tomorrow. *Mind & Society*, 1(1), 25–39. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02512227>
- Skinner, B. F. (1963). Operant behavior. *American Psychologist*, 18(8), 503–515. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/h0045185>
- Skinner, B. F. (1965). *Science and human behavior*. Simon and Schuster.
- Spencer, L., Radcliffe, L., Spence, R., & King, N. (2021). Thematic trajectory analysis: A temporal method for analysing dynamic qualitative data. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 94(3), 531–567. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12359>

- Stewart, G. L., Courtright, S. H., & Manz, C. C. (2019). Self-leadership: A paradoxical core of organizational behavior. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 6, 47–67. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012218-015130>
- Tagliabue, M., Squarrito, V., & Presti, G. (2019) Models of cognition and their applications in behavioral economics: A conceptual framework for nudging derived from behavioral analysis and relational frame theory. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 2418. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02418>
- Verhezen, P. (2010). Giving voice in a culture of silence. From a culture of compliance to a culture of integrity. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 96(2), 187–206. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0458-5>
- Wheeldon, J., & Åhlberg, M. (2019) Mind maps in qualitative research. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences* (pp. 1113–1129). Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.
- Wilson, C., Boni, N., & Hogg, A. (1997). The effectiveness of task clarification, positive reinforcement and corrective feedback in changing courtesy among police staff. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management*, 17(1), 65–99. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J075v17n01\\_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J075v17n01_04)
- Yukl, G., Seifert, C. F., & Chavez, C. (2008). Validation of the extended influence behavior questionnaire. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 19(5), 609–621. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.07.006>