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SENSE-MAKING IN NARRATIVES AND THE UNIQUENESS PARADOX IN LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine how to more fully capture the uniqueness of the leader-member exchange (LMX) experience. Specifically, this study examined the LMX experience vis-à-vis narrative and qualitative accounts in order to better understand the LMX phenomenon. Two research questions guided this study to determine 1) common scriptal elements in high, medium, and low LMX members’ stories, and 2) how the uniqueness paradox (Martin et al., 1983) operates with respect to LMX stories. The LMX-7 scale, the most widely accepted LMX measurement, was used to determine the overall LMX score. Next, the LMX-7 scale served as a prompt for interview questions to elicit specific examples of the members’ answers. This dual methodology is aligned with Corman and Krizek’s (1993) prescription to researchers to further investigate a more thorough explanation of self-reported surveys. Three constant comparison methods were used in order to elicit common scripts: 1) constant comparison by overall LMX score, 2) constant comparison by LMX question, and 3) constant comparison by item score. The results produced one common script for low LMX stories, two common scripts for medium and high LMX stories. Findings also suggest that the uniqueness paradox operates with regard to member’s LMX stories. Implications of enhancing the understanding of the LMX experience, and further LMX research, by incorporating a joint scale-narrative methodology are discussed.
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CHAPTER 1

Overview

Within the organizational sciences, leadership is a topic many are compelled to study. As early as the 1920’s, scholars have considered the subject. Through the years, the lens from which leadership is viewed has shifted from traits, roles and styles to influence processes, relationship and discourse. This study focuses upon leadership discourse as applied to a relational theory called leader-member exchange theory (Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1975).

Leader-member exchange is based on the premise that leaders do not treat all members alike: “role-development will inherently result in differentiated role definitions and, therefore, in varied leader-member exchanges” (Dienesch & Liden, 1986, p. 621). Essentially, leaders exchange their discretionary resources for members’ performance. Research has generally supported this model over the past 25 years (see reviews by Fairhurst, 2001; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997; Schriesheim, Castr, & Cogliser, 1999); although measurement has been an issue (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). For many years, LMX was measured in order to determine whether an exchange was of high, medium, or low quality with the use of scales with a variety of sub-dimensions. In fact, Dienesch and Liden (1986) point out that there have been a number of scales to measure LMX that have ranged from two to 25-items. These scales include, but are not limited to, measures of trust, attention, sensitivity, and power. For example, a high LMX would reflect a “better than average” trusting relationship between members and/or leaders. A medium LMX would reflect a relationship thought by the members and/or leaders to have an “average” amount of trust.
Finally, a low LMX relationship would be one of “lower than average” trust among members and/or leaders. Among the competing scales that exist, the LMX-7, a seven-item scale, is the most commonly used (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

There is a general lack of agreement among scholars about the best way to quantitatively measure LMX, as reflected in the number of scales that exist. In addition, it has been recently argued that the extant measurement approaches downplay the intricate detail of the LMX experience because a quantitative reflection of the experience may not fully capture the unique nature of the experience (Fairhurst & Hamlett, 2003). Therefore, the quantitative scales that have been traditionally used may not capture the LMX experience in full. Specifically, narrative and qualitative accounts can augment our understanding of the LMX phenomenon.

Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) argue for a narrative approach to studying LMX for two primary reasons. First, memory may be narratively organized, thus better able to capture the sequential form of the experience. Second, narratively organized memory is best reflected in narrative discourse, in which actors narrate their experience in storytelling. Thus, the study of LMX through narrative may embody the experience of LMX not captured in a quantitative record in a scaled measurement. Specifically, the intricacies of the LMX experience may be best captured vis-à-vis the narrative discourse of an individual’s stories.

In conjunction with the recommendations of Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003), there are several ways in which a narrative research agenda of LMX can be accomplished, including: narrative reflection and the uniqueness paradox in LMX stories, stories and the tie to how LMX is discursively constructed, and stories and their tie to discursive
formations. This thesis seeks to study narrative as a reflective sense-making tool as found in the interview discourse of leaders and members. Special consideration will be given to Martin, Feldman, Hatch, and Sitkin’s uniqueness paradox (1983), which suggests that cultural manifestations that claim to be unique, are indeed not so. While Martin et al (1983) discovered several cultural scriptal elements, related to the uniqueness paradox and the seven common story types discussed by Martin et al. (1983), this study searches for new relational scriptal elements surrounding the LMX experience. Thus, the study seeks to examine common scriptal elements in the stories that leaders and members tell. In addition, this is the first study of its nature to use a joint scale-narrative LMX dual methodology.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Leadership

Early literature on leadership was dominated by attempts to define its essential characteristics. According to Bass (1997),

Leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviors, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, as an initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions, (p. 17).

As Bass states, there are varieties and combinations of characteristics by which to consider the nature of leadership. In perhaps an even more frank account of leadership, Bass and Stodgill (1990) state, “The study of leadership rivals in age the emergence of civilization, which shaped its leaders as much as it was shaped by them (p. 3). Further, the continual angst over how to view leadership is a testament to the various stages through which leadership models have passed since leadership has been studied.

Specifically, there are four primary approaches/stages that are consistently referred to in the evolution of examining leadership study: the trait approach, the style approach, the contingency approach, and the New Leadership approach, sometimes identified as the neo-charismatic approach (Bryman, 1996). Notably in recent leadership research, there has been a fifth approach added to the repertoire, the discursive approach (Fairhurst, forthcoming) within which this study resides.

The trait approach is commonly paralleled with the “model leader.” The model leader is one who possesses the characteristics of what it is to be a leader, as she or he is set to lead in his or her most conducive leading environment (Bass, 1997). During the
1920’s, when this approach thrived, individuals were considered leaders because of certain enduring traits (Johns & Moser, 2001). Thus, leaders were born, not made. Leader-worthy characteristics included the following: physical traits (e.g., attractive, tall), personality characteristics (e.g., confident, extroverted), and/or abilities (e.g., organization skills) (Bryman, 1997). An individual either had the aforementioned characteristics or s/he was not a leader. Today, trait research is studied in leadership research, such as Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt’s (2002) study of the impact of low neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness on leader emergence and effectiveness. However, trait research is fairly limited in the frequency with which it is studied today, as it was replaced by the style approach to leadership.

The style approach, sometimes referred to as the behavioral approach, began with a series of studies in the 1930’s conducted by Lewin (commonly referred to as the Iowa studies). These studies centered on leadership styles such as authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire, and were geared more toward examining leaders behaviors and their impact on the performance and satisfaction of followers. Most pertinent to the style approach are the Ohio State studies, which occurred in the 1950’s. These studies viewed leadership style in terms of two dimensions: consideration and initiating structure. They focused on those aspects of the situation that triggered the most effective combinations of these styles. For example, high consideration was linked with less grievance and turnover but less favorable evaluation from superiors (Landy, 1981). The shortcomings of the trait and style approaches parallel each other, notably the failure to take into account the interaction between people, tasks and environment. This transition led leadership research in the direction of the contingency approach (Bolman & Deal, 1991).
The contingency approach was led by Fiedler’s 1967 model of leadership effectiveness. Basically, the model is dependent upon style of the leader (relationship oriented versus task oriented) situational favorableness, leader-member relationship, task structure, and leader position power (Fiedler, 1967). The contingency approach flourished in the 1980’s because of the idea that there is some middle ground between the existence of universal principles of leadership and situational uniqueness and variability (Robbins, 1995).

Within contingency approaches lies the leader-member exchange theory (LMX). First investigated in 1972, LMX was originally viewed as a relationship-based way in which to examine leaders and members (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). In its origin, LMX was viewed as an exchange relationship premised on the foundational elements of competence, interpersonal skill and trust (Graen, 1976). As will be discussed later, LMX has seen many stages of evolution.

As researchers such as Bolman and Deal (1991) began to criticize contingency theories for problems such as oversimplification, a much broader approach to leadership was undertaken with neo-charismatic approaches. Theories revolving around the transformational and charismatic leader thrive within this approach. Transformational leadership examines individuals’ ability to shift the beliefs, values, and needs of followers via motivating forces such as charisma, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985). The effective recipe for transformational leadership gravitates around the ability of leaders to convey a vision and deal with uncertainty (Tichy & Devanna, 1986). Similar to the transformational leader, the charismatic leader is one who
possesses confidence in self and subordinates, high expectations, and an ideological vision, and who leads via personal example (House, 1977).

With the introduction of the study of visionary leadership and the study of organizational culture, the fifth approach to leadership study, leadership researchers paid increasing attention to vision articulation and related discursive concerns (Fairhurst, 2001; Putnam & Fairhurst, 2001). However, the linguistic turn of the social sciences generally influenced the emergence of more discursive approaches, which have been applied to a variety of leadership theories, including leader-member exchange.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory

As discussed, LMX was first evident in the contingency approach of leadership research. LMX was first proposed in order to examine common misconceptions of the dynamic between leaders and their relationships with their self-reports (Dansereau et al., 1975). Specifically, Dansereau et al. (1975) examined the idea that a single superior behaves similarly, or is engaged in an almost identical relationship, with each of his/her subordinates.

Over the past three decades, LMX research has advanced through four primary stages. During stage 1, researchers considered the relationship between leaders and members to be a part of a vertical dyad linkage (VDL). According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), the VDL represents how leaders discriminate in their treatment of individual members because a leader’s time and resources are limited. A member exchanges his or her performance for the limited resources a leader controls. Presumably, the better the performance, the more resources a member will be afforded. As illustrated by a 1975 study by Cashman, Dansereau, Graen and Haga, the VDL was supported over an average
leadership style model. Leaders do not treat all direct reports alike. VDL’s discrimination comes in the form in the “in-group,” or those with higher quality exchanges, and the “out-group,” or those with lower quality exchanges. Stage 1 is the only one that focuses solely on the leader, which many researchers perceived as a problem. “In-“ and “Out-group” terminology was also subsequently dropped in favor of “High” and “Low quality.”

To expand the influence of LMX, researchers began to examine both the leader and the member in the second stage, the LMX stage. The LMX stage pays attention to the in-group and out-group, and according to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), examined “antecedents and determinants of LMX, communication and relationship maintenance, cross cultural applicability, LMX outcomes, and measurement issues” (p. 415). Stage 2 also included gender and its influence on LMX (Duchon, Green, & Taber, 1986), communication frequency and its influence on LMX communication and relationship maintenance (Baker & Ganster, 1985), and career progress and outcomes of LMX (Graen & Wakayashi, 1994). Thus, LMX endured a period of growth that would transition research into the third stage (see Fairhurst, 2001).

In stage 3, the emancipatory stage of LMX research was based on the foundation of Graen and Uhl-Bien’s (1995; 1992) Leadership Making Model. This stage focuses on the possibility that leaders could offer more members opportunities to be a part of a high LMX relationship. According to Fairhurst (2001), “Members who accepted the high LMX offer not only improved their performance, they enhanced overall unit functioning by increasing the percentage high of LMXs.” The Leadership Making Model reveals how a member may become a part of high quality LMX. The outline three primary
phases of what an individual encounters during an LMX relationship: 1) Role finding, also known as the “stranger phase,” delineates if there is an implicit or explicit offer made to a member. If accepted then that member may advance to the next stage; 2) Role making, also identified as the “acquaintance stage,” is similar to a trial period in the sense that members test out various social and contractual exchanges, before moving on to the final stage; 3) Role implementation, identified as the “mature partnership,” (which not all members reach) is characterized as highly developed vis-à-vis loyalty, support, and trust (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1992, 1995). Most researchers argue that high LMX is a result of a positive series of member performances, which leads into the final stage of LMX (Dienesch & Liden, 1986).

The fourth stage of LMX moves beyond the dyadic relationship into the realm of groups and networks. Two different research directions have emerged. The first area of research identifies leadership structure emerging as a function of task structure and the individual characteristics of leaders and members (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The questions that guide this type of research examine the effects of both low and high LMX relationships on unit functioning and task performance (Fairhurst, 2001). Conversely, the second direction research has taken in this stage critiques the emancipatory shift of the third stage by citing limitations on a leader’s time and resources (Liden et al., 1997). Liden et al. (1997) contend that a leader will have the most access to information possible when s/he is connected with members beyond the work-group. The major research questions that guide this research includes: how newcomers are assimilated into or isolated from the leader’s network, how work group effectiveness differs when the leader’s competence is taken into account, and how different social networks the leader is
a part of vary in homogeneity of high LMX constituent selection (Liden et al., 1997; Sparrowe & Liden, 1997).

LMX Measurement Concerns

Although the stages of LMX present a number of research directions, questions concerning the operationalization LMX persist throughout. Early LMX studies were often exploratory in nature and provided little detail regarding the theoretical implications of what exactly LMX constructs were (Dienesch & Liden, 1987). However, Haga, Graen, and Dansereau (1974) established more definitive theoretical parameters for LMX, which set the tone for future studies. Subsequent studies, such as Graen (1976), suggested that the nature of LMX is grounded in the exchange of competence, interpersonal skill and trust. Shortly thereafter, LMX theory was further expanded to include the sub-dimensions of attention, sensibility (Cashman et al., 1976), support, reward, satisfaction with the leader (Graen & Ginsburgh, 1977), and influence and latitude (Graen et al., 1977). Researchers held different opinions about what sub-dimensions should be included while operationalizing the nature of LMX theory. Due to these competing ideals, measures of LMX suffered from a great deal of inconsistency.

According to Dienesch & Liden (1986), LMX scales have ranged from two to 25-item scales. Further, according to Gerstner and Day (1997), LMX-7 is the most commonly used scale, which consists of seven items created by Graen et al. (1982). A common complaint about LMX occurs in the “unresolved ambiguity about the nature of the construct, its measurement and its relationship with other organizational variables” (Gerstner & Day, 1997, p. 827). Keller and Dansereau (2001) conducted a study that explains several differential research findings by comparing studies using earlier versions
of LMX measurement versus later versions. Simply stated, the problem with the evolution of LMX research findings is the "tainted" results received when subsequent items are added to the LMX scale (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Ultimately, the debate over LMX scales is one of a quantitative inconsistency in relating an accurate portrayal of a high versus medium versus low LMX relationship.

With this seemingly endless debate about LMX scaling, few have thought to explore how leaders and members make sense of their relationship in communication through discourse. This type of consideration would perhaps pose a qualitative answer to the quantitative problem. Fairhurst (2001) argues that, "Marginalizing communication comes at the expense of a more complex view of the relationship’s dynamics" (p. 420).

In particular, the role of narrative has been overlooked in LMX and may suggest both an avenue to deal with the above LMX measurement concerns, and also a more complex account of one LMX relationship.

The Case for Narrative and Discourse

LMX has been defined as the unique social exchange between leaders and members (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The quality of those social exchanges is determined by actors’ calculations of the quid pro quo (Graen & Scandura, 1987). In writing about social exchange theory generally, Roloff (1981) assumes that individuals are, on some level, active and self aware when calculating these decisions. LMX scale items, as completed by the leaders and/or members, are designed to elicit this calculation, which follows an information-processing model of rational calculation. However, Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) argue, "the information processing model of LMX calculation in the extant literature ignores another equally plausible means by which sense is made of the
relationship through narrative” (p. 120). In other words, current LMX calculations do not fully capture the narratively organized relationship aspects of an LMX experience. Further, there is a place for narrative in recalling and reporting the LMX experience.

The work of Brown (2000) suggests why because he identifies sense-making as a narrative process. Drawing from Weick (1995), Brown concludes, “sense-making refers to those processes of interpretation and meaning production whereby individuals and groups reflect on and interpret phenomena and produce intersubjective accounts” (p. 45-46). Without dismissing rational analytic thought, Bruner (1991) argues that we also have an innate narrative capacity that is a means of understanding our world. Particularly, Bruner (1991) argues that the narrative basis of memory is framed by how we understand our experiences; specifically, humans remember events as stories. Further, Bruner (1991) states that as humans we “organize our experiences and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative- stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on” (p. 4). In other words, Bruner (1991) contends that human reality is created and reified through the way in which we construct and represent human interactions pertaining to story-telling.

Weick (1995) points out several benefits as to why narratives assist in sense-making. Specifically, Weick states:

Stories assist comprehension because they integrate the known and the speculative; stories suggest a causal order for unorganized or unrelated events; stories enable people to call forth the absent talk about the present in order to construct meaning; stories are mnemonics that help people to reconstruct prior complex events; stories can guide action before routines are formed and can enhance routines after they are formed; stories can enable people to build a data base of experience from which they can infer how the world works; and stories can convey shared values and meanings. (p. 129)
Boje’s (2001) view of narrative as sense-making surfaces in his account of how managers utilize stories in order to accomplish daily tasks:

Managers are taught and socialized to participate in the organizing process that control stories, storytellers, and the construction of storytelling in complex organizations. Managers learn to listen and evaluate stories told through administrative processes that make the experiences of employees and customers difficult to hear. Managers have to deal with the ethical consequences of these two points. (p. 41)

It is important to note that the managers of which Boje speaks are individuals who operate in what he terms the “storytelling organization.” Boje (2001) defines the storytelling organization as one in which the accrual of stories is instrumental to employees’ ability to make sense in the organization and their position within the organization. Therefore, not only is narrative an inherent part of the sense-making process occurring within organization, it is also a culture building tool. The contribution to the organizational culture is not necessarily engrained in the number of stories that are amassed as much as the values reflected in stories that are found in an individual story, or narrative account.

The Narrative Basis for LMX

If narrative is a basis for sense-making, and this plays itself out in storytelling discourse, LMX theory may benefit from a more inclusive account of the LMX experience. As mentioned, Fairhurst (2001) argues that the way in which LMX researchers theorize and study LMX relationship development is deficient because the experience of LMX and the sense-making that occurs is underplayed. However, typical approaches to LMX measurement may assume too much relational stability, thus undermining the contradiction, dynamism and flux that occur within relationships (Fairhurst, 2001). Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) explain:
Narrative as a mode of knowing would be obscured because of a requested ratings judgment that takes a single snapshot of the relationship as effective or ineffective, trusting or untrusting, etc, the usual scale item indicators of high or low quality LMX. Just what is experienced as effective or ineffective, trusting or untrusting, etc. is most likely to be narratively organized, but is not subject of inquiry (p. 123).

Sense-making is bypassed when individuals are not afforded the opportunity to discursively reflect upon their LMX experiences. Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) argue that “stories leaders and members tell about their relationship should be reflective of the quality of their exchange” (p. 124). While reflecting is a means by which individuals share meaning about a relationship, it also allows actors to “work out meanings for relationships in communication” (p. 124). Giving participants the opportunity to tell their LMX story opens up new avenues of study, including an application of what Martin et al. call the uniqueness paradox.

Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) suggest the role of narrative may be applied to LMX in the form of the uniqueness paradox. This paradox suggests that the stories that actors tell about their culture are not unique, although actors often believe they are (Martin et al., 1983). Martin et al. (1983) argue, “in spite of these claims to uniqueness, cultural manifestations share common elements and express common concern” (p. 438).

Therefore, while individuals make claims to uniqueness, these claims overlap in shared themes or scripts. Martin et al. (1983) indicate that the common elements and concerns that emerge from stories that are, in fact, told on the premise that individuals are meeting a need to hash out tensions and contradictions that they experience in the workplace. In other words, in many instances members of an organization tell their own, similar stories with regard to common themes. However, each of these stories will likely be infused
with details that are likely to be one of a kind, or rare, thus supporting the story’s claim to uniqueness, much as Martin et. al. (1983) discovered.

LMX Scripts and the Uniqueness Paradox

Martin et. al. (1983) suggest tensions that arise in an organization, such as equality and security, can be narratively reconciled. This was apparent in seven common story types illustrating the uniqueness paradox, which differed in plot and characters. For example, “Is the big boss human?” centers on recognizing the credentials of an employee, an opportunity for that employee to perform, and alas, how the employee performs in that situation is the determinate of whether or not individuals perceive him/her as “human.” “Can the little person rise to the top?” is a script, or story told, that revolves around a low-status employee who deserves a promotion and is trying to climb the corporate ladder. The “Will I get fired?” script centers around two events: the reasoning behind the lay-off and the announcement and justification of the lay-off. The “Will the organization help me when I have to move?” script may go one of two ways, either the company helps or it does not. The “How will the boss react to mistakes?” script includes two characters: the mistake maker and the mistake evaluator. Finally, the “How will the organization deal with obstacles?” is the most frequent of all the script due the abstract nature and countless variations of the script (Martin et al., 1983).

Importantly, Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) contend that “scripts inform the nature of hierarchical relationships in the organization as much as they inform its culture because they are inseparable” (p. 126). They base this argument on Schank and Abelson’s (1977) Scripts Theory, which explains how a basic frame of a story elicits similar characteristics such as sequenced events with certain plots and characters among
the individuals who tell them. Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) state that LMX has the
capacity to generate its own set of stories: “If, as Martin et al. (1983) discovered,
individuals will cite and either embrace or disparage their organization’s uniqueness to
plan into self-enhancing attributions for organizational successes or failures, why should
a similar dynamic not operate with LMX?” (p. 126).

While that this thesis will likely produce some common scriptal elements, they
may not be those Martin et al. (1983) discuss in their research. While the above review
only uncovers a few of the possible scripts, or stories, or narratives, that may be exposed,
perhaps this study will generate new scripts because Martin et al. (1983) focused more on
organizational culture and less on hierarchical relationships. Because the latter is the
focus of this study, this genre of scripts may reveal how the uniqueness paradox functions
actors would be given the opportunity to discursively reflect upon their relationship
experiences, thus reclaiming the ways that sense-making and meaning for the relationship
get worked out in communication and through discourse,” (p. 126, emphasis added).

Thus, based on Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) and Martin et al. (1983) the
following questions will guide this study:

RQ1: What are the common scriptal elements of high, medium, and low
members’ LMX stories?

RQ2: How does the uniqueness paradox operate with respect to LMX stories?
CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Participants

Participants in this study were employees of a medium-sized manufacturing company in the Tri-County area. Approximately 25 employees ranging in ages from 18 to 60 were interviewed. Participants were recruited by an email to his/her manager. The researcher sent an email to the department heads who, in turn, forwarded the email to all of the department employees (see Appendix A). The email briefly explained the nature of the study and included an attachment of the consent form (see Appendix A). Further, upon agreeing to participate in the study, participants signed an informed, which told them their participation in the research study at any point in time was voluntary.

Procedures

Two types of data were collected from each person, including completion of a LMX scale and a follow-up interview. Participants were identified as high, medium, and low based on their overall LMX score from the survey. Participants were first asked to complete the LMX-7 scale (Graen et al., 1982), the most frequently cited LMX measurement tool. Once the scale was completed, each question was used as a prompt for sense-making as it was put into the form of an interview question. This procedure was designed to elicit the narrative experience behind a scaled judgment. For example, “You indicated an answer of 2 out of 5 for the first survey question, ‘Do you know where you stand with your leader…do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?’ Can you give me a specific example to illustrate your answer?” Therefore, the
narrative protocol was determined upon completion of the LMX scale. Each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes.

Work by Corman and Krizek (1993) support this methodology. Although network analysts, Corman and Krizek’s (1993) study employed a methodology in which participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire while commenting on their answers. Interviews prompted participants to provide reasons for their answers. Corman and Krizek (1993) describe their methodology: “People report on their thought process while answering network questionnaires by offering acts of what happened or how things were” (p. 25). Corman and Krizek (1993) feel strongly that: “Organizational communication researchers should question the assumption that self reported communication validity indicates communication behavior” (p. 31). Thus, this thesis employs a methodology prescribed by Corman and Krizek (1993) in order to obtain a more thorough explanation of the self reported survey accounts of an LMX experience by participants. However, the goal of this study is primarily to get participants to narrate their experience amidst the accounts they offer.

Midway through data collection the interview protocol was modified. After conducting several interviews, there was growing concern over the few low LMX stories being collected. A greater number of high and medium LMX may have been elicited because of selection effects, a common self-reporting problem. Thus, the researcher modified the interview protocol to ensure there would be a greater number of low LMX as well. To achieve this, medium and high LMX participants were prompted to recall a low LMX leader in their past, and then asked to fill out the modified survey, which consisted of LMX-7 questions 1, 2, 6, and 7 (see Appendix A). These questions were
selected for the modified survey and interview protocol because they were the questions that elicited a greater number of stories. For example, question five seemed to elicit few stories. Almost all interviewees indicated that the question, “Again regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that s/he would “bail you out” at his/her expense?” was unrelated to his/her relationship with the leader because s/he would not call upon the leader to defend the interviewees’ “integrity.”

Analysis

Once the interviews were completed, stories were compiled that were reflective of high, medium and low quality exchanges. Following with Martin et al.’s (1983) explanation of what a story is, this thesis unitized a story as one that “Focuses on a single unified sequence of events, apparently drawn from the institution’s history” (p. 439). In this study, it would be a unified sequence of events drawn from the relationship’s history. During the interview, any time participants provided an account on a specific, single instance, which included a sequence of events and characters, the account served as a story. Martin et al.’s (1983) study also utilized script analysis (Schank & Abelson, 1977). A script is the skeletal outline a story falls under with specification of a set of characters or roles and a causally connected sequence of events (Martin et al., 1983). A script analysis was performed here once the stories were unitized to search for familiar themes. Further, Martin et al. (1983) suggested that a common script might have “optional branches” in which the nonessential details lead to alternative story components and events.

Fifty-nine stories were collected from the interviews. The stories were subjected to a constant comparison method, a variant of grounded theory. Three comparative
analyses were performed: an overall LMX score comparison, a LMX question comparison, and an item LMX score comparison. The overall LMX score constant comparison incorporated the quantitative LMX score from the LMX-7, which was next converted to a designation of high, medium, and low LMX (see Appendix B). The scores from the stories were roughly equal for each high, medium, and low LMX stories. Scores that range from 7 to 19 were designated low LMX. Scores that range from 20 to 25 were designated medium LMX. Finally, scores that range from 26 to 35 were designated high. The stories for each of the LMXs elicited a number of themes. Next, the LMX question constant comparison was divided by LMX-7 questions one through four, six and seven; question five was not used because it did not produce any stories. The constant comparison of the LMX-7 questions produced a few additional themes. The final constant comparison, the LMX-7 item score was primarily used to assess the impact of hedging, but it did not produce any new themes and reached a point of redundancy.

Finally, based on Martin et al. (1983), the uniqueness paradox was explored by searching the stories for explicit details that are one of a kind or at least rare. Such details would support the story’s claim to uniqueness. Thus, data analysis of the story will first be explored for similar themes and next for exclusive details suggesting the uniqueness paradox is present.
CHAPTER 4

Results

RQ1: Common Scripts

Data will be presented by the overall LMX score constant case comparison (see Appendix B). There were several themes for the three LMX types. Table 1 identifies each story with its LMX type, low, medium, or high, the story number and the theme found in the story. Furthermore, there was one prominent theme for the low LMX and two prominent themes for the medium and high LMXs.

Table 1: Prominent Themes of Overall LMX types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LMX type</th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Leader around, but for wrong reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Leader’s a “Nazi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Leader’s an “Asshole” (wants to be mean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Can’t make Leader happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Leader always finds faults, bad communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>L just didn’t care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>L just wouldn’t help, did nothing extra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>L has no empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No FB from L, L wasn’t around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>M not on same page with L, everything’s a “joke”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>M never advanced in job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>L doesn’t acknowledge what M does</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>L wasn’t focused enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>L only gave - reinforcement, M doesn’t und. L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>M wanted to hurt L b/c L didn’t know how to treat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>L didn’t keep promises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>L didn’t want to go extra mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>L didn’t keep promises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>L is busy, no one-on-one time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>L doesn’t check in with M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>L has little experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>L has little experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>L doesn’t understand M and M’s personal job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>L has little experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>M only gets FB in yearly review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>L is busy, doesn’t know M’s personal job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>M only gets FB in yearly review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>L doesn’t show he knows M’s potential (pay, title)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>No co-construction of problem-solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>L doesn’t know job/unsere of job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>M doesn’t get answers from L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>M backs L up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>L didn’t back up his word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>L lack of experience, M can’t go to L for advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>L plays favorites, M has no added responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L doesn’t try to identify with M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>L and M have constant communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>L helps M/ is there for M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>L and M worked together long, L is there for M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>L tells M “good job,” L is there for M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>L “takes up for” M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>L doesn’t know trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>L has experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>L delegates responsibility to M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>L delegates responsibility to M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>L recognizes M’s potential, delegates responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>L helps M out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Co-construction to answer problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Co-construction/ work together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>L helps M out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>M defends L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Hang out outside of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>L helps M out (days off work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teamwork, M likes L’s personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Have become friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Work together, share similar ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In conjunction with the seven scripts Martin et al. (1983) reported, this thesis will first present the script, or theme. Next, the script will be explained in terms of the
characters, the connected sequence of events, or the plot, and, when applicable the
optional branches for alternate story components. Subsequently, the script will be
illustrated with supplementary stories as evidence of the themes. Finally, evidence of
how the stories align with established LMX literature will be discussed. Further, the
results section will conclude with a brief description of partially developed themes from
the data.
Low LMX Scripts

Why doesn’t my leader help me? This script is centered on the characters of a low
LMX, the member and the leader. The basic plot of the stories illustrating this theme
describes a member in need of his or her boss’ support or help but, for whatever reason,
does not receive it. In LMX the member exchanges his or her performance for a leader’s
personal and positional resources (Graen & Scandura, 1987). Although the leader’s point
of view regarding the member’s extra-contractual behavior is unknown, the member is
reporting a lack of resources, which is consistent with low LMX. Further, the various
reasons for the lack of help parallel Martin et al.’s (1983) research suggesting there are
alternative story components. The following stories exemplify the members’ accounts of
a leader who is not there to assist him or her:

Story #38: “He didn’t understand my job problems at all.”
HOW DID YOU KNOW? HOW COULD YOU TELL?
“Well, when I was on the road when I was in service, so this was here, um, you
would call in ‘I need this part, this part is defective,’ stuff like that. [leader would
say] ‘Can’t you go to Home Depot, or go to Lowes and find out.’ [Member would
say] ‘No, I’ve already done that.’ Indecipherable It seems like at the end of the
day when the quittin buzzer goes off that, that’s it. You know, they don’t care
about what’s outside of their normal days work.”

Story #5: “He [the leader] would look over your shoulder and see what you were
doing. Not so much to help, but to kind of ask. The point it was to see where you
are at with a project. Just to talk about anything… not even job related. If you have a question, it is almost unpleasant to even ask them [the leader].”

Story #34: “You know, we’re kind of branching out, I kind of get to work on all these new products. Even the president has said, ‘I’m going to have you build this.’ I’ve seen other people around me kinda looking at me like ‘Let’s get him involved cuz he knows how to do this.’ But the ones working directly over me seems like I just need to stand there and say ‘Hellllo! Do you see what I’m doin here, what I’m trying to do. I just need your support.’ I’m getting some support from another guy. You know, he’s working on taking care of some issues that I brought up, which if I had brought this to the other guy he would have probably said, ‘Quit complaining.’”

Consistent with LMX research, these examples are characteristic of low LMX.

Specifically, Uhl-Bien and Graen (1992) distinguished a low LMX as one in which incremental influence is lacking with little, if any, depth beyond the relationship than the terms of the formal employment. Therefore, the above examples illustrate the members’ perception of a leader who does not partake in such activities that go “above and beyond” a normal days work, although ironically this phrase is typically used to describe members in the LMX literature. Again, although the leader’s viewpoint is not represented, the assumption of low LMX can be made because the member reports no extra-contractual, or no additional, resources. There is little depth seen in the examples with regard to the members’ insight of the leaders’ formal authority and position.

Specifically, the first story reveals a member who accounts for his leader’s actions as not caring “outside of the normal business day.” Although the leader’s point of view is unknown, the complaint of no additional personal or positional resources is suggestive that a leader is not exchanging them for member’s performance. Instead, the leader directs the member to alternate places for assistance, Lowes or Home Depot. The second story illustrates a leadership situation with lackluster incremental influence. The member cannot accurately describe what purpose the leader’s conversation provides. It is
apparent to the member, however, that the conversation is not intended to help or influence the member in a positive regard with respect to the task. Finally, the member in the third story blatantly states, “I need your [the leader’s] support.” The member is not receiving the resources needed to advance certain job situations, support that undoubtedly moves beyond the standard terms of employment within the dyad.

Medium LMX scripts

*My leader doesn’t have the experience.* This script focuses on the characters of a medium LMX differing in their degree of job knowledge and expertise. The plot of the stories provided illustrate how the member is more knowledgeable about the job than the leader. The following examples show how medium LMX variance in expertise co-occur:

Story #27: “I answered moderate because I don’t think my leader is quite, you know what I mean, up to snuff on what he’s trying to get me to do.”
SO HE’S NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE JOB, OR…?
“Job or… A good example is a job. You know, when they come out there and they try and tell yaw ‘We need to do this, we need to do that,’ yet you can tell the way that they’re explaining it to you, they really aren’t for sure themselves. Or, there might be changes they aren’t aware of. We have a lot of that here.”

Story #29: “Of all the supervisors I think that [my leader] is probably the most knowledgeable about what we do.”
“WHY”
“Because he took the time to self teach. He seems to be in touch with what the job actually entails.”
IS HE AN ELECTRICIAN THEN?
“Um, no.”
SO WHEN YOU SAY THAT HE TOOK THE TIME TO LEARN, YOU MEAN BECAUSE IT IS NOT NECESSARILY HIS TRADE?
“And that happens a lot in this type of industry. I mean this is industry wide. A lot of times you’ll have a guy that’s a supervisor and he has management training and no skills training for those particular jobs. It’s not always the case, but a lot of times. And that makes a big difference. I mean, if they don’t know how to do the job, how can they manage properly?”

Story #40: “His experience in field is minimum. He has a mechanical background and he’s the supervisor, it’s hard for him to answer my questions.”
Standing in stark contrast to the low LMX script, this medium LMX script does not represent a lack of depth in a relationship, but rather a difference in areas of expertise between the member and leader. Coinciding with LMX literature, the member does not express a lack of respect for the leader, but a low degree of trust and confidence in the leader’s experience in a particular area of the job (Graen et al., 1976). The examples provided indicate a barrier between the job knowledge of leaders and members.

*My leader doesn’t understand (me, my needs, my potential).* This script echoes the same characters as the first medium LMX theme; however this theme uncovers the members’ problem with the leader not understanding him/her. The plot of the stories reflects how the leader does not try to understand the member. The lack of understanding is attributed to different reasons and, therefore, provides optional branches to the theme. The following examples show how members of a medium LMX experience feel, at times, less than understood:

Story #2: “They understand the company and how the company works. They understand some of the challenges for that position. Do they know what my personal job problems and needs are? Am I saying one thing and really needing something else? I might gripe I’m not getting information from this person over here to get this job done, and they [the leader] may hear it as ‘ok’. This is something that happens all the time. All I can do is say, ‘This is how it is,’ without looking at it and saying, ‘Okay this is how we can make it work.’”

Story #3: “They’re [the leader] really busy. They don’t have time to take you out one on one. Do they really look over your shoulder? Do they kind of walk in your shoes to understand what you’re doing and see how effective you are?”

Story #15: “From my experience here, sometimes when there is a difference of opinion, it isn’t necessarily a sit down and try to look it from both ways and see what will work the best [thing]. Sometimes it’s just put upon they’re [the leader’s] experience. They’re not looking at the situations on both sides. They’re missing something there.”
Again, the stories work in conjunction with established LMX literature (see Fairhurst, 2001). Three LMX outcomes that the above stories include are outcomes in job problems, performance, and decision influence. To begin, the first story focuses on the member’s “personal job problems and needs.” This story type directly correlates with Keller and Dansereau’s (1995) research, which focuses on how both the leader and member influence the quality of the exchange, and specifically the quality of attention given to high LMX job problems as a result of the high LMX exchange. The second story addresses time as a discretionary resource of leaders and members. The notion of time aligns with LMX research such as Liden et al.’s (1997) argument that leaders have a limited amount of time and resources with which to supply members. Therefore, medium LMXs will vary from high and low LMXs in this regard. Finally, the last story is linked to LMX outcome studies with regard to decision influence (Scandura, Graen, & Novak, 1986, and Duchon et al., 1986), as the member describes his lack of influence in working through a job problem. The LMX literature has long held that mutual influence is operating the higher the quality the exchange, yet we do not know what form this takes exactly (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). Further, the linguistic choices leaders and members make to manage situations with mutual influence define the nature of the exchange (Fairhurst, 1993).

High LMX Scripts

I can turn to my leader for help. The nature of this script is based on the indication that because the leader is forthcoming with resources, then the leader has determined the member is supplying a sufficient work performance. Therefore, assuming that the leader views that the exchange is high, this script outlines stories between high
LMX members and their leaders. The plot sequence of this script reflects stories in which a member calls for either the leader to provide additional assistance. Regardless of the various job needs, the high LMX member asserts the high LMX leader will provide or offer assistance. Consider the following:

Story #55: “If I call for and cry for an answer and I can’t get a hold of that guy, and he’ll go and see where that guy is and get the answer. He’ll run down my parts and information when I need it.”

Story #57: “He always, you know tells me when I am doing a good job like for instance he was away for a couple of weeks because his uncle had cancer so he was gone for like a month or so. I was running the back all by myself he was consistently back there saying anything ‘You need anything’ or ‘You are doing a good job.’ It makes you feel good when someone says stuff like that. I think he understands.”

Contrary to low LMX, high LMX is characterized by extra contractual behavior that is usually defined as above and beyond performance by the member in return for the discretionary resources of leader. Extra contractual behavior can be described in these examples in the form of support for “running parts,” or the offer to “help in any way.” Further, the extra contractual behavior is similar to Bass’ (1990) notion of material exchanges, which also includes the social exchange of psychological benefits and favors. In other words, the leaders described in this script are supplying his/her aid in exchange of the members’ ability to complete a job task beyond the terms of the formal employment contract.

*My leader recognizes my potential.* This particular script provides a plot that covers how a member perceives the leader recognizing his/her potential. The recognition of potential could come in the form of acquiring: 1) a higher position within the company ranks, 2) extra work tasks, 3) or some form of responsibility in general.
Story #45: “I say high and the reason I don’t say very high is because he doesn’t have the time to go over in my area and sit and watch me all day to realize what I’m doing. But I say high because a few years back we were looking for another foreman and he picked me out of everybody in the shop to be a foreman. So that tells me the answer to that.”

Story #43: “Well, I’ve worked here 23 years, so I kind of know my supervisor and I guess that’s about it. And by the kind of work I’ve been given.”
“When you say by the kind of work you are given what do you mean?”
“Responsibility. I know where I can fit in as far as work. Some people get certain things, certain jobs.”

Story #49: “In the back we have been busy and we got a bunch of new guys and he gave them all to me. Plus ten other jobs to see if I could handle it. I think he realized I can handle it.”

The above examples illustrate a leader who is optimistic about the member’s capabilities, a factor presented by Vasudevan (1993) while describing high LMX relationships. Similarly, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) describe high LMX as an exchange intrinsically tied to respect for one’s capabilities. Like the medium and low LMXs, the exchange of resources for high LMXs appears quite consistent with the literature.

Partially Developed Themes

There were several themes that began to emerge in the research, as shown in Table 2. Although these scripts did not receive as much consistency as the primary themes discussed, they are worth addressing. Martin et al. (1983) suggested there are three primary reasons why common story types have propagated: discomfort with dualities, self-enhancing attributions, and the idea that those self-enhancing attributions bestow the institution with uniqueness. However, with further exploration, the following scripts may prove to be significant in future research.
Table 2: Partially Developed Themes of Overall LMX types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LMX type</th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>12, 23, 24</td>
<td>Leader didn’t know how to treat people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Leader was not encouraging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>31, 37</td>
<td>Leader wondered why member couldn’t do more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>13, 34</td>
<td>Leader doesn’t recognize member’s potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Leader thinks ‘this [member’s ideas] is stupid’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Leader is jealous of member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>8, 32</td>
<td>Leader shows/has no empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>7, 28</td>
<td>Leader is all talk, no action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>12, 23, 24</td>
<td>Member calls leader names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Leader is not focused on the big picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14, 41</td>
<td>Leader doesn’t get answers to member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Leader doesn’t acknowledge member’s presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Leader plays favorites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Leader doesn’t give member added responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
<td>Leader is too busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>7, 16</td>
<td>Leader doesn’t back up word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>22, 14</td>
<td>Leader only tells member ‘good job’ once a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>58, 48</td>
<td>Leader had experiences leader’s job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>56, 18</td>
<td>Leader and member have a relationship outside of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>44, 50, 46</td>
<td>Leader backs member up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Leader and member have worked together a long time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>17, 57</td>
<td>Leader and member have constant communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ2: The Uniqueness Paradox

The very evidence of common script elements suggests that relationship have high degrees of similarities in high, medium, and low LMXs. But are the stories claiming uniqueness within the organization as in Martin et al. (1983)? Following Martin et al., this would involve the inclusion of details that are one of a kind, or at least rare. The following examples illustrate uniqueness.

Low LMX stories

Story #23: “He didn’t know how to treat people.”
WHAT WOULD HE DO?
“He wouldn’t know how to talk to people. I’d be working with tools and he’s grab em out of my hands. So I went and told the owner that if he didn’t get out of my face that I was gonna hurt him.
The member is describing leader physically removing tools from his hands. Consequently, the member goes on to describe the repercussions of his leaders’ act by suggesting the possibility of “hurting” the leader. There is a commonality between this script and others with the underlying theme of poor interpersonal skills, however the detail of this story is certainly one-of-a-kind. No other individuals described a feeling of inflicting pain on his or her leader.

Story #31: “Because more often then not, he was unhappy. I was working a night shift, and… Well, for instance, I come in at midnight and a machines is down, 8 o’clock in the morning, he rolls in, and right about then, you’re hitting that wall where you are dead. I’ve got 9 or 10 of the 11 machines up and running in eight hours, which is pretty darn good. It’s ‘Well how come you let that machine down all night?’ That sort of thing. It just, a lot of times it didn’t matter what you were doing it just wasn’t quite good enough.

IT DOESN’T SOUND LIKE HE WAS REAL AWARE OF… What you went through, exactly. And as far as… I mean it just seemed like he was never really happy with what you were doing even if you did do real well.”

Many of the details in this story communicate uniqueness. For instance, this member is describing a night shift by recalling how exhausted he feels by the end of the shift. Most of the members interviewed were not night shift employees. Additionally, this member recalls how many machines are working, a concise detail not given by other members. While there are some similarities to other stories in the theme of “nothing is good enough for my leader,” much of the detail in the story is unprecedented.

Story #32: “He had done that job and was suddenly promoted over the entire department, over 25 people and forgot what it was like to do the job. And that to me is poor, poor, poor leadership. And I’ve seen that in other areas. In field service, some of the guys have been on the road and then they get off the road and they kind of forget what it’s like out there. I mean it’s not the job, it’s the travel, it’s finding a place to sleep. There were just crazy things. And, and ridiculous schedules, and back to back jobs.”
The unique details in this story come from the description of the “crazy things” the member discusses. He explains the travel, the nuance of finding a place to sleep, ridiculous schedules, and back-to-back jobs. While other members who worked in field service described some of the hardships they faced (going to Lowes and Home Depot to pick up parts, Story #38), the obstacles that this member described were exclusive to this story.

Medium LMX stories

Story #16: “I had a situation where people weren’t backing up what they said… said verbally over a time period and it was forgotten. And if you couldn’t prove it [what they said] with paperwork, what can you do there? They’re higher up in rank than you. When you’re in situations like that it doesn’t seem to be good. But in the same regard, there are situations where they do stick up for you regardless of whether you can show proof or not. I’ve had it both ways.”

This member discussed a leader who did not follow through with his word, a theme discussed by a few members. However, this story is different from others because the member goes on to describe the specific ramifications of failing to provide paperwork. This story was the only one to discuss the detail of *showing* proof via documentation.

Story #26: “Well, they understand your potential, but they don’t show it. See what I’m saying?”
WHAT INDICATES TO YOU THAT THEY KNOW YOUR POTENTIAL BUT DON’T SHOW IT?
“Pay. Pay. Pay. Real quick, pay. Like when I first got hired on, I just got out of the service and I come in here and they said they hired you because of your knowledge and your skill, but that’s not true. That’s not true at all. I had my experience when I got in here, but it took them a while to give me my Leadman, although I was doing a Leadman job, they didn’t give me my ‘Leadman’ title for a while. It was not very fair.”

There are several themes in this story that were apparent in others. Specifically, one of the common scripts, “My leader doesn’t understand (me, my needs, my
potential),” is illustrated by this story. However, this story demonstrates uniqueness because the member discusses the sequence of events that led to his receipt of the “Leadman” title.

Story #30: “Well there’s definitely some give and take here. There are obviously times that I am disappointed with how he is.”
WHAT ARE THOSE TIMES?
“Well, sometimes, he’ll play favorites a little bit. Certain guys get the real big machines, or, shoot for a long time I was cleaning up bits and problems that other guys got problems with. Some of it may have been that I was good at doing that stuff, but I kinda get the impression that it’s you know ‘his guys’. For instance, a lot of the guys have dozens and dozens of machines. I went, well I’ve been in the shop a couple years now, and I’ve only had 5 or 6 machines. And it’s like, you know, I let it go and then had to complain occasionally and say, ‘Hey what’s the deal here?’

There were only two stories that reflected the notion of “playing favorites,” which qualifies the topic as rare. In addition, this story is unique because of the jargon, an organizational manifestation according to Martin et al. (1983), the member uses: “his guys.” This story is distinct in the implications of the phrase “his guys” because the member has created an image of who he believes his leader’s “guys” are. Additionally, the member equates his exclusion of being a part of “his guys” to only receiving five or six machines, a detail only found in this story.

High LMX Stories

Story #36: “When I’ve needed days off, I asked him and he gave them to me. I haven’t been bumping heads with him at all. I’ve been here 9 years and haven’t been written up yet. But um, I have a good relationship with everybody I work with, I’m pretty easy going.”

This story is unique in how the member describes “bumping heads,” or how the member defines “bumping heads.” Although this story is not the only story to discuss how many years the member has been with the company or having a good relationship
with co-workers, it is unique in how it describes these things. Specifically, the member discusses being employed with the company for nine years and not being written up.

Story #46: “It’s mostly been on my peer level or lower. I haven’t had the opportunity to defend him to anyone higher than him, if I did I would. It’s because the other people who are saying something about him don’t know what his job entails. I just always back him up and tell them ‘He’s the best guy on that side of the office doors when it comes to his job.’ As I said before, I think he would easily fill the shoes of his leader and excel.”

The opening part of the story, a member backing his or her leader up, is not a novel concept. However, the unique detail in this story comes in the form of how the member feels about his leader. This discussion of advocating a leader for the leader’s position was isolated to this account.

Story #47: “Well, this might say it all ‘If I were to start my own business, I would employ him before anybody else. And I would think he would do the same for me.”

“WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?”

“Well because of the ideas that we have to save time and money. Some people are not here to fix things, they’re just here to ride the boat, get a paycheck end there’s no care involved.”

The member describes how he and his leader share similar ideas. In fact, the ideas are contingent upon the member’s declaration that he would employ his leader to work for him. The proposition of a member hiring his or leader is significant only to this story.

Story #59: “I think he would help us in any way possible.”

“IS THERE A SPECIFIC INSTANCE YOU CAN TELL ME ABOUT?”

“Yea like right now, we are so shorthanded. We went from eight people in the stock room to two. So he is right there trying to get some good help. So he is trying to push and get us to help. So that so much pressure would not be on us.”

“How does he help alleviate some of that pressure?”

“Just be hands on. I might start receiving stuff and a truck might pull up. My cell phone might ring and it’s [Name] can you bring me such and such. And it’s I’ll go run this to them, you can take care of such and such. And it helped me out a whole lot.”
There are two primary forms of unique detail in this story: the condition of the stockroom and unloading a shipment. Although several stories mention the stockroom, this member provides the only story that describes how many people work the stockroom and the accompanying idea that the low number creates a stressful environment. Additionally, this story’s details are unique because the member reenacts a shipment receipt complete with a ringing cell phone, and the leader steps in to help dissolve the situation.

In summary, there appear to be a number of rare and even one-of-a-kind details that are endemic to these stories suggesting that Martin et al.’s (1983) uniqueness paradox applies as much to organizational relationships as organizational culture.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Revisiting Research Question 1 guiding this study, there are commonalities seen in stories provided by high, medium, and low members. Each member supplemented his/her survey with distinctive, yet at times similar, stories during the interview. The similar stories make up the common, overarching themes of the scripts presented in the results.

In the instance of the low LMX data, “Why doesn’t my leader help me” is the most prevalent script. This script involved low LMX members describing their leaders by indicating a lack of help received from the leader. There were several reasons, or branches of alternative story components, members provided for the lack of help. However, the overarching descriptor by the low LMX members of the low LMX leader was little, if any, contractual influence beyond formal employment. Without the leader’s viewpoint, we can say the LMX is low due to the lack of resources provided to members. In other words, most low LMX members described their leader as providing little or no depth to their working relationship with regard to extra care or attention.

Shifting focus to medium LMX, two scripts surfaced. A medium LMX member describing his or her medium LMX leader’s lack of job, or field, knowledge, or expertise categorizes the first script, “My leader doesn’t have the experience.” This script is characteristic of medium LMX literature because it suggests medium LMX members lack confidence and trust in the leader’s expertise. However, the script does not necessarily demonstrate a lack of respect.
The second medium LMX script moves away from critiquing the leader’s expertise of the field and toward critiquing the leader’s interpersonal skills. “My leader doesn’t understand (me, my needs, my potential)” script centers on the medium LMX member describing his/her problem with the leader’s lack of insight toward the member. The member describes a lack of teamwork on the leader’s behalf. This script is a branching script with alternative story components as seen in the varying ties to LMX outcome literature. For example, members attribute the lack of understanding to everything from personal jobs and needs, personal job performance, and decision-making.

The final LMX type, high LMX relationships, also produced two major scripts. The first script, “I can turn to my leader for help,” includes the high LMX member maintaining the high LMX leader “is there” for him or her. While the leader’s viewpoint is not in tact, the LMX is high as suggested by the members description of the leader “being there” is several ways. For example, a leader could assist a member in simple everyday tasks such as keeping the work area clean or by supplying an offer to help when needed. Unlike low LMX, high LMX is defined partially by the extra contractual behavior that takes place between a member and leader.

The final script presented in the high LMX experience is “My leader recognizes my potential.” The high LMX member describes his or her leader as recognizing his or her abilities and potential in this script. Similar to the first high LMX script, there are various branches to this script. The different forms the script takes include the leader recognizing the member’s potential by awarding the member a promotion, added work tasks, or any other added responsibility. This script aligns with LMX literature because it
is a high LMX script in which the leader views the member in an optimistic light (Vasudevan, 1993).

Regarding Research Question 2, the uniqueness paradox is present in LMX stories. While there are commonalities in the themes among high, medium, and low’s stories, much of the detail is rare or one of a kind. This detail ranges from jargon an employee uses to how long an employee has worked for the company. For instance, the way in which one member operationalized “bumping heads” as not being written up was a unique detail. Therefore, stories solidified the claim to uniqueness in the form of the detail provided, much as Martin et al. (1983) found in their research.

The research findings and protocol of this study suggests several implications for the study of leader-member exchange. To begin, this research explores the importance of the role of narrative in LMX. In turn, the role of narrative with regard to scale judgment is considered in answering methodological concerns of LMX. Finally, this research presents a rhetorical argument for using scripts as they relate to the uniqueness paradox and LMX.

The role of narrative, as Fairhurst and Hamlett (2003) suggested, may hold a strong place in LMX studies. With significant debate among LMX scholars, the quantitative measurement of the LMX experience needs more accurate portrayal of the experience. While LMX-7 is a good scale judgment, narrative supplementation to the quantitative data is one answer to the quantitative debate, as suggested by the data of this study. Because organizations are cultures as they are reflected by such things as the stories its members tell, there is a place in LMX research for narrative (Martin et al., 1983). Specifically, LMX research undoubtedly investigates one intricate part of a
culture, the relationship between a leader and his or her member. Therefore, as the stories collected in this research demonstrated, narrative is a good methodological tool that can supplement our understanding of the LMX relationship.

This research is also consistent with the methodological considerations Corman and Krizek (1993) set forth, which criticized the validity of the self report and questioned what exactly self reported communication data is telling researchers. Given that self-reported communication may obscure exactly what the report is trying to convey, research suggests that individuals are active and self aware when calculating these social exchanges (Roloff, 1981). Therefore, while it has been argued self reported data ignores the minutiae of an LMX experience (Fairhurst & Hamlett, 2003), this study suggests there are different meanings assigned to self-reported quantitative data scores.

For example, at one point in data collection each type of LMX overall score answered an item score of three out of five on the third LMX-7 survey question: “How well does your leader recognize your potential?” By conducting an interview to supplement the survey, the researcher was able to learn why the member answered the way s/he did and why the item score was not only used by medium LMX members. Specifically, one theme of a medium LMX was a member’s issue with the leader’s experience. However, while a few high LMX members answered question three similarly to the way a medium LMX member answered the question, the high LMX member did not view the lack of experience to be detrimental to the overall LMX. The extra data conveyed by the narratives provided in this study enhance idiosyncrasies of the LMX experience. It is those idiosyncratic stories that informs scripts and Martin et. al.’s uniqueness paradox.
Further, the researcher suggests that there should be some type of question regarding extra-contractual behavior and resources added to the LMX scaled judgment. The very nature of LMX is based on the principles of direct reports trading their performance for positional and professional resources held by their boss, but there is no specific question in LMX scales that centers on this idea. In addition, the extra-contractual behavior and resource question should be asked in a comparison format in order to gain insight to perceptions of both members and leaders about the LMX relationship. For example, an extra-contractual comparison question for the member survey may state: “What specific resources do you give your leader that you do not give to other leaders?” Conversely, an example of an extra-contractual comparison question for the leader survey may state: “What specific resources do you give the member that you do not give other members?”

In its original use, the uniqueness paradox suggests that a culture’s claims to uniqueness, as articulated by cultural manifestations such as stories, are not so unique (Martin et al., 1983). Therefore, while individuals make claims to uniqueness, these claims overlap in shared themes or scripts as this study demonstrates. For each overall LMX type, there was at least one prevalent common script, and several others that may prove significant with further research. It is important to note the scripts discovered in this study are different than the seven scripts Martin et al. (1983) found, largely due to the nature of what was studied. In contrast to Martin et al.’s study, this study focused on the hierarchical LMX relationship, not solely the organizational culture. However, the dynamics that work within an organizational culture were still at work in the organizational hierarchical relationship and common scripts emerged. As Fairhurst and
Hamlett (2003) point out, “why should a similar dynamic not operate with LMX,” (p. 126). This study’s conclusions indicate that the dynamic does operate within LMX research.

Limitations

The biggest limitation to this study, and subsequently working with an evolving methodology, concerns the use of general questions to guide the interview. Interview questions can be characterized as either general or specific. For example, survey question one states: “Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?” An example of a general interview question to coincide with question one is: “Tell me why you answered three out of five while considering ‘do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?’” Contrastingly, an example of a specific interview question to coincide with question one is: “Tell me about a specific example to illustrate why you answered three out of five while considering ‘do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?’” In other words, the general question is more generic while the specific example calls for an interviewee to provide a specific example or instance.

There were a few interviews in which the interviewer was not sensitive enough to using specific language to elicit specific responses. While there were general questions that were able to elicit adequate data the researcher could have collected additional data by remaining specific at all times. Also, in the event that the interviewer does ask a specific question and the interviewee gives a general answer, the interviewee should continue to probe for a specific example or instance.
Additionally, the study included members, but it did not include their counterparts. Without the leader’s insight, the researcher had to assume what the leader’s viewpoint was as a result of LMX literature. Although empiricist literature has privileged member’s viewpoint because managers traditionally provide socially desirable responses, a multi-vocal approach is the next step to study the LMX experience. Thus, the protocol to data collection may correct the socially desirable answers that leaders reportedly provide for their scaled judgments. As this study has shown, the scaled judgment score elicited a different LMX type story at times.

Directions for future research

Reflecting on the findings and the implications of this study, there are directions future researchers should take. Specifically, the methodology employed during this study is a strong template for future research. As mentioned, there should be a comparison question regarding the extra-contractual resources because of its prevalence to LMX literature. The methodology covered the area that LMX scholars generally agree upon while measuring LMX, the LMX-7, and it enhanced the survey with interviews to incorporate the nuances of the LMX experience. In other words, for the first time the LMX experience was not underplayed. By continuing to use a survey and a supplemental interview, researchers will be able to discover interesting data.

The data collected in this study provided great insight to the quantitative confines of the LMX-7. For example, as the multitude of emerging scripts demonstrates, participants operationalize a question to mean a plethora of different things. Specifically, LMX-7 question three, How well does your leader recognize your potential?, produced three primary genres of interview answers: feedback (or lack of feedback) from the
leader, responsibility (or lack of responsibility) given to the leader, and formal awards (or lack of formal awards) such as pay and title from the leader. Altogether, the data collected was interesting with regard to learning how individuals “make sense” of a question. A multi-vocal approach should be taken in continuation of collecting interesting data.

Further, as the dual methodology allows for a more complete view of an LMX experience, the methodology also opens a new door to conveying what researchers know about LMX. In other words, by examining LMX quantitative and qualitatively, researchers gain a more complete conception of exactly what an LMX experience is like. However, the researcher is not suggesting that the methodology be used only in standard LMX research as it was in this study. Future researchers should consider using this methodology in other avenues of LMX research, such as stage model analysis. As explicated in the review of literature, there are three proposed stages of LMX growth and development: role finding, role making, and role implementation (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Future research considering differences or similarities in each type of stage would undoubtedly increase organizational research. Common scripts among the type of overall LMX are a good way in which to highlight differences and/or similarities while defining exactly what high, medium, and low LMXs are.
Appendix A

LMX-7 Survey and Interview Prompt

1. Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?

   Rarely       Occasionally     Sometimes     Fairly Often     Very Often

2. How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?

   Not a Bit     A Little        Moderately    Mostly         Fully

3. How well does your leader recognize your potential?

   Not at all    A Little        Moderately    High           Very High

4. Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?

   None          Small           Moderate      High           Very High

5. Again, regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that s/he would “bail you out” at his/her expense?

   None          Small           Moderate      High           Very High

6. I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if s/he were not present to do so?

   Strongly disagree  Disagree     Neutral    Agree         Strongly Agree

7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?

   Extremely Ineffective  Worse then Average  Average  Better Than Average  Extremely Effective
Modified LMX-7 Survey and Interview Prompt

1. Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
   
   Rarely  Occasionally  Sometimes  Fairly Often  Very Often

2. How well does you leader understand your job problems and needs?
   
   Not a Bit  A Little  Moderately  Mostly  Fully

6. I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if s/he were not present to do so?
   
   Strongly disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
   
   Extremely Ineffective  Worse then Average  Average  Better Than Average  Extremely Effective
Email to be sent for recruitment

Elizabeth Prebles, a master’s students at the University of Cincinnati is conducting a research study in order to complete her thesis work. The study deals with the work relationship between managers and subordinates. The purpose of the study is to broaden organizational communication research by examining how employees use story-telling to make sense of their work relationships. The study contains two parts: a 7-question survey and an interview, which will take approximately 10 minutes.

Your participation to this study is strictly confidential. You will have an alternative names assigned to you during the data analysis and there will be no personally identifying information included.

If you are interested in participating in the study, please email Elizabeth at eaprebles@hotmail.com ASAP. A time that is convenient for you, and confidential, will be set up to administer the survey and then the interview the following week.

Upon completion of the study, you will have an opportunity for feedback of the results by receiving a copy of the final thesis project.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (513) 556-4494, or my advisor, Gail T. Fairhurst at (513) 556-4460.
Consent to Participate

Consent to participate in a research study with Elizabeth Prebles
University of Cincinnati, Department of Communication

Title of the study: Sense-making in narratives and the uniqueness paradox in leader-member exchange.

The purpose of the study is to look at the manager-subordinate work relationship. There are approximately 30 participants in the study. Participation is voluntary and non-participation or withdrawal from the study will not have a negative impact on you.

You will fill out a survey and do an interview. The survey is 7 questions, and the interviews will last approximately 10 minutes. The interview will be recorded in order to preserve your exact wording with no manipulation.

Your participation to this study is strictly confidential. You will have an alternative names assigned to you during the data analysis and there will be no personally identifying information included. The surveys, audiocassettes, and transcriptions of the audiocassettes will be kept secure in the privacy of the researchers locked office, and destroyed after five years. This information will only be accessible by the researcher and the advisor, Dr. Gail T. Fairhurst.

You may be asked to recall unpleasant topics, such as downsizing, within the organization, but you can depart from the study at any time if you feel the need. There are no direct benefits of participating in this study.

If you have any other questions about this study, you may contact me, Elizabeth Prebles at (513) 556-4494, and/or Dr. Gail T. Fairhurst, advisor, at (513) 556-4440. If you have any questions with regard to your rights as a research participant, you may call Dr. Margaret Miller, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, Social and Behavioral Sciences, at (513) 558-5784.

I HAVE READ THIS CONSENT FORM. I VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I WILL RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM FOR MY INFORMATION.

Signature of Participant__________________________________________ Date__________

Signature of Researcher__________________________________________ Date__________
Appendix B

Story Codebook

Story #: 1-59

Scale Questions:

1) Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do? Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?

2) How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?

3) How well does your leader recognize your potential?

4) Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?

6) I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if s/he were not present to do so.

7) How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?

Item Score:

1= Rarely, Not at all, None, Strongly disagree, Extremely Ineffective
2= Occasionally, A little, Small, Disagree, Worse than Average
3= Sometimes, Moderately, Neutral, Average
4= Fairly Often, Mostly, High, Agree, Better than Average
5= Very Often, Fully, Very High, Strongly Agree, Extremely Effective

LMX Score:

Low: 7-19
Medium: 20-26
High: 27-35

Member Letter

Letter: Member’s first leader spoken of
Letter + 2: Member’s second leader spoken of (a low LMX)

Gender (Male or Female)
Constant Comparison Method #1 by Overall LMX Score

LOW LMX

Story #: 5
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: L
Member Letter: R2
Gender: Male
Story: “He [the leader] would look over your shoulder and see what you were doing. Not so much to help, but to kind of ask. The point it was to see where you are at with a project. Just to talk about anything… not even job related. If you have a question, it is almost unpleasant to even ask them [the leader].”

Story #: 6
Scale Question: 6 I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if s/he were not present to do so.
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: (L)
Member Letter: R2
Gender: Male
Story: “He was not concentrating on the big picture. He would look at drawings, note that some parts were okay and others were screwed. He would look at this stuff and miss this stuff.”

Story #: 7
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: (L)
Member Letter: R2
Gender: Male
Story: “He was hiding behind company reviews while making promises. Even though he acted like it was his intent to move me up… that I was held back said something else.”

Story #: 8
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 14 (Low)
Member Letter: S
Gender: Female
Story: “He understood what was needed, he just frankly didn’t care. He would say, ‘Go play in traffic. Do whatever it is to get this job done, just get it done. I don’t care what it takes.’”
Story #: 9
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: (14) L
Member Letter: S
Gender: Female
Story: “It’s what he would not say. You got very little feedback from this man. He went out to lunch at 11, came back at 3, picked up his mail, and was gone at 4.”

Story #: 12
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: L
Member Letter: T2
Gender: Male
Story: “He was a Nazi dictator. He thought I wasn’t going to stick around, so he didn’t care and yelled at me. You shouldn’t yell at your employees. Not a good way to motivate.”

Story #: 13
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 1
LMX Score: 15 (L)
Member Letter: U
Gender: Male
Story: “If you don’t advance at all in certain situations where you know you can do things… you have no added responsibilities, tasks, promotions, you know? Just anything to add to the job you were doing before.”

Story #: 19
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: L (looks M though)
Member Letter: W2
Gender: Male
Story: “He was just a boss and title only. Helps you out when you need it, but he would just pass you along. It’s not that he didn’t have time, it came across as he didn’t want to help. Bad times- he’s never around; good times-he’s always there.”

Story #: 23
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 1
LMX Score: L
Member: K2
Gender: M
Story: “He didn’t know how to treat people.”
WHAT WOULD HE DO?
“He wouldn’t know how to talk to people. I’d be working with tools and he’s grab em out of my hands. So I went and told the owner that if he didn’t get out of my face that I was gonna hurt him.
WHAT TYPES OF THINGS WOULD HE SAY TO YOU?
“He treated everybody like crap. By the way he was. He didn’t know how to treat people.”

Story #: 24
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: low
Member: L2
Gender: M
Story: “He just didn’t care.”
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
“Well, I’ve never had a boss that wasn’t satisfied with my work. This guy I’m thinking of was just an asshole.”
HOW SO?
“Any given opportunity, what he would say, just anything. Any situation that he had to take advantage of being an asshole he took advantage of it. And I am no longer with them anymore because of the fact that he was an asshole.”

Story #: 28
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: low (looks medium though)
Member: M2
Gender: M
Story: “Because you’ve got bad leaders and good leaders. Everybody’s got good qualities and bad qualities. Even a good leader’s got bad qualities.”
“RIGHT, BUT WHAT ABOUT THIS ‘BAD’ LEADER? WHAT DID THIS GUY OR GIRL DO? CAN YOU GIVE ME EXAMPLES ABOUT SOME SPECIFIC INSTANCES?”
“I base this on a guy I worked for at a gas company up here, when I first got here. And, he was a really good leader, the only thing is, is that he kept in the way of making a promise and not keep it. He said one thing and did another.”

Story #: 31
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: L
Member: N2
Gender: M
Story: “Because more often then not, he was unhappy. I was working a night shift, and...Well, for instance, I come in at midnight and a machines is down, 8 o’clock in the morning, he rolls in, and right about then, you’re hitting that wall where you are dead. I’ve got 9 or 10 of the 11 machines up and running in eight hours, which is pretty darn good. It’s ‘Well how come you let that machine down all night?’ That sort of thing. It just, a lot of times it didn’t matter what you were doing it just wasn’t quite good enough. IT DOESN’T SOUND LIKE HE WAS REAL AWARE OF...
What you went through, exactly. And as far as... I mean it just seemed like he was never really happy with what you were doing even if you did do real well.”

Story #: 32
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: Low
Member: N2
Gender: M
Story: “He had done that job and was suddenly promoted over the entire department, over 25 people and forgot what it was like to do the job. And that to me is poor, poor, poor leadership. And I’ve seen that in other areas. In field service, some of the guys have been on the road and then they get off the road and they kind of forget what it’s like out there. I mean it’s not the job, it’s the travel, it’s finding a place to sleep. There were just crazy things. And, and ridiculous schedules, and back to back jobs.”

Story #: 33
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 2 (then said should have put 1)
LMX Score: 13 (L)
Member Letter: O
Gender: Male
Story: “I probably should have put ‘not at all’. One thing, we have a suggestion program here. I tell all my bosses, ‘I come here to make things better’ I figure I’m gonna be here 30 more years, why keep doing the same thing over and over again? I don’t want to keep making the same mistakes over and over again. And the only way that we’re gonna change them is to go ahead and start making improvements now. I know I’ve put the most suggestions in, in the whole company, and they cannot stand it. They’re getting to the point now where they cannot stand when I turn one in. And I keep saying, ‘you know…”
BUT YOU ARE TURNING THEM IN BECAUSE...
“Because they will make the company better. I am seeing something the wrong way or don’t we want this company to be better? If its [he’s thinking], ‘Well he’s [interviewee]
is coming up with all these ideas that I [the leader] should be coming up with.’ Maybe they’re getting that feeling, I don’t know. They’ve all been making money and making things run smoother. I don’t see what the problem is.”

SO SUGGESTIONS THAT YOU ARE PUTTING IN ARE NOT GETTING ANSWERED/REPLIED TO/ADDRESSED BY HIM?

“Well this guy that I’m talking about thinks it’s a joke.”

THE SUGGESTIONS BOX?

“Yeah. He thinks it’s a joke and if he would just listen to me and give me some room to do this, the potential for increased profitability… There are other ones [leaders] that see it, but the one I’m talking about thinks it’s a joke.”

Story #: 34
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: 13 (L)
Member Letter: O
Gender: M

Story: Member talked about building a job from 450 hours to 140 hours

HOW DOES THE LEADER WE’RE TALKING ABOUT HERE RECOGNIZE THAT?

“You know, we’re kind of branching out, I kind of get to work on all these new products. Even the president has said, ‘I’m going to have you build this.’ I’ve seen other people around me kinda looking at me like ‘Let’s get him involved cuz he knows how to do this.’ But the ones working directly over me seems like I just need to stand there and say ‘Hello! Do you see what I’m doin here, what I’m trying to do. I just need your support.’ I’m getting some support from another guy. You know, he’s working on taking care of some issues that I brought up, which if I had brought this to the other guy he would have probably said, ‘Quit complaining.’”

Story #: 35
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: 13 (L)
Member Letter: O
Gender: M

Story: “Well I know when this guy came aboard, we had a little discussion and they said ‘we’re gonna put this man in charge, and things are gonna be different now. You don’t have to complain to upper management.’ I said ‘Ok. We’ll see how that works.’ I’m kinda waitin to see how that’s gonna work out. When a guy takes a suggestion out of your hand and says, ‘this is stupid. You writing up these suggestions is stupid.’ I say ‘Excuse me. This is going to save 10, 20, 30 hours on each machine, it’s gonna take an hour to implement. I don’t understand where you’re coming from.’ You know, when somebody tells you something like that, it’s mind-boggling.”
Story #: 37
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: L
Member Letter: P2
Gender: M
Story: “I think that boils down to communication. There was no communication. Seemed like a poor time [to talk] and there was no right time. More or less…”
HOW COULD YOU TELL?
Well, it was never ‘Good job’ it was always, ‘why couldn’t you do more?’ Always seemed to find faults, never seemed to find anything that was good.

Story #: 38
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: L
Member Letter: P2
Gender: M
Story: “He didn’t understand my job problems at all.
HOW DID YOU KNOW? HOW COULD YOU TELL?
“Well, when I was on the road when I was in service, so this was here, um, you would call in ‘I need this part, this part is defective, stuff like that.’ [L would say] ‘Can’t you go to Home Depot, or go to Lowes and find out.’ [Member would say] ‘No, I’ve already done that.’ Indecipherable It seems like at the end of the day when the quittin buzzer goes off that, that’s it. You know, they don’t care about what’s outside of their normal days work.”

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<th>Item (LMX)</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4 (L)</td>
<td>Leader around, but for wrong reasons</td>
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<td>Leader’s a “Nazi”</td>
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<td>3 (L)</td>
<td>Leader’s an “Asshole” (wants to be mean)</td>
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<td>3 (L)</td>
<td>Can’t make Leader happy</td>
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<td>2 (L)</td>
<td>Leader always finds faults, bad communication</td>
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<td>3 (L)</td>
<td>L just didn’t care</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>2 (L)</td>
<td>L just wouldn’t help, did nothing extra</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>2 (L)</td>
<td>L has no empathy</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2 (L)</td>
<td>No FB from L, L wasn’t around</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>2 (1) (L)</td>
<td>M not on same page with L, everything’s a “joke”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1 (L)</td>
<td>M never advanced in job</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2 (L)</td>
<td>L doesn’t acknowledge what M does</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 (L)</td>
<td>L wasn’t focused enough</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2 (L)</td>
<td>L only gave - reinforcement, M doesn’t und. L</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1 (L)</td>
<td>M wanted to hurt L b/c L didn’t know how to treat</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3 (L) (Ik M)</td>
<td>L didn’t keep promises</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3 (L)</td>
<td>L didn’t want to go extra mile</td>
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MEDIUM LMX

Story #: 1
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do? Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: 21 (medium)
Member Letter: R1
Gender: Male
Story: “Say a leader’s in charge of 6 of us, but the leader is busy doing there own thing. That tends to take away from any one on one time.”

Story #: 2
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: 21 (M)
Member Letter: R1
Gender: Male
Story: “They understand the company and how the company works. They understand some of the challenges for that position. Do they know what my personal job, problems and needs are? Am I saying one thing and really needing something else? I might gripe I’m not getting information from this person over here to get this job done, and they [the leader] may hear it as ‘ok’. This is something that happens all the time. All I can do is say, ‘This is how it is,’ without looking at it and saying, ‘Okay this is how we can make it work.’”

Story #: 3
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: 21 (M)
Member Letter: R1
Gender: Male
Story: “They’re [the leader] really busy. They don’t have time to take you out one on one. Do they really look over your shoulder? Do they kind of walk in your shoes to understand what you’re doing and see how effective you are?”

Story #: 4
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 21 (M)
Member Letter: R1
Gender: Male
Story: Reading the question aloud, the M recognizes that he is about to contradict himself: “Ok, I’m about to contradict what I just said, but, he [the leader] was approachable, he made good attempts to be understood. He made sure the task was well defined. But as far as stepping out of his realm and actually get to know how you perform that task, that’s where it’s a different story.”

Story #: 14
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 25 (M)
Member Letter: V
Gender: Male
Story: “Usually outside of it [the yearly review], if you have concerns and you bring it up, they [the leader] are willing to sit down with you. If you don’t bring it up, you usually don’t hear anything, and it’s, you know, business as usual.”

Story #: 15
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 25 (M)
Member Letter: V
Gender: Male
Story: “From my experience here, sometimes when there is difference of opinion, it isn’t necessarily a sit down and try to look it from both ways and see what will work the best [thing]. Sometimes it’s just put upon they’re [the leader’s] experience. They’re not looking at the situations on both sides. They’re missing something there.”

Story #: 16
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 25 (M)
Member Letter: V
Gender: Male
Story: “I had a situation where people weren’t backing up what they said… said verbally over a time period and it was forgotten. And if you couldn’t prove it [what they said] with paperwork, what can you do there? They’re higher up in rank than you. When you’re in situations like that it doesn’t seem to be good. But in the same regard, there are situations where they do stick up for you regardless of whether you can show proof or not. I’ve had it both ways.”
Story #: 20
Scale Question: 6 I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if s/he were not present to do so.
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: Medium 24
Member: I
Gender: Male
Story: “Oh, like if we’ve burnt jobs out before prints have come out.”
“WHAT DOES ‘BURNT JOBS’ MEAN?”
“Oh, laser them out, cut the jobs using the job material. Somethin’ may have been wrong with it, but, you know, you’re getting the job out on the floor to get the guys work out there and that’s, you know, justified. You know, you gotta have them doin’ somethin’, you can’t have them standin around.”
“I’M SORRY, LET ME SEE IF I AM GETTING THIS CLEARLY: YOU ARE JUSTIFYING HIS DECISION TO HAVE PEOPLE WORKING BECAUSE YOU AGREE THAT PEOPLE NEED TO BE WORKING?”
“Well, he’ll, um, we’ve burnt jobs out before that there has actually been approval from a customer to get them to hit the floor to have work, and that’s justified, in my thinking. And [my leader] does that decision too. He might let the job go even if it don’t have approval from the company.”

Story #: 22
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 24 medium
Member: K1
Gender: M
Story: “He doesn’t give me any indication of how I’m doing.”
“LIKE WHAT TYPES OF INDICATIONS?”
“Well, he always calls me knucklehead [laugh], but he never turns around and tells me ‘good job’… [indecipherable] except once a year.”
IS THAT ONCE A YEAR A YEARLY REVIEW?
“Yes.”

Story #: 25
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 23 medium
Member: M
Gender: M
Story: “We got new machines coming out all the time. So, a lot of times he’s not experienced with it neither.”

Story #: 26
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 23 medium
Member: M
Gender: M
Story: “Well, they understand your potential, but they don’t show it. See what I’m saying?”
WHAT INDICATES TO YOU THAT THEY KNOW YOUR POTENTIAL BUT DON’T SHOW IT?
“Pay. Pay. Pay. Real quick, pay. Like when I first got hired on, I just got out of the service and I come in here and they said they hired you because of your knowledge and your skill, but that’s not true. That’s not true at all. I had my experience when I got in here, but it took them a while to give me my Leadman, although I was doing a Leadman job, they didn’t give me my ‘Leadman’ title for a while. It was not very fair.”

Story #: 27
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 23 (M)
Member: M
Gender: M
Story: “I answered moderate because I don’t think my leader is quite, you know what I mean, up to snuff on what he’s trying to get me to do.”
SO HE’S NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE JOB, OR…?
“Job or… A good example is a job. You know, when they come out there and they try and tell ya ‘We need to do this, we need to do that,’ yet you can tell the way that they’re explaining it to you, they really aren’t for sure themselves. Or, there might be changes they aren’t aware of. We have a lot of that here.”

Story #: 29
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 26 (more med interview)
Member: N1
Gender: M
Story: “Of all the supervisors I think that [my leader] is probably the most knowledgeable about what we do.”
“WHY”
“Because he took the time to self teach. He seems to be in touch with what the job actually entails.”
IS HE AN ELECTRICIAN THEN?
“Um, no.”
SO WHEN YOU SAY THAT HE TOOK THE TIME TO LEARN, YOU MEAN BECAUSE IT IS NOT NECESSARILY HIS TRADE?
“And that happens a lot in this type of industry. I mean this is industry wide. A lot of times you’ll have a guy that’s a supervisor and he has management training and no skills training for those particular jobs. It’s not always the case, but a lot of times. And that makes a big difference. I mean, if they don’t know how to do the job, how can they manage properly?”

Story #: 30
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 26 (more medium interview)
Member: N
Gender: M
Story: “Well there’s definitely some give and take here. There are obviously times that I am disappointed with how he is.”
WHAT ARE THOSE TIMES?
“Well, sometimes, he’ll play favorites a little bit. Certain guys get the real big machines, or, shoot for a long time I was cleaning up bits and problems that other guys got problems with. Some of it may have been that I was good at doing that stuff, but I kinda get the impression that it’s you know ‘his guys’. For instance, a lot of the guys have dozens and dozens of machines. I went, well I’ve been in the shop a couple years now, and I’ve only had 5 or 6 machines. And it’s like, you know, I let it go and then had to complain occasionally and say, ‘Hey what’s the deal here?’

Story # 39
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 22 (M)
Member Letter: B
Gender: M
Story: “Sometimes when I come in my supervisor may not check with me. He may not know what I’m doing half the time. He may not know I’m missing. If I’m here, he knows I’m doing my job….or what I’m supposed to be doing.”

Story # 40
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 22 (M)
Member Letter: B
Gender: M
Story: “His experience in field is minimum. He has a mechanical background and he’s the supervisor it’s hard for him to answer my questions.”Story # 41

Story #41
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 22 (M)
Member Letter: B
Gender: M
Story: “I believe he can do more for us.”
“CAN YOU GIVE ME A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE WHERE YOU HAD WISHED HE HAD DONE MORE.”
“There’s a problem where we fill out forms to help with the flow of the job and the cost suggestions forms. I put suggestions in and don’t get answers.”

Story # 42
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 2
LMX Score: 22 (M)
Member Letter: B
Gender: M
Story: “That’s just to do with his experience versus my experience. I can’t turn toward him for advice.”
“What kind of advice?”
“Any kind of technical advice.”

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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 (M)</td>
<td>L is busy, no one-on-one time</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3 (M)</td>
<td>L doesn’t check in with M</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>3 (M)</td>
<td>L has little experience</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>4 (M)</td>
<td>L has little experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (M)</td>
<td>L doesn’t understand M and M’s personal job</td>
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<td>4 (M)</td>
<td>L has little experience</td>
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<td>M only gets FB in yearly review</td>
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<td>2 (M)</td>
<td>L is busy, doesn’t know M’s personal job</td>
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<td>M only gets FB in yearly review</td>
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<td>3 (M)</td>
<td>L doesn’t show he knows M’s potential (pay, title)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3 (M)</td>
<td>No co-construction of problem-solving</td>
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<td>3 (M)</td>
<td>L doesn’t know job/unsure of job</td>
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<td>M doesn’t get answers from L</td>
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<td>M backs L up</td>
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<td>L didn’t back up his word</td>
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<td>2 (M)</td>
<td>L lack of experience, M can’t go to L for advice</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4 (M)</td>
<td>L plays favorites, M has no added responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 (M)</td>
<td>L doesn’t try to identify with M</td>
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M has issues with L’s experience/background (42, 40, 29, 25, 27)
• L doesn’t understand M/ there’s no co-constructed meaning (2, 4, 3, 15)- L doesn’t understand M’s potential (26)

HIGH LMX

Story #: 10
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 5
LMX Score: 29 (H)
Member Letter: T1
Gender: Male
Story: “I took him out there in the shop. I suggested, well, I gave him suggestions, and we kind of came together, to um, find an answer to the problem.”

Story #: 11
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 5
LMX Score: 29 (H)
Member Letter: T1
Gender: Male
Story: “We work really well together as a team. We were brainstorming certain ideas on how to fix a certain problem. We work well together. He knows where he’s coming from. I know where he’s coming from.”
ME: “HOW DO YOU KNOW? ANY EXAMPLES?”
“That’s actually a good question. I guess it’s his personality.”

Story #: 17
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 5
LMX Score: 31 (H)
Member Letter: W1
Gender: Male
Story: “He and I talk on a daily or hourly basis. And it’s more, I think, we’re constantly working so well together. It’s so easy. It’s just natural. Part of our daily ongoing is just conversation right between us. There’s a lot of communication. It makes it so easy.”

Story #: 18
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 5
LMX Score: 31 (H)
Member Letter: W1
Gender: Male
Story: “More or less, we’ve worked together, we’ve become better friends. A friendship developed from working together as opposed to the opposite way around.”

Story #: 21
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: med-high 26
Member: J
Gender: Male
Story: “It’s easy to work with each other. I mean, I could go to him with any kind of problem. I don’t have to worry about him being right all the time. He’s easy to work with, um… We’ve had situations from other people that you do it his way or no may; and he’ll [my leader] will work with ya. His way, my way, and then we’ll decide together which is the right way.”

Story #: 36
Scale Question: 7
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 26 (H)
Member Letter: P
Gender: M
Story: “When I’ve needed days off, I asked him and he gave them to me. I haven’t been bumping heads with him at all. I’ve been here 9 years and haven’t been written up yet. But um, I have a good relationship with everybody I work with, I’m pretty easy going.”

Story #: 43
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 27 (H)
Member Letter: C
Gender: M
Story: “Well, I’ve worked here 23 years, so I kind of know my supervisor and I guess that’s about it. And by the kind of work I’ve been given.”
“WHEN YOU SAY BY THE KIND OF WORK YOU ARE GIVEN WHAT DO YOU MEAN?”
“Responsibility. I know where I can fit in as far as work. Some people get certain thing, certain jobs.”

Story #: 44
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 27 (H)
Member Letter: D
Gender: M
Story: “Yeah because he has always taken up for me. Um, I have a problem with his leader. He’s [direct leader] like a mediator, he’s always trying to explain why I do things the way I do them. I think he even has a problem with his leader.”
“CAN YOU EXPLAIN THAT?”
“Well he’s constantly affirming that I make the best choices. And the leader above him seems to be suspicious of everybody. It’s not a fun environment to work in.”
HOW DOES YOUR DIRECT LEADER HELP ALLEVIATE THAT TENSION?
WHAT KIND OF THINGS WILL HE DO?”
“I’ll give an example from this morning. We have job cards we fill out. We write down our job numbers, how much time we spend on a job. I’m in a different position than most people in the shop. I run a small area over here and I have to deal with more than guys out there. And I’m where the trucks come in and help unload parts so I have my hand in a lot more things. So my card has a bunch of different numbers on it. My time is more spread out. My leader’s leader saw the numbers this morning and kind of freaked out, ‘How can he have different numbers on there? He can’t be efficient at so many different things.’ And he accused me not actually doing all of those things, of making my other people do them and I don’t do anything except go around and watch other people do things. So my leader goes to bat for me.”

Story # 45
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 27 (H)
Member Letter: D
Gender: M
Story: “I say high and the reason I don’t say very high is because he doesn’t have the time to go over in my area and sit and watch me all day to realize what I’m doing. But I say high because a few years back we were looking for another foreman and he picked me out of everybody in the shop to be a foreman. So that tells me the answer to that.”

Story # 46
Scale Question: 6 I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if s/he were not present to do so.
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 27 (H)
Member Letter: D
Gender: M
Story: “It’s mostly been on my peer level or lower. I haven’t had the opportunity to defend him to anyone higher than him, if I did I would. It’s because the other people who are saying something about him don’t know what his job entails. I just always back him up and tell them ‘He’s the best guy on that side of the office doors when it comes to his job.’ As I said before, I think he would easily tell the shop of his leader and excel.”
Story # 47
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 27 (H)
Member Letter: D
Gender: M
Story: “Well, this might say it all ‘If I were to start my own business, I would employ him before anybody else. And I would think he would do the same for me.”
“WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?”
“Well because of the ideas that we have—to save time and money. Some people are not here to fix things, they’re just here to ride the boat, get a paycheck end there’s no care involved.”

Story # 48
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 3
LMX Score: 27 (H)
Member Letter: E
Gender: M
Story: “I guess because he’s not an electrician. He knows a little but not a lot. And I think by expressing to him. He usually does what he can but not really knowing the trade.”

Story # 49
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 5
LMX Score: 27 (H)
Member Letter: E
Gender: M
Story: “In the back we have been busy and we got a bunch of new guys and he gave them all to me. Plus 10 other jobs to see if I could handle it. I think he realized I can handle it.”

Story # 50
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 30 (H)
Member Letter: F
Gender: M
Story: “I am a leadman. I’ve got guys working underneath me and I have to know my job for them to know their job. If I got any questions or anything my supervisor is right there behind me to solve the problem.”
“IS THERE ANY ASSISTANCE THAT COMES TO MIND YOU CAN THINK OF HE JUST DID THAT?”
“If I’m doing a job and can’t find the part I go to him.”

Story # 51
Scale Question: 3 How well does your leader recognize your potential?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 30 (H)
Member Letter: F
Gender: M
Story: “When it comes time for my year review he rates me high because he knows I know my job.”
“IS THERE ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF THE YEAR REVIEW?”
“He knows I have the potentials to build the job.”
“WHAT DO YOU MEAN BUILD A JOB?”
“Not ask questions. Not ask him questions. He knows I can build a job on my own if all the information in there.”

Story # 55
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 30 (H)
Member Letter: F
Gender: M
Story: “If I call for and cry for an answer and I can’t get a hold of that guy, and he’ll go and see where that guy is and get the answer. He’ll run down my parts and information when I need it.”

Story # 56
Scale Question: 7 How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 30 (H)
Member Letter: F
Gender: M
Story: “We have get-togethers like card parties and stuff like that. At the end of the year we have company picnics and stuff like that and we all hang out”.

Story # 57
Scale Question: 1 Do you know where you stand with your leader...do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do?
Item Score: 5
LMX Score: 28 (H)
Member Letter: H
Gender: F
Story: “He always, you know tells me when I am doing a good job like for instance he was away for a couple of weeks because his uncle had cancer so he was gone for like a month or so. I was running the back all by myself he was consistently back there saying anything ‘You need anything’ or ‘You are doing a good job.’ It makes you feel good when someone says stuff like that. I think he understands.”

Story # 58
Scale Question: 2 How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 28 (H)
Member Letter: H
Gender: F
Story: “Yea, because he experiences it himself. He knows what we do, how we do the business.”
“WHEN YOU SAY HE EXPERIENCES IT HIMSELF, WAS HE IN THE POSITION YOU ARE IN?”
“Exactly, receiving like I said we were shorthanded. Then to when he first became my supervisor he had to learn how to do these things. You know receive things so he got it firsthand.”

Story # 59
Scale Question: 4 Regardless of how much formal authority s/he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?
Item Score: 4
LMX Score: 28 (H)
Member Letter: H
Gender: F
Story: “I think he would help us in any way possible.”
“IS THERE A SPECIFIC INSTANCE YOU CAN TELL ME ABOUT?”
“Yea like right now, we are so shorthanded. We went from eight people in the stock room to two. So he is right there trying to get some good help. So he is trying to push and get us to help. So that so much pressure would not be on us.”
“HOW DOES HE HELP ALLEVIATE SOME OF THAT PRESSURE?”
“Just be hands on. I might start receiving stuff and a truck might pull up. My cell phone might ring and it’s [Name] can you bring me such and such. And it’s I’ll go run this to them, you can take care of such and such. And it helped me out a whole lot.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Item (LMX)</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5 (H)</td>
<td>L and M have constant communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L helps M/ is there for M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L and M worked together long, L is there for M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>5 (H)</td>
<td>L tells M “good job,” L is there for M</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L “takes up for” M</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3 (H)</td>
<td>L doesn’t know trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L has experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L delegates responsibility to M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5 (H)</td>
<td>L delegates responsibility to M</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L recognizes M’s potential, delegates responsibility</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L helps M out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>Co-construction to answer problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>Co-construction/ work together</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L helps M out</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>M defends L</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>Hang out outside of work</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>L helps M out (days off work)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 (H)</td>
<td>Teamwork, M likes L’s personality</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5 (H)</td>
<td>Have become friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4 (H)</td>
<td>Work together, share similar ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- L helps M/ M turns to L for help (59, 55, 44, 36, 50, 57)
- L recognizes M’s potential (knows M can do it) (51, 43, 49, 45)
References


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Larson (Eds.), *Leadership: The cutting edge* (pp. 189-207). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.


