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THE PERFORMANCE OF LEADERSHIP: ALL THE SCHOOL'S A STAGE AND THE

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ARE MERELY PLAYERS

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The College of Graduate and Professional Studies

Department of Department of Educational Leadership

Indiana State University

Terre Haute, Indiana

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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May 2015

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Keywords: Principal, Performing, Leadership, Acting, Improvisation, Charisma

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify and better understand the performance qualities that are prevalent in successful principals. Specifically, acting and leadership tools previously identified and compared by Dunklee (2000) were used to gain a better understanding of the interview process utilized to hire K-12 principals in school districts with more than 10,000 students in the state of Indiana.

Arguably, the roles of the principal are much like those of an actor who must think on his or her feet in multiple situations. It is hoped that this study contributes new knowledge to assist in the selection process of principals and help in developing an interview framework to use in identifying and hiring the most effective principals by acknowledging and capitalizing on performance qualities.

The following research questions framed the interviews with practicing hiring managers:

1. In what ways does acting like an effective school principal, as understood through performance qualities, result in being an effective principal?

2. What performance qualities do hiring managers perceive their successful principals utilize?

A case study methodology was selected to take a more in depth look into the hiring process in five large urban school systems in Indiana. A variety of demographic data were collected about the individual school systems, with a key focus on the interview process and desirable attributes for hiring principals.

The major themes and subthemes were also identified. Primary themes include the following: (a) Hiring protocols are not focused on performance qualities, (b) Performance qualities were predetermined to inform the interview process, and, (c) Districts supported professional development for both aspiring and practicing principals.

The primary theme of hiring protocols included the subthemes of (a) The use of a cattle-call approach (i.e., mass interviewing) in the interview process are consistent in all districts included in the study, (b) The practice of hiring internal candidates is a prevalent practice, and (c) Current interview rubrics and questions to identify effective principals.

The primary theme of nine performance qualities were maintained as subthemes in this category and later reduced in number. The primary theme of training for aspiring and practicing principals led to the subthemes of (a) Internal and (b) External use of those professional development practices.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Curtis and Connie Winkle. Being born into a family of educators, it was not surprising that I would stay with the family business. The expectation of always learning more and reaching higher was instilled at a very young age. My parents set high expectations for me not by what they said, but by who they were. They made me want to be the best person I could be. I continue striving to reach that goal. I only wish I could hear my mother tell me she was proud of me one more time. This is exactly what she would have said with a touch of my arm and a smile on her face. She was a thespian in her own right.

It was easy to put off the start to my dissertation; there was always a reason not to start. As each year passed, the thought still swirled in my mind that there was something left undone. I would like to say I did it for myself, but that is only a half-truth. There is nothing accomplished in this world without the love and support and of those around us.

To Pat Sheehan who stood by me throughout the process of this dissertation and tolerated my frustrations, as I sometimes felt that a terminal degree felt more like a terminal illness. His encouragement, patience, and love allowed me to keep moving forward.

To my sons, Brad and Michael Fenton, who have grown into exceptional young men before my eyes and of whom I am very proud. I will be sure to smile and touch them on the arm the next time I see them and tell them so. I will continue to push them to be their best in all they do, since that is the most important role I play.

And to my youngest brother, Carter Winkle, who recently went through his own dissertation journey and inspired me to continue through each new phase of my own. His life story of performance and education held the underlying anecdotes that lead me to view educational leadership through the eyes of a performer.

A special thanks goes to Danny Tanoos, the superintendent of the Vigo County School Corporation. It is through his encouragement and support that I was able to stay committed to the task of completing this study, and to the school board for their support. My fellow doctoral students from the Silver Cohort will be remembered fondly. You have made this process worth it all. I am thankful for the many friendships that developed as we worked cooperatively toward our common goals. You are an amazing group of educators who have made me look at Wednesdays with a whole new affection, in particular, Tom, Stacy, Suzanne, Janel, and Susan whose friendly competition kept me motivated. You still won, Tom. For those who put up with me on a daily basis, your patience has not gone unnoticed. I will soon get back to normal for all our sakes.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research continues to evidence that the single most influential person in a school is the building principal (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Roeschlein, 2002; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Whitaker, 2003). Principals set the stage for the school to either flourish or fail. It is the principal's leadership that determines the school's success (National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 2001). "Thirty-five years of research indicates that school leadership has a substantial effect on student achievement and provides guidance for experienced and aspiring administrators alike" (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 12).

At the start of each new school year across the country, decisions are made in selecting principal candidates to lead schools. The challenge comes in selecting the best candidate for the assignment. Casting the role of principal is much like filling a role in a play or movie. It takes the right amount of talent, experience, and charisma to fit the bill. As the hiring agent, it is important to hire the right people by working more like a talent scout or casting director in filling a principal's role. They should be selected for talent as well as the skills and knowledge they may hold (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). One might add the addition of performance qualities into the mix in an effort to move beyond simply knowledge and skill.

So, what is it that should be considered in a principal casting call? Sergiovanni (2009) wrote of the roles and images of leadership that are required of an effective principal: "strategic

problem solver, cultural leader, barterer, and initiator" (p. 2). In playing the part of principal, it is the heart, head, and hand that craft leadership. As the curtain opens for a new principal, is it more important to find a *leading man or leading woman* or is a *character actor* needed? Is the principal the star of the show or will he or she serve as the director? Perhaps it is the *supporting actors* that are most important in making the *show*.

School principals must be qualified to teach in the schools that they lead (Sahlberg, 2010). No longer are only managerial skills required. Simply stated, a principal must be able to walk the talk. Gladwell (2005) contended that instincts should be trusted as much or more than the data in making decisions. Can the blink of an eye that Gladwell described really cause one to make the right decisions in identifying the star principals? Are the candidates who played the part in the interview destined to be the best principals? Are those who audition principals missing out on quality school leaders because their instincts have failed them? Perhaps a potentially strong principal candidate did not act the part during the interview process, leading to non-consideration for the principal role. What is the balance between knowledge and charisma? In 2005, Marzano et al. stated, "35 years of research indicates that school leadership has a substantial effect on student achievement and provides guidance for experienced and aspiring administrators alike" (p. 12). The problem exists in finding the right leader to perform in the right role on the right stage. It may mean that situational leadership (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2001) comes into play by selecting the best principal candidates to assume the role of principal.

Statement of the Problem

If one is involved in the critical responsibility of hiring quality school leaders, it is imperative to have a method in that decision-making process that identifies important leadership

attributes. More often than not, it is the principal who is either the hero or the villain on the

school stage. The development of a conceptual framework to identify performance

characteristics found in successful principals is a desired outcome of this study. By identifying

key needs of a school, a framework of performance qualities related to acting may help

determine what skill set, or set of talents a leader must have to be successful. Not every school

has the same needs, just as every actor cannot portray a role with the same intensity or

believability. This may also help ascertain whether playing the part can lead to being right for

the part. Does acting transform into being?

A representative list of professional actors that developed into leaders has intrigued my

interest in performance qualities and overall leadership potential. Names like Ronald Reagan,

Shirley Temple Black, Robert Redford, Paul Newman, Lawrence Olivier, and Clint Eastwood

come to mind. Each started as an actor who then rose to positions worthy of applause. Some

rose to political leadership roles and others rose to the directing ranks within their own

profession. In comparison, then, is teaching a rehearsal for the principalship or is it the audition?

School principals coming up through the teaching ranks bring with them important

knowledge from the classroom, the ins and outs of teacher interactions, school protocols, and

history of education (Dunklee, 2000). With recent changes in principal licensure in the state of

Indiana, it is evident there are those who believe non-teachers can be as effective as those who

come from the teaching field. It is yet to be determined if the trend of alternate licensure for

teachers and principals will cause student improvement.

This study may help to provide a conceptual framework for recognizing effective leaders

and, hence, effective principals. The relationship between the theatrics or performance qualities

of the principal role and the job of the principal were investigated. Current structures for hiring were examined and a relationship to the performance qualities of the candidate was explored.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to identify and better understand the performance qualities that are prevalent in successful principals through a deeper understanding of the principal interview process. Specifically, the 14 performance and leadership attributes identified and compared by Dunklee (2000) served as the protocol to gain a better understanding of the interview process utilized to hire K-12 principals in school districts with more than 10,000 students in the state of Indiana.

Arguably, the role of the principal is much like that of an actor who must think on his or her feet in multiple situations. Can these performance (i.e., acting) qualities be identified in an interview? It is hoped that this study contributes new knowledge to assist in the selection process of principals and helps in developing a framework to use in identifying and hiring the most effective principals by acknowledging and capitalizing on performance qualities.

Research Questions

1. In what ways does acting like an effective school principal, as understood through performance qualities, result in being an effective principal?

2. What performance qualities do hiring managers perceive their successful principals utilize?

Definition of Terms

Performance qualities are the acting qualities described as role assumption using specific tools as described by Dunklee (2000). Actors' tools are described as "preparation of self, limbering and aligning, gesture, voice, diction, rhythm, speech, working with others,

performance environment, flow of action, emotion, text analysis" (Dunklee, 2000, p.105), imagery and figurative language, and attitude. The use of these tools is seen as situational in nature.

Although a limited definition of a principal may not be shared universally—for the purpose of this study, **effective** was defined as a set of coordinated actions described by Marzano et al. (2005) as

1. Developing a strong leadership team.

2. Distributing some responsibilities throughout the leadership team

3. Selecting the right work.

4. Identifying the order or magnitude implied by the selected work.

5. Matching the management style to the order of the magnitude of the change. (p. 98)

Hiring managers are those people who are in the direct supervisory role of principals who take a lead role in the hiring and evaluation of principals.

Performance qualities, for the purpose of this study, are those attributes described as acting traits by Dunklee (2000).

School principal is described as the administrative leader at a K-12 school.

Limitations

Since a qualitative case study was used for this research, mistakes could have been made and personal bias may have interfered (Merriam, 1998). All observations and analysis of data were filtered through my own worldview and, therefore, did not contain the protocols and design set forth within quantitative design. There may have been bias of those in positions that hire principals towards those principals in which they were responsible for hiring.

Delimitations

Interviews were limited to participants working in the state of Indiana who are in the position to hire managers in school districts with student enrollments of 10,000 or larger. The time frame for collecting data was limited to the 2014-15 school year. Additionally, this study was limited to new administrators practicing in their first through fifth years.

Summary and Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 included an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem, the purpose, research questions, definition of terms, and description of inquiry, limitations, and delimitations. Chapter 2 includes a literature review of related materials and is subdivided into an introduction, traditional conceptions of successful leadership, management, effective leadership, hiring school leaders, evaluation, and a summary section. Chapter 3 presents information about the study design, the data sources, and the qualitative case study methodology. Chapter 4 presents findings to answer each of the research questions in Chapter 1. Chapter 5 is a summary of the findings, conclusions, a discussion of implications of the findings, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, a literature review explores the areas of traditional leadership, management, effective leadership, and hiring managers. A discussion of important theatrical performance qualities or acting traits that mirror the skills needed to be an effective leader follows. With the current demands and pressure to perform, principals are required not only to have their students show sound academic performance on high-stakes testing but they are required to do it all with a smile and the confidence of a masterful performer. The skill set needed to portray the role of a leader has become even more important. Gone are the days of automatic trust and reverence for a school leader. It is not acceptable to be the leader sitting behind a closed door managing the school and presumably having all the answers. The school must be managed and led. It is now that school leaders must garner talents of communication and nonverbal skills that say much more than words.

> A good actor knows that when it comes to delivering a message, 7 percent of it is the content of the message itself, 38 percent is your voice tone, and 55 percent is about the visual presentation, which includes a self-confident persona. So how you sound, look, and carry yourself makes up 93 percent of what goes into being an effective communicator—a critical component to leadership success. (Froschheiser, 2013, p. 1)

Effective leaders know and practice these important messaging strategies as well. Words, tone, gestures, postures, and facial expressions are used in sending any message (Berne, 1964).

My research interests led me to examine the qualities of a principal that few have addressed in principal preparation programs. With the fast paced, instant gratification age we live in, now more than ever, the principal must be front and center capturing the attention of students, teachers, and parents. The message is too easily lost to a ringing cell phone, Siri request, or Google search. An effective principal must grasp and keep the attention of others in order to communicate the message while gaining the confidence of the stakeholders. It is impossible to lead if no one is following, and in order to get followers, the message must be wrapped in a package of glitz, solemnness, or intrigue. "It is with the spectator, in brief, that theatrical communication begins and ends" (Elam, 2002, p. 86).

Traditional Conceptions of Successful Leadership

Leadership can mean numerous things to many people. In fact, the literature is rich with different paradigms of leadership. Servant leadership is one such example where practices enrich lives of individuals and the organization (Greenleaf, 1977). Situational leadership is also a prevalent leadership perspective in which leaders give consideration to people while orientating tasks based upon maturity level (Hersey et al., 2001). In the past few years, much attention has been given to transformational leadership when leaders change their organization by empowering subordinates to imagine and behave differently (Brower & Balch, 2005). Instructional leadership (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999) is also gaining much popularity in an era of accountability. These many perspectives are bantered about as if there is a competition to discover a new definition of a leader. Leaders that are more task-orientated

dictate the roles for others, give guidance, and establish a more formal communication (McCleaskey, 2014).

Although this study focused in on the leadership of school principals, it was evident that leadership occurs in all walks of life. This study reviewed a variety of traditional theories of leadership and the performance qualities that can alter a leader's effectiveness in the field of education and other professional venues as well.

As a Captain in the U.S. Navy, D. Michael Abrashoff ruled his ship with a military fist. Rank and order were what leadership entailed, but he saw his role differently. "A leader will never accomplish what he or she wants by ordering it done. Real leadership must be done by example, not precept" (Abrashoff, 2012, p. 42). This is a real change from the old "because I said so" approach.

Leadership can be witnessed across a wide array of organizations and applications. "Leadership exists because it must" (Burns, 1978, p. 21). Leadership is a relationship between the leader and those being led that encourages independent relationships (Burns, 1978). It is within those relationships that leaders and followers either connect or not. Blake and Mouton (1985) portrayed the relationships between concerns for people verses the concern for production in their leadership grid. It is this balance in productivity that a skilled leader is able to establish (Blake & Mouton, 1985).

In a study of school improvement in Kennewick School District, it was discovered that in order to make a true difference in the learning opportunities for students, the leadership was the key (Fielding, Kerr, & Rosier, 2007). The focus was to see improvement through a concerted effort in results-centered teaching driven by a charismatic principal rather than wishing it to happen by luck. Leadership does make a difference. "We cannot cross our fingers and hope to

happen upon a great leader. We need to insure that great leaders are selected, groomed, unearthed and discovered so that all students can be mobilized to success" (Fielding et al., 2007, p. 70).

The need for effective and inspiring leadership is currently in great demand. With changes in society and in the workplace, the need for knowledgeable and responsible citizens has put the pressure on schools to repair the ills of society. The expectation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2002) in a global society is not likely to wane (Marzano et al., 2005). In the future, principals will have to know a great deal more about teaching and learning (Fullan, Hill, & Crevola, 2006). The expectation of understanding quality instruction and curriculum help to ensure appropriate content delivery has increased (Leithwood & Seashore-Louis, 2012).

Instructional leadership is not a new concept in the United States. In the middle of the 1900s, the role of the principal began a focus and a framework for instruction rather than that of school manager (Mort & Ross, 1957). School leadership does have an indirect effect on student learning. The influence that principals have on the classroom and school set the stage for real learning to occur through their influence (Hallinger, 2005; Heck & Hallinger, 2010). DuFour and Marzano (2011) stated that the more skilled a principal leader is with significant and positive relationships, the more learning can be expected from students. "In short, our research and that of others validates the conclusion that leading a school requires a complex array of skills" (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 99). Fullan (2014) contended that the role of an instructional leader is to build social capital with teachers working together for improvement of student learning through instruction that is prescriptive to student needs.

Leadership may be more about communication of expectations rather than simply following orders. The art of communication has become important in the role of a principal. As

history has unveiled, Abraham Lincoln emerged as a strong leader with communication skills that represented strong leadership. Lincoln's sense of humor used in stories and anecdotes served him well as a persuasive tool. In the tradition of humorist Mark Twain, he was comfortable talking to heads of state, backwoodsmen, and politicians alike (Phillips, 1992).

If communication were needed for leadership it would follow that good communication skills would influence better leadership. The message is only important if it is received, understood, and appreciated. It then implies that the method in which it is delivered would also have a relationship to effective leadership. "Leadership is about winning followers" (Howard, Dresser, & Dunklee, 2009 p. 91).

In the search for performance in leadership, sources were frequently not found in the educational realm and searches were redirected towards businesses and industries that promoted seminars/workshops that sold performance skills as a way to do business. Egnal (2013), in his article entitled *Acting Lessons for CEOs,* professed "that business leaders are always on stage and that actors uniquely understand how to shine when the curtain comes up and the house lights cast a harsh light on the performers" (p. 3). Egnal also described six factors needed to emulate actors in order to become a more effective leader.

1. You need to get into character.

2. You need to be authentic.

3. You need to learn your script before you step on stage.

4. You need to get nervous.

5. You need to use your full physical and vocal instrument.

6. You need to love it. (pp. 2-3)

Egnal (2013) further contended that following the six acting rules makes for a skillful and effective leader in the business world. Can that same thought process carry over to school leadership as well? If getting into character is Step 1, an appreciative and humble character may fit the bill.

Faw (2011) coined the phrase "improvisational leaders." Improvisational leaders are capable of accepting change quickly as they look for immediate opportunities to seek solutions to problems (Faw, 2011). The five improvisational leadership keys that Faw referred to are as follows:

1. The environment – Improvisational leaders enhance their ability to interpret and adapt to their ever-changing environment.

2. Improvisational planning – Planning and executing a well-defined process when improvising are critical for success.

3. The relationship leaders and followers – Temper you opinions and judgments and unleash your imagination! Consequently, each person must develop the ability to both lead and follow by being in the moment and listening fully.

4. Risk – Improvising organizations overcome risk-taking fear by embracing the tension that exists between the known and unknown. Plan your strategy with your hearts, your minds, and your passion!

5. The common goal – In an improving company, this commitment to one another motivates excellent performance. Everyone must be committed to the success of his or her teammates, both individually and collectively. (pp. 4-5)

Marzano et al. (2005) identified 21 responsibilities of principals and their correlations with student achievement. The responsibility demonstrating the strongest relationship between

leadership and student achievement was that of situational awareness, with a correlation of .33. "Situational Awareness addresses leaders' awareness of the details and the under currents regarding the functioning of the school and their use of this information to address current and potential problems" (Marzano et al., 2005, p 43). This has implications for a close alignment with the skill of improvisation as described by Faw (2011).

Leadership should not be a win or lose proposition. In order for an organization to be healthy, there must be a purpose and a benefit to all involved. "Win/win is based on the paradigm that there is plenty for everybody, that one person's success in not achieved at the expense or exclusion of others" (Covey, 1989, p. 207). Leadership is a way to meet the needs of others and not just those in leadership positions. "We have three innate psychological needs – competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When those needs are satisfied, we're motivated, productive and happy" (Pink, 2009, p. 72). It is when those needs are satisfied that a win/win is possible or all parties involved.

"Rather than developing what they lack, great leaders will magnify their own strengths and simultaneously create teams that do not mimic the leader but provide different and equally important strengths for the organization" (Reeves, 2006, p. 23). Leaders understand and recognize their strengths in the roles they play. They also recognize their limitations and are able to build a supporting cast for the improvement of the school.

Leadership standards have been developed and adopted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. Those policy standards as cited by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in 2008 are intended to promote student success as follows:

1. An educational leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.

2. An educational leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

3. An educational leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

4. An educational leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

5. An educational leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

6. An educational leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts. (p. 15)

Effective leaders are those who understand the balance of expecting and implementing change while recognizing the need for preservation of the culture, values, and norms that are important to embrace. They are able to look at policies and practices and align them with the changes that are imminent. They are also cognizant of the pace of change and the readiness of people within the organization. "Finally, they understand and value people in the organization" (Waters et al., 2003, p. 2).

Management

After years of research and books focused on instructional leaders, principals have been professing their instructional leadership abilities. They have almost been embarrassed to claim to be a school manager if it competes with instructional leadership. Declaring to be a manager made one envision setting calendars, putting out newsletters, and performing as a traffic cop. Current administrators wanted to be more than that. But unless the management tasks are attended to, the instructional leadership rarely happens. Time devoted to managerial tasks creates time for instructional focus. "Leadership is about change—How to justify it, implement it, and maintain it" (Reeves, 2006, p. 158).

Some people use the terms management and leadership interchangeably, yet they involve distinctly different traits and responsibilities. Carroll (2004) noted that managers are involved in the day-to-day operation of an organization. They ensure everything runs smoothly and as required by corporate procedures. Management is critical to success and not easily attained. When done well it is said to be running as a well-oiled machine. Hansel (2007) recognized that with the vast changes that have occurred in the areas of technology and lifestyles, the practice of management has changed very little sine the 1960s.

Instructional leaders must focus not only on leading, but also on managing (Hallinger, 2005). Marzano et.al. (2005) implied the job of principal has become difficult for one person to manage and requires a larger team approach. The process of developing team leaders within the ranks of teachers creates new time demands on our school leaders (DuFour & Marzano, 2011).

In searching for information about management, more often than not, checklists and blueprints emerged as a way of administering and accomplishing tasks. Items that topped the management realm were budgets, school safety, security, duty schedules, and school procedures.

Those are very different than lofty conversations on leadership. One can check off a managerial task, but checking off leadership cannot and will not occur.

Furman and Grasinger (2004) suggested using a checklist as an organizer to check off and date as tasks are completed. This serves as documentation that management was approached in a reasonable and systematic manner (Furman & Grasinger, 2004). Over and over again principals lament the need for more time. It may be a need for better management than time.

A milestone in an educator's professional life if pursuing administrative opportunities is that of his/her first principalship. This leadership opportunity affords students a nurturing and supportive environment. Despite the continuously expanding demands of the principalship, effective time management enables new principals to be successful on the job without jeopardizing personal wellness and family (Ruder, 2008).

Time is of the essence and the use of that time is one of the management skills that allows leadership to develop. Graduate courses in educational administration generally do not cover time management, but it is an essential skill needed as a successful administrator (Ruder, 2008). Making time for parent conferences, bus issues, teacher evaluations and the laundry list of other duties can overwhelm even the most organized principal (Ruder, 2008).

"Traditional management theory is suited to situations of practice that are characterized by linear conditions. However, the usefulness of this theory ends where nonlinear conditions begin" (Sergiovanni, 2009, p. 85). In the role of principal, day-to-day activities become non-linear quite quickly. What starts out as a well-planned series of events can be interrupted by a phone call, lost child, or a fight on the playground. If operating in a traditional management manner without the talent of perspective and flexibility the leadership role cannot be obtained.

"The usefulness of this theory ends when the goal is to bring about extraordinary commitment and performance" (Sergiovanni, 2009, p. 86).

Another area of management is that of school maintenance. It is the responsibility of the building administrator to maintain a safe and orderly school. This is an area in which most outsiders of school administration may not consider part of being an effective principal (Chan, 2000). The day-to-day cleanliness and maintenance speaks to the culture of the school and therefore the effectiveness of the school leader. Instructional leadership does not maintain the building, but it is imperative that management of the building occurs so that instructional leadership can transpire (Chan, 2000). Management is about organization and procedures, a very separate issue from leadership, but both are needed to run an effective school. "Principals can easily find their time eaten up by things that are urgent, but not important. The principal's number-one priority is zeroing in on the highest-priority activities for bringing all students to high levels of achievement" (Marshall, 2008, p. 17).

How does the idea of performance lend itself to the management role? Management may be picking the right people for the right positions at the right time. "It does mean that great managers are aggressive in trying to identify each person's talents and help her to cultivate those talents. They believe that casting is everything" (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 147). Buckingham and Coffman (1999) additionally noted that "whether the excellence is 'celebrated' or anonymous, great managers know that excellence is impossible without talent" (p. 71). It is with that talent that a manager becomes a leader.

The use of experiential data by principals can be traced back to the 1950s where time management and efficiency first came into question. Principals of the 1950s felt pressured to

answer disapprovals of their role with empirical data that supported their actions and those of the teachers that they lead (Beck & Murphy, 1993).

Effective Leader

Does an effective principal emerge when the leader incorporates performance qualities? Maxcy (1991) spoke of the artist/leaders, and compared their talent to that of sculptor/painters. They both produce a creation in which others may value or take pleasure in. Like the artist/leader, the actor/leader may possess another creation for one to take pleasure and value. It is the performance qualities used with skills and talents that create the stage for improvement to occur. In using the performance qualities, a story can be spun to intrigue and motivate others. "The story is our best tool for helping one person understand what it is like to be someone else" (Egan, 2008, p. 54). In understanding others, we are better equipped to lead.

Egnal (2013) noted,

When Shakespeare wrote that *All the world's a stage*, he could have been talking about executives. From town halls to phone calls, every interaction represents a leadership tool. So if you want to be a successful executive, take a lesson from the screen and stage world and act like one. (p. 2)

Linking acting skills and leadership are not as farfetched an idea in the business world. A business and industry CEO of Management Action Programs (MAP), Froschhieser (2013) made an additional connection of leadership and acting:

Like good actors, good leaders become the character of the moment, and their success depends greatly on the purity of their belief. Ironic but true, good acting is one of the strategies good leaders use to communicate with credibility, build trust among their people, and motivate others. (p. 1)

Imagination and performance may have a link to the arts but may link more strongly to leadership. "One continuing problem faced by the Imaginative Education movement was due to the apparent unshakable assumption that anything concerned with the imagination had to be connected to the arts" (Egan, 2008, p. 131). Whether one is a school, business, or community leader, it is clear that one is always on stage and must have and use the skills of an actor to play the part. Imagination in leadership is connected to the arts (Egnal, 2013; Froschheiser, 2013).

In her study, DiSalvo (2008) shared indications that there are common characteristics between educational leadership and acting. "Principals exhibit theatrical acting behaviors in their leadership roles and consciously incorporate theatrical acting behaviors in their communication practices" (DiSalvo, 2008, p. 214). In looking at performance qualities of principals, it is not necessarily the role of the leading man or woman. It is more the role of an improvisational actor, one who must change to meet the leadership style needed in the moment. "Leadership is about change, and change is the only way to realize the perfect school. We know that change is not a matter of charisma, but requires inspiration, perspiration, motivation, and imagination" (Roseborg, McGee, & Burgett, 2007, p. 4). School leadership has become more about change and the manner in which school leaders promote change is under scrutiny.

> People want to work for a boss who is courageous yet calm, tough on the problem and easy on people, and strong yet sensitive. They expect the leader to be a presence, the face of the school, and to have energy, heart, enthusiasm, and a darn good sense of humor. Actions do speak louder than words, so it is more important for the leader to lead by example than to tell people about their leadership style. (Roseborg et al., 2007, p. 27)

Communication and the manner in which information is communicated is a skill that falls into the area of performance. "If a leader has great communication and interpersonal skills, (i.e.,

'people skills'), then the job of leading is much easier" (Brower & Balch, 2005, p. 67). The message of leadership must be loud and clear and principals are seen as the experts in their field. It is no longer acceptable to be the leader in a school and do for your school and not your profession. Communication is essential to an effective leader. Members of the community have an expectation of school leaders to competently express their perspectives on current educational topics (Gullen & Chaffee, 2014).

"Effective leadership is both a science and an art and that good decision making is not necessarily dependent upon the application of dispassionate rational processes" (Davis, 2008, p. 50). The science might be considered what one does and the art being how one does it. Visionary leaders challenge the status quo by being clear in communication and delivery of the message (Reeves, 2006).

"In the past, especially since Rousseau's time, and more especially during the previous century, educational thinkers have focused on cognition or on knowledge separately and then typically inferred a role for others" (Egan, 2008, p. 84). Leadership has developed from mere content knowledge to the messaging of the content. That messaging is hiding in the roles that we play.

"There is a palpable spirit in a school that has a good leader. If can be felt when listening to the morning announcements and seen on the hallway walls. Everything is a celebration, and everyone in the school is happy to be there" (Rigsbee, 2009, p. 2). Not only is it a celebration, it is a performance. The culture and climate are the stage for the performance to occur, and good leadership is equivalent to a good performance.

Balanced leadership (Waters et al., 2003) is a study funded by the Mid-Continent Research for Educational Learning Lab (McREL). In this study, Waters et al. identified 21

leadership responsibilities that have a relationship to student achievement. "A statistically significant correlation was found between principal leadership and student achievement" (Waters et al., 2003, p. 3). They also identified 66 behaviors tied to the leadership responsibilities.

"Not all strong leaders have a positive impact on student achievement. Just as leaders can have a positive impact on achievement, they also can have a marginal, or worse, a negative impact on achievement" (Waters, et al., 2003, p. 5). Once leadership responsibilities and their relationships are understood, one can move from manager to leader and presumably to an effective leader.

In a study by Reitzug and West (2008), four dominant instructional leadership conceptions were identified after working through their data:

1. Relational: relationship building

2. Linear: cause and effect

3. Organic: things as a whole with effects on others

4. Prophetic: high belief system in place.

In conclusion of their work, they noted, "instructional leadership (as true for leadership in general) is not only about skill but also about purpose" (Reitzug & West, 2008, p. 709).

"An effective leader realizes that all members of an institution are equally important with regard to delegated tasks and empowerment opportunities they undertake. . . . some roles are more vital to the success of the institution, but not more important" (Brower & Balch, 2005, p. 78). Just as main characters are more vital to the success of a performance, they are not more important than supporting actors. "There are no small parts, only small actors" (Stanislavski, n.d.).

Each member of a school has a role to play and casting for those parts is the responsibility of the principal. "If you want to turn talent into performance, you have to position each person so that you are paying her to do what she is naturally wired to do. You have to cast her in the right role" (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 148). Not only is it important that the principal is cast in the right role, but the supporting cast must also be cast appropriately. "Everyone has the talent to be exceptional at something. The trick is to find that 'something.' The trick is in the casting" (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 150). Once being cast into the right role, each day become a performance and each performance is critiqued by the situation at hand. "Performance is the execution of that potential under real-life conditions" (Regier & King, 2013, p. 16).

Effective principals become focused on student learning so that each decision is made with the end result being improved instruction and student growth.

> Powerful principals are obsessed with the instructional core of personalizing learning and getting results for each and every student. They make instruction a priority. They deal effectively with distractors; they create a culture of job-embedded learning. They help the school focus on a small number of core priorities, they resolutely pursue while avoiding innovation overload. (Fullan, 2010, p. 14)

The situation or the context of leadership is what drives the decisions of an effective leader. "Adaptive capacity, which includes such critical skills as the ability to understand context and to recognize and seize opportunities, is the essential competence of the leaders" (Bennis & Thomas, 2002, p. 92). Similar to the performance qualities described by Dunklee (2000), Bennis and Thomas (2002) defined leadership competencies as "adaptive capacity, engaging others by creating voice, and integrity" (p. 89). "However gifted, great leaders emerge

only when they can find the proper stage, a forum that allows them to exercise their gifts and skills" (Bennis & Thomas, 2002, p. 123). Spodek (2012) compared actors and leaders by claiming "Actors and leaders share a common element to their craft: part of our jobs is to recognize and managing emotions in ourselves to communicate them and create and inspire emotions in others" (para. 1). Knowing and understanding someone entails a detailed understanding of an employee's talents and those areas lacking in talent (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). "A competency such as calm under fire is a talent–You cannot teach someone to be cool" (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 89). Leadership demands a variety of talents required for a variety of situations. "Effective leadership requires a person to be an effective actor" (Dunklee, 1999). It is time we look at those actor traits that make an effective leader.

"Whether called management, supervision or administration, the underlying processes establish direction and the coordination of results" (Blake & Mouton, 1985, p. 10). It is a shared commitment among those who work together that help define a strong effective leader (Blake & Mouton, 1985).

Hiring School Leaders

Coming from a family of teachers and performers, mostly in the musical field, each family reunion was filled with opportunity to be in the spotlight with a song, skit, or musical performance. Little did I know at the time that I was preparing for the most prestigious role of the principal. I was developing the confidence to stand in front of a group and play a role. In order to be cast into the role of principal, a hiring manager had to see potential in me and recognize my skills, talents, and performance qualities.

In seeking to hire and keep principals in the right roles, the interview process becomes even more critical. Being a good teacher is the first requirement. Teaching is leadership in

itself, so recognizing performance qualities in practicing teachers may the first place to look. It is a special talent that can mesmerize 25 first graders for six hours a day.

Many tools and surveys have been developed to monitor personalities and leadership styles. The Keirsey Temperament Sorter II is one tool available to assess personality differences and how they may influence interactions both in leadership and life (Keirsey & Bates, 1984).

The North Montgomery School District in Indiana has developed a Teacher Quality Inventory used in the hiring process. It places candidates on a rubric for consideration. Groom–your-own or grow-your-own programs focus at hiring internal candidates and training them for leadership roles. Studies on recruitment and retention of quality candidates emerge, but the expectations of school principals continue to change. "There has been a change from focusing on school inputs to student outcomes and an emphasis on standards-based strategies to improve school quality" (McCarthy, 2003, p. 64).

The role of hiring manager is one who serves as the head of the selection team. After making the best selection for a new employee, the hiring manager is also the direct supervisor of the new employee (Heathfield, 2014). The interview process is a time to pose questions about very specific situations and have the candidate answer how they might address those situations. Green (2010) suggested looking at the interviewing and hiring process as dating. It is important to share your strengths and weaknesses so that the hiring manager can see who you really are and whether you are right for the job. It is about having the right fit rather than winning the job (Green, 2010). It is about casting the role of the principal with the one most qualified to play the part.

After hiring a school principal to lead the school, the task of evaluating effectiveness falls to the supervisor. Recently in the state of Indiana, the 2012 Evaluation and Development System

(Indiana Department of Education [IDOE], 2012) principal effectiveness rubric was developed to chart effectiveness. Although school corporations had the flexibility to modify the RISE instrument, they could not stray too far from the core principles on which they were developed. In looking at the indicators, it is easy to tell what qualities of a principal carried the most weight. The rubric focuses on instructional leadership with student outcomes carrying the most weight. There are two components, professional practice and student learning. No indicators address the essential elements of school management in either facilities or budgets. Management is not valued in this assessment instrument. The Indiana Principal Effectiveness Rubric (IDOE, 2012) was developed for four key purposes:

1. To shine a spotlight on great leadership: The rubric is designed to assist schools and districts in their efforts to increase principal effectiveness and ensure the equitable distribution of great leaders across the state.

2. To provide clear expectations for principals: The rubric defines and prioritizes the actions in which effective principals must engage to lead breakthrough gains in student achievement.

3. To help principals and their managers identify areas of growth and development: The rubric provides clear language differentiating levels of performance, so that principals can assess their own performance and identify priority areas for improvement in their practice.

4. To support a fair and transparent evaluation of effectiveness: The rubric provides the foundation for accurately assessing school leadership along four discrete proficiency ratings. (p. 10)

It is apparent that those who developed the Indiana Principal Scoring Rubric view school leadership as only student outcomes. Nothing else seems to matter. Regarding the performance qualities relating to acting, there are no indicators for select attributes such as charisma, confidence, emotiveness, humor, inspiration, drive, gregariousness, theatrics, and casting. Parent communication skills, sensitivity, discipline, financial solvency, or integrity do not appear on the rating scale. However, these indicators do influence effective leadership (Dunklee, 2000; Green, 2010). Research and study findings suggest that there are effective strategies that are not so easily measured as evidenced on the selected tool for evaluation in the state of Indiana.

There is more to school leadership than that which can be measured by student outcomes. "Leadership is about change, and change is the only way to realize the perfect school. We know that change is not a matter of charisma, but requires inspiration, perspiration, motivation, and imagination" (Roseborg et al., 2007, p. 4).

Summary

In this chapter a literature review explored the areas of traditional leadership, management, effective leadership, and the roles of hiring managers. Differences and commonalities were explored between leadership in the business arena and the educational realm. "The concept of leaders *playing roles* as theatrical actors do represents a new look at leadership in fields such as business, law, and politics" (DiSalvo, 2008, p. 58). These performance qualities can be transferred to school leaders that manage, lead, and communicate with others. School leaders understand and recognize the roles they play and the importance of casting the right people in supporting roles.

Parameters of Indiana's current principal evaluation were introduced (IDOE, 2012). Evaluation systems dictate what is measured, but not necessarily what is important.

Discussions of important theatrical or performance traits that mirror the skills required of an effective leader were detailed (Dunklee, 2000). It is clear that leadership is needed in all walks of life, but to be an effective school leader, a balance of management and the art of communication are essential to playing the role of principal.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative case-study design was to identify and better understand the performance qualities that are prevalent in successful principals through a deeper understanding of the principal interview process. Qualitative research as described by Creswell (2009) is a method of giving meaning to a human problem. This process uses specific information gleaned from the interviews and then builds into more general themes. "What is hard to experience is a set of numbers. What is comparatively easy to experience is a set of qualities" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. xi). The researcher makes interpretations of the data gathered. This study aligns well with qualitative research because my interests are more inductive in nature with a focus on situational complexity (Creswell, 2009). Further, a qualitative methodology was best suited for my overarching research questions:

1. In what ways does acting like an effective school principal, as understood through performance qualities, result in being an effective principal?

2. What performance qualities do hiring managers perceive their successful principals utilize?

Acting and leadership tools were identified and compared by Dunklee (2000) and used to guide the interview process of five subjects who were in positions of hiring K-12 principals in school districts with 10,000 or more students in the state of Indiana. A case study methodology

was selected to take a more in-depth look into the hiring process in four large urban school systems in Indiana. A variety of demographic data were collected about the individual school systems, with a key focus on the interview process and desirable attributes for hiring principals. I traveled to the home districts of the hiring managers for interviews.

The role of the principal is much like that of an improvisational actor who must think on his or her feet in multiple situations. It is hoped that this study provides new knowledge about the selection process of principals and help in advancing interview protocols for identifying and hiring the most effective principals by acknowledging and capitalizing on select performance qualities of principals.

For those involved in the critical responsibility of hiring quality school leaders, it is important to have a method in that decision-making process. Not every school has the same needs, just as every actor cannot portray a role with the same intensity or believability. A sound methodology of hiring may also help ascertain whether playing the part can lead to being right for the part.

Is teaching a rehearsal for the principalship or is it the audition? School principals coming up through the teaching ranks bring with them important knowledge from the classroom, the ins and outs of teacher interactions, school protocols, and history of education (Dunklee, 2000). With changes in principal licensure, it is evident there are those who believe aspiring principals coming from a non-teaching background can be as effective as those who come from the teaching field.

This study could help to provide a framework for recognizing effective leaders and hence, effective principals. The relationship between the theatrics or performance qualities of

the principal role and the job of the principal were investigated. Current rubrics for hiring were examined and a relationship to the theatrics of the candidate was explored.

Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Orientation

Conceptual Framework

My conceptual framework that assists in visualizing the school leader is found in Figure 1. It depicts essential characteristics that were modified from Dunklee (2000) to describe effective principals, in part. If a candidate possesses the knowledge and skills that make him or her a viable candidate as a school principal, as seen in the first rectangle, he or she would fall into the category of a manager as indicated by the downward arrow. Knowledge and skills are those basic understandings of school functionality in both educational process and building management. If that same candidate also possesses the talent (see Figure 1) to put those skills and knowledge into practice, he or she moves into the category of leader. The talent would be the lens in which the skills are used. The talent is the skills and knowledge within the confines of integrity, honesty, tactfulness, and reliability. The talent may be focused to promote the growth of students and/or teachers, but they are merely players. It is the principal that orchestrates the school. The talent can also be the ability to build a team or culture that supports the skill and knowledge. If the lens of talent were used with dishonesty or unreliability, a leader would have a negative impact rather than positive, but could still be considered a leader. It is the effective principal that we strive for.
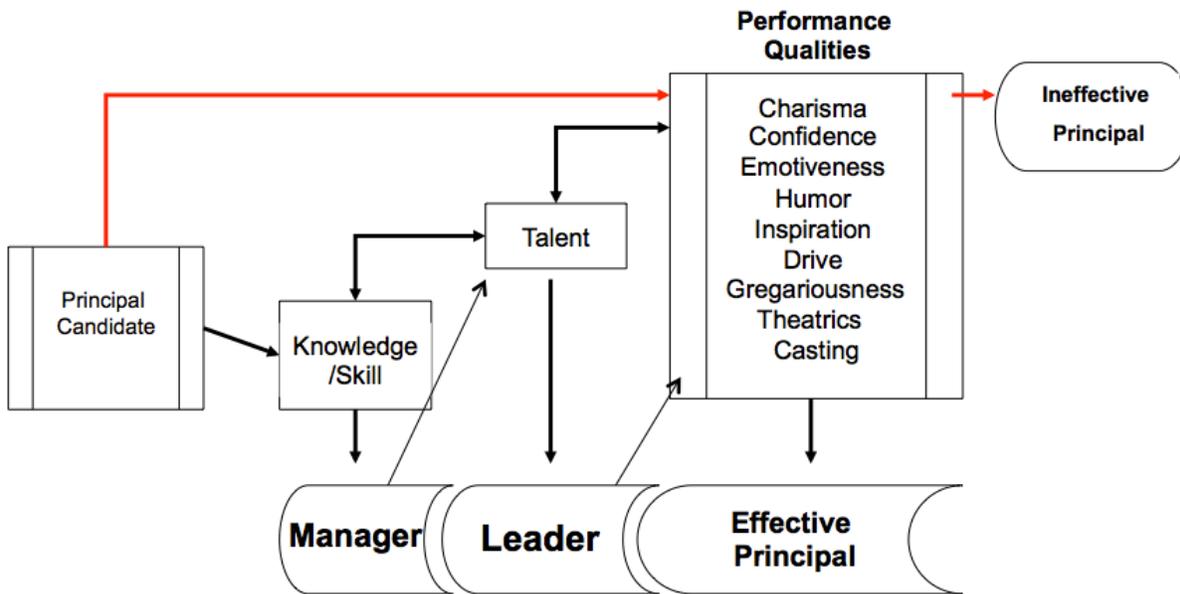
Figure 1. Principal performance qualities.

Since "all the school's a stage," my research sought greater understanding of which performance qualities (as noted in Figure 1) are needed for effective leadership. These include charisma, confidence, emotiveness, humor, inspiration, drive, gregariousness, theatrics, and casting. The talent lens still directs (i.e., influences) the positive or negative effects of the leader even with the performance qualities.

It is not to say that once a manager always a manager. It is conceivable that one with knowledge and skills in a manager role would be capable of developing the talents and move into a leadership role. Thus, with time and practice a leader who develops or taps into his/her own performance qualities could become an effective principal.

In looking at a principal candidate who only possesses performance qualities, as indicated by the red line (see Figure 1), this signifies that he or she would fall into the ineffective principal category. In order to be effective, a leader must also have the knowledge, skill, and talent to

support the performance qualities listed. With a leader who possesses only performance qualities, the double-headed arrows show that it is not impossible to develop talent, skill, and knowledge in order to become effective, but may be more difficult to obtain. Just as in a play, the curtain closes once the acting is over. Performance qualities alone cannot sustain the school.

Theoretical Orientation

The research was guided from the theoretical perspective of social constructivism. In constructivism, "individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences—meanings directed towards certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple. Leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meaning into a few categories or ideas" (Creswell, 2009, p. 8). This research did not begin with a theory that was anticipated to prove or disprove. Through a constructivist approach, the research is intended to "generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning" (Creswell, 2009, p. 8) as hiring managers are interviewed about their experiences in hiring principals in K-12 schools. This information can help hiring managers better understand how performance qualities play a part in the hiring process for the principalship.

<div align="center">

Qualitative Design

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In this study, the exploration of performance qualities of principal candidates was researched within a case study. "Qualitative research forms around assumptions about interpretations and human action. Qualitative researchers are interested not in prediction and control, but in understanding" (Clandinin, 2007, p. 4).

Strategies of Inquiry

In this study, a case study explored the activities used in hiring quality principals. Creswell (2009) promoted the following ideas in regards to qualitative research:

1. Qualitative researchers collect data in the field and in the natural setting of the participant, allowing for up close gathering of information.

2. Qualitative researchers collect data themselves. They do not rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by others, but are more humanistic and interactive.

3. Researchers use multiple sources of data such as interviews, observations and documents.

4. Qualitative researchers build their categories and themes along with the participants in an inductive manner.

5. Focus is kept on the participant's meaning of the problem or issue rather than that of the researcher.

6. The design is emergent, meaning that all aspects of the process may change as more information is gathered.

7. Qualitative research is seen through the lens of theoretical orientation.

8. Qualitative researchers interpret data and do not separate their own background and history.

9. Qualitative researchers try to develop an overarching theme or picture of the problem or issue. (Creswell, 2009, pp. 175-176)

This study was designed with a thoughtful review of the preceding nine assumptions and an assurance they were met.

Role of the Researcher

I am in a position of hiring principals for a large school district in the state of Indiana. Along with that responsibility is the attendant obligation to both students and staff members to hire the highest quality principals that will affect student achievement. In interviewing

counterparts in similar school districts it is assumed that participants may have similar stories to tell as I have garnered in my hiring role. "Narrative inquirers recognize that the researcher and the researched in a particular study are in a relationship with each other and that both parties will learn and change in the encounter" (Clandinin, 2007, p. 9).

I selected the qualitative approach to research to better understand the narrative and the underlying stories that are in the hiring process that cannot be seen in quantifiable data alone.

Sometimes this means that our own unnamed, perhaps secret, stories come to light as much as do those of our participants. This confronting of ourselves in our narrative past makes us vulnerable as inquirers because it makes secret stories public. In narrative inquiry, it is impossible as a researcher to stay silent or to present a kind of perfect, idealized, inquiring, moralizing self. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 62)

I attempted to examine biases and assumptions that could have been prevalent in preparation for the interviews. The randomly selected school districts for the study were selected due to the large size of the student population and, therefore, the size of the administrative teams. Hiring managers are much more likely to have hired principals within the last year or two and have a fresh perspective of the process and the outcome of those hires if they are located in the largest of the school districts, which suggests greater leadership turnover. Additionally, as I reflected on my own biases, Merriam (2009) affirmed, "It is common practice for researchers to examine their biases and assumptions about the phenomenon of interest before embarking on a study" (p. 26). My examination of personal biases and assumptions in preparation for this study informed how I conducted interviews as well as interpreted and decoded the participant input.

I believed that I possessed bias regarding the role of the hiring manager, believing that a best-practice process or framework is often not used. Additionally, I possessed bias toward the

use of nine specific performance qualities in leadership (i.e., charisma, confidence, emotiveness, humor, inspiration, drive, gregariousness, theatrics, and casting). I shared my performance-quality bias through four distinct scenarios that influenced my perceptions of leadership and the effective principal.

While I was beginning my career as an elementary teacher, my youngest brother, Carter, was starting his career as a starving artist by moving to New York City to take the stage. One holiday and home from basking in the limelight, he was lamenting about the stress of being on stage all weekend. Of course, there were Friday and Saturday night shows, but there was also the added pressure of two matinees on Saturday and Sunday. It was then I made the first connection between the performance qualities of acting on stage and the performance qualities needed as a teacher and later those of principal. I remember saying, "Quit whining, I am on stage for six hours a day for five days of the week." No wonder I was exhausted. It did not matter whether my own children kept me up all night or if my dog had just died, the show must go on. I now know, the school must go on as well. This experience helped me realize the performance qualities such as charisma, emotiveness, and theatrics do play a critical role in teaching and leadership.

In sharing my interest in the performance qualities of principals with colleagues, I was asked if I meant that principals just needed to pretend or to fake it. That is not the message I hope to send. It is more about portraying a role so that those around you feel the confidence in the leadership. I distinctly remember my first year as principal in a small urban school. A case conference was convened to share concerns about one of the second-grade students. It was then that I learned of the brutal and on-going sexual assault this child had been enduring at the hands of a trusted family member. It was my responsibility to counsel this family and provide

guidance as to the protection of this child and to insure the uncle was dealt with from the authorities. I was able to appear in control of the situation as a plan of action was set. It was not until I ushered this family to the door with a manner of confidence and assurance that I was able to shut the door and break down into tears at the thought of this young child being so abused. Having young children myself, I could only imagine the emotions of this family. Was I acting as if everything was going to be all right in front of the family? Absolutely, that was what the situation demanded at the time. I put on one of my greatest performances that day as I kept cool and maintained control. It was in this situation that I recognized the need for confidence and drive in the role of principal.

As the years passed, other performances as principal revolved around more trivial things such as talent shows, kissing a pig, snuggling a snake (15-foot boa), or coloring my hair in school colors. It was all a part of the show that is school. I set the stage for the mood of the building, if I was happy and cheerful so were the rest of the staff, humor and inspiration being the performance traits that appeared. On more solemn occasions, I again could set the appropriate mood. The audience was teachers and students reacting to my skills as a thespian. My performance qualities met the real test on September 11, 2001. It was a regular Tuesday as children trickled in for breakfast. There were some comments about planes hitting a building, but not much more than that. As the day ticked on, more and more information came to light. Staff and students were looking to me to decide how to react. We tried to keep the day as close to normal for the students as we possibly could, but staff members who understood the gravity of the situation were lumbering around numb to the news we were receiving. One teacher had a son living just outside of ground zero in New York City. There was no news of him. Many parents came to pick their children up in light of the grave situation in New York, just wanting to be with

the ones that they loved. At 12:54 p.m., I received a call from my central office; I was to get the school evacuated by 1:00 p.m. Someone had called in a bomb threat on a day when nerves were already rattled. How could I evacuate the building without panic? I could not pull the fire alarm for fear of activating an explosive device. It was then that I took a deep breath and in my calmest voice, declared that we would be practicing a fire drill, and needed to see how quickly we could get out of the building. I attempted to put a lilt in my announcement, but it was not my best performance; those who knew me well could hear the waiver in my voice, but the students were walking out as orderly as they had practiced so many times before. Only this time they were not permitted back in the building, and a plain-clothed policeman arrived and waited with me at the entrance to the building. Whether consciously performing or not, others expected me to act in a manner consistent with someone in charge. Confidence again was needed, and I was fortunate that the supporting cast I had gathered around me was able to assist in keeping a calm atmosphere on a day in history such as that one was.

As a child, I dreamed of becoming a celebrity and imagined myself stepping out of my stretch limo to the screams of adoring fans. As I contemplated the theatrical roles that principals play, it reminded me of the excitement of red carpets and black ties. I never did become an actress; I ended up drawn to the florescent lights of a classroom instead. I may not be making the same salary as a celebrity, but walking into a room full of excited elementary students makes me feel like a rock star. As I walked into the mall or restaurant, people would start to whisper and point. "That's the principal," I hear in hushed voices. The same kids who scamper up to hug you in the hallways at school are now frozen like a deer in the headlights just to think that you may actually eat somewhere other than the school cafeteria. I am sure they think I sleep on the cot in the health room as well. Just thinking about Christmas or graduation programs when

everyone wants their picture taken with me brings a smile to my face. Flashes from cameras sparkle across the gymnasium as I take the spotlight on stage and a hush fills the room. Parents and grandparents try to capture their children positioned next to me and follow me around like my own personal paparazzi. "Can we get a picture of you with Janie?" they shout as they shove poor Janie into the shot. Other days I took on a different character as I donned costumes of antlers, Elvis sideburns, Sumo's suits, or dyed my hair for the amusement of others. The flashes twinkle again. I do not wonder anymore about how Brad and Angelina feel in the middle of the hoopla of the Academy Awards. Forget the gowns and diamonds, I would much rather be a principal in a room full of six- and seven-year-olds with sticky fingers and untied shoes; to them I am a celebrity. Instead of Grammies and Oscars, I have gummies and Oscar the Grouch. I suppose my dream really did come true. These performance qualities of gregariousness and humor are important when working with children.

Data Collection and Recording Procedures

Six hiring managers were asked to voluntarily contribute to this study. They were interviewed to acquire an in-depth understanding of current hiring practices and the pros and cons of those practices. The interviews were informal and relatively conversational, as well as situational. Using the IDOE website, four school corporations in Indiana were randomly selected from a population of districts with 10,000 or more students. The random sample came from the random integer generator at www.random.org. From the randomly selected sample, hiring managers were contacted via a telephone call requesting participation in the study. A transcript framed the conversation (Appendix A). If those identified opted not to participate, additional corporations from the randomly identified population were contacted for participation. A follow-up introductory letter with informed consent to participate was sent electronically

(Appendix B) to those individuals interested in participating. In this communiqué, I confirmed

the time and place of interviews to take place. Email communiqués were password protected.

Instrumentation

Question protocol revolved around the use of performance qualities of candidates

(Appendix C). A few questions were asked to put the interviewee at ease and develop a rapport

with me. Discussion of the current practice and protocols for hiring principals revolved around

performance qualities inspired by Dunklee (2000), knowing full well that the format of inquiry

lends itself to non-linear discussion.

All participants were informed that involvement was voluntary in nature and they could

withdraw from the study at any time without consequences and that information from individuals

who withdraw from the study would not be utilized. Time was provided for clarification of the

study and any questions by the participant was addressed.

Data for this qualitative study were collected in face-to-face interviews and audio

recorded. Permission to record the interview prior to the session was requested from the

participants and rationale provided as for the need for valid and reliable collection of data. Each

interview lasted approximately two hours and relied on the willingness of the participant to

extend the time for further discussion. The participants were made fully aware that they could

refuse to answer any question or have the recording device stopped at any time. A follow-up

interview was offered at the discretion of the participant either face-to-face or via telephone for

clarification purposes. If available, copies of principal interview questions, documentations, and

protocols were collected if provided by the participants.

Establishing Validity and Reliability

"All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner" (Merriam, 2009, p. 209). In order to produce the valid and reliable knowledge as indicated by Merriam, the following protocols were put into place: (a) The interviews lasted approximately two hours, (b) The interviews took place at the volunteering school districts, and (c) Participants were notified that the study was voluntary, and could withdraw from the study at any time.

I also prepared for scripting by rehearsing mock interviews with colleagues in order to have a smooth and reliable procedure in place prior to the interviews. Most importantly questions had been developed and vetted to ensure that they were germane to the study and also that they generated data for the study.

Feedback from two groups was used to determine the interview question's content validity. The first group consisted of 17 Ph.D. cohort students, 11 men and six women, all of whom currently participated in a residency program. There were 11 who worked at the district level, five were employed at the school level, and one was a retired administrator. Feedback was garnered on October 1, 2014. The second group providing input consisted of five doctoral candidates, four women and one man who served as building-level leaders, and one central office administrator. Their feedback provided input for changes on September 24, 2014. Each group was asked to ponder the following questions:

1. Are the questions clear and concise?

2. Is the time allotment sufficient for discussion?

3. Are there any suggestions for improvement?

Revisions were made to the interview questions following a review of the collective feedback. Specifically, I opted to reverse the order of questions to allow the hiring manager to think of a specific principal hire while contemplating the nine performance qualities and then have a more general discussion afterward. I also added a question of the hiring manager as to whether they had held the role of a principal.

Data Storage and Confidentiality

Participants were notified that responses would be kept confidential through coded data, stored in my home office for the required three-year period, and accessed only by me. Removing all identifiers from the data protected confidentiality. The Institutional Review Board (Appendix D) approved procedures. I had a master code list to identify each subject for data analysis purposes. I requested that all participants in the study keep the information shared confidential.

After the required storage period of three years, the data, including audiotapes, will be shredded and destroyed. Participants were notified that they could file a written request to review material prior to the final oral defense of this study. After receiving the notifications, participants acknowledged receipt of this information by signing an Institutional Review Board consent form.

After the data were collected, pseudonyms were randomly assigned to identify each participant both in recordings and my notes, and the names of school corporations were not used at any time. All information obtained through this study that could be identified with any participant remained confidential. This information will only be disclosed with the subject's permission or as required by law.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

During the interviews of hiring managers, I took field notes and spent time analyzing them afterwards. The conversations were also audio taped and transcribed by me. An audio tape recording was determined necessary during the interviews to capture all of the participants' responses and to ensure an accurate description of the responses. Transcripts were coded and reviewed for themes and patterns.

Risks and Benefits

The participants were notified of potential risks and benefits of the study in the written Informed Consent form (Appendix B). All participants were informed that there was no direct benefit for participating in this study. The risks related to participating in this study were minimal. Some questions may have made the subjects uncomfortable, and they could refuse to answer these questions.

Conclusion

Chapter 3 presented the research methodology, description, and background I plan to utilize as I investigate the performance characteristics that are used by principal candidates in the interview process. Details about the research questions, methodology, the role of the researcher, data collection procedures, reliability, and validity were also addressed. The qualitative method used has been described in detail, and I have identified themes in the responses from the hiring managers that were interviewed. The results surrounding emerging themes from the interviews will be described in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 will present the findings of this study and identifies conclusions that can be utilized and studied by other researchers in future research around performance qualities for principals.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Arguably, the role of the principal is much like that of an actor who must think on his or

her feet in multiple situations. Can these performance (i.e., acting) qualities be identified during

a hiring interview? It is hoped that this study contributes new knowledge to assist in the

selection process of principals and helps in developing a framework to use in identifying and

hiring the most effective principals by acknowledging and capitalizing on performance qualities.

This chapter describes the major themes derived from the site-based interviews.

Subthemes were also identified. Primary themes include the following: (a) Hiring protocols are

not focused on performance qualities, (b) Performance qualities were predetermined to inform

the interview process, and (c) Districts supported professional development for both aspiring and

practicing principals.

The primary theme of hiring protocols included the subthemes of (a) The use of a cattle

call approach (i.e., mass interviewing) in the interview process are consistent in all districts

included in the study, (b) The practice of hiring internal candidates is a prevalent practice, and

(c) Current interview rubrics and questions to identify effective principals.

The primary theme of performance qualities, the nine elements as described in Table 1,

were all maintained as subthemes in this category. The primary theme of training for aspiring

and practicing principals led to the subthemes of (a) Internal and (b) External use of those

professional development practices. Table 1 provides a summary of the primary themes and corresponding subthemes.

Table 1

Summary of Primary and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
Hiring protocols	Cattle call approach Hiring within Current interview questioning
Performance qualities	Charisma, confidence, emotiveness, humor inspiration, drive, gregariousness, theatrics, and casting
Training	Internal External

Six hiring managers volunteered to be interviewed for this study. The interviews were designed to acquire an in-depth understanding of hiring practices currently used and the pros and cons of those practices. The interviews were informal, situational, and relatively conversational. School corporations in Indiana were randomly selected using the IDOE website, from a population of districts with 10,000 or more students. The random sample selection was created from the random integer generator at www.random.org. From the randomly selected sample, hiring managers were contacted requesting participation in the study. A transcript framed the conversation (Appendix A). Only one hiring manager contacted declined participation. All others contacted were interested in participation and scheduled an interview. A follow-up introductory letter with informed consent to participate was sent electronically (Appendix B) to those individuals interested in contributing. In this communiqué, I confirmed the time and place of the interview to take place. All email communiqués were password protected.

I was fortunate to interview six hiring managers from four different school corporations in the state of Indiana. All participants were in roles of either Director of Elementary Education, Director of Secondary Education or Assistant Superintendent. After the data were collected, pseudonyms were randomly assigned to identify each participant both in recordings and field notes and the names of school corporations were also provided pseudonyms.

There are 21 school districts in the state of Indiana that consist of 10,000 or more students. Of those 21, when developing a contact list of both secondary directors and elementary directors, I discovered that only nine of the 42 (21.4%) directors are men and the remaining 33 (78.5%) being women. Although this was not part of the intended study, I found this curious and researched further to determine if there was a similar representation across Human Resources Director positions. Again, I was surprised to note the same ratio of men to women. Although gender was not a descriptor in the study, it was hard to ignore the facts that were contrary to my preconceived perceptions.

The randomly selected school corporations, as listed in Table 2, yielded interviews with only female hiring managers. All corporations were rated as "C" or "A" as identified by the IDOE school rating system. There was a balanced representation of rural, suburban, and urban districts. Poverty rates ranged from 37.1% to 60.6% based upon free and reduced lunch status counts.

Table 2

Summary of Participants and Corporations

Participant	School Corp.	Corp. Rating	Enrollment	Corp. Setting	Poverty Rate
Dr. Hughes	Little Carter County Schools	C	Over 10,000	Rural	56.3%
Dr. Sparks	Little Carter County Schools	C	Over 10,000	Rural	56.3%
Ms. Rapp	MSD Lincoln Twp.	A	Over 11,000	Urban	59.3%
Ms. Patterson	MSD Lincoln Twp.	A	Over 11,000	Urban	59.3%
Ms. Clarke	Fruitvale Twp.	A	Under 15,000	Suburban	60.6%
Ms. Bird	Boulevard County School Corp.	A	Over 10,000	Urban	37.1%

Primary Theme: Hiring Protocols Are Not Focused on Performance Qualities

In all four Indiana school corporations, there was a team approach to hiring new principals. All interviews included central office administration, teachers, and parents at different points throughout the interview process. Two of the four corporations included current principals within the district to provide input. None of the four included any writing component or portfolio, but one district requested a 10-minute presentation on any topic of their choosing. The candidates were not informed about the presentation until the night before the formal interview. Ms. Clarke, of Fruitvale, explained this "I purposely leave the content of the presentation open, because I want to see what they think is important."

I also discovered that all hiring managers I interviewed were more likely to appoint a candidate from within the school corporation rather than an outside applicant. Successes with

outside candidates had been few and far between. Ms. Bird from Boulevard stated that they "had been burned with outside candidates too many times."

Little Carter County Schools (LCCS)

The first of my interviews was held in Little Carter, where student population was just over the 10,000-student requirement to be eligible for this study. There were 12 elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools. The overall poverty rate based on free and reduced lunch count was 56.3%. The corporation letter grade received through the state accountability system had been a consistent C for the last five school years.

I traveled to LCCS for the interview. The corporation offices were located in a very rural area, and sat adjacent to one of the high schools. There was nothing but farm fields and rural housing in every other direction. The entrance to the corporation office was welcoming yet secure. A receptionist greeted me warmly as she announced my arrival. As I sat waiting in the reception area, it was clear that several teachers were leaving the building after a professional development activity housed there in the building. Dr. Kathy Hughes appeared through the opening doors of the elevator and escorted me to an upstairs conference room. It was there that she introduced me to her secondary counterpart, Dr. Annie Sparks. I was able to interview both the elementary director and the assistant superintendent who oversaw the middle and high schools. Dr. Sparks had been in her position for over 20 years and was referred to as the "go to person for the corporation," by elementary director, Dr. Hughes. Dr. Hughes had only been at the corporation level for about one and one-half years, but even in that short time span had been involved in hiring three principals because of the team aspect of their hiring protocol. The newest principals were at the middle school level.

Hiring practices. The hiring practices at LCCS had been and continued to be a team approach. The team consisted of high-level administrators. There was a screening instrument developed, but it was revised for more pertinent and timely information each time a new principal was hired. Candidates were processed through a screening procedure to determine which candidates qualified to advance to the next round. Using the screening instrument, candidates were rated using a three-point rubric that had been developed over the years under various superintendents. A committee now included representatives of teachers and parents from the school in which the new principal was assigned then interviewed those who had advanced to the second round. Dr. Hughes stated that there was no requirement for a portfolio or video, but many candidates opted to include those items. Just coming from the principalship, she recognized that the candidates expect much of what is asked in the interview, and they respond with what you want to hear rather than what they truly believe. "The next time we do an interview, we may even do some scenarios," she suggested. Dr. Hughes felt that the scenarios might allow for a better impression of the candidate and how he or she would handle difficult situations. They were careful to hold comments about candidates to the end acknowledging there are teachers and parents on the committee and confidentiality is a concern. They typically had closed ballots as they narrowed candidates to the top two or three. They are striving to select the right person for each building due to the three unique communities within their district. Both Dr. Hughes and Dr. Sparks recognize that each building has its own characteristics that require varying backgrounds and experiences in their leaders. Concern was shared as to the size of the interviewing committees and the scope of responsibility they shared. The role of the principal is viewed as so critical that Dr. Sparks suggested adding another level to the process. She did not elaborate on what that additional step would entail.

Metropolitan School District of Lincoln Township

Located in the central Indiana area, MSD Lincoln Township (MSDLT) boasted nearly

15,000 students in seven elementary schools, three middle schools, one high school, and a career

center. Lincoln Township had a poverty rate of 59.3% as estimated by the free and reduced

lunch rate. Using the state accountability rating system, the corporation letter grade was listed as

an A after several years in the C and D ranges. It is an accomplishment they were quite proud of

based upon the banner prominently displayed in the entryway of the administration building. I

visited MSDLT over the winter break when schools were not in session. There was a skeleton

crew working at the administration building that day. Although not located very far from the one

and only high school, the building could have been identified as a local businesses corporate

office due to its location and appearance. The interview was held in an upstairs office space.

The director of elementary/secondary education was preparing for retirement and her successor

had already been named. Ms. Mary Rapp, retiring director, and Ms. Kay Patterson, newly

appointed director, were available for the interview.

Hiring Practices. Ms. Rapp had been in central office for 17 years with hiring

responsibilities for principals over the last eight years. Over that period of time, she had placed

many principals. Her soon to be replacement, Ms. Patterson, had just completed six and one-half

years as principal at a flagship school in the district. She too, had been involved in the hiring of

principals due to current administrators being an integral part of the teams interviewing principal

candidates. All current principals are given the opportunity to serve on the screening committee.

"After posting the position, the next step is putting together a community group comprised of

parents, teachers, other principals; generally all the principals are invited to be involved

(elementary and the secondary) and then the central office people," Ms. Rapp explained. In

MSD Lincoln, there are usually 12 people involved in the first round of interviews. It is their

charge to narrow the field to two or three people of which Ms. Rapp makes a recommendation to

the Human Resources Director and Superintendent.   Questions used during the interview

process are revised each time a new principal is hired. They have been developed to match the

needs of the current school vacancy. With such a large committee on the interview team, they

typically only have the opportunity to ask one question each. The superintendent reviews scores

compiled by the committee and renders the final decision. There have been times when an

unexpected loss of a school leader has caused a need to make quick decisions; it is during these

times that internal candidates are given an advantage as the interview process is adjusted.

Fruitvale Township

Located in the central Indiana area, Fruitvale Township (FT) provided educational

services to nearly 15,000 students in 11 elementary schools, two sixth grade centers, two middle

schools, two high schools, and an alternative school. Fruitvale Township had a poverty rate of

60.6% as estimated by the free and reduced lunch rate. Using the state accountability rating

system, the corporation letter grade was listed as A. Only three years prior, the township was

listed as a D rating. Fruitvale's administrative building was a remodeled former high school in

the district. They had received community honors for the tasteful way in which they preserved a

historical building. Entering the building brought me to a friendly receptionist who buzzed me

into a waiting area that held brochures and flyers about the corporation's accomplishments. Not

only were the corporation offices held in this older, remodeled building, but also a pre-K

program was housed in a separate section. Once ushered upstairs, a secretary with a much larger

office and seating area greeted me. Most rooms seemed very spacious in this old, grand high

school transformed into plush offices for all.

Ms. Valerie Clarke was serving as the assistant superintendent for Fruitvale. With that title, she oversaw the 11 elementary schools, Title I, special education, and early childhood programs. She had been in education for 30 years, with 15 of those years in central office.

Hiring practices. During the last four years, Ms. Clarke had been in the position to hire principals. The community was fortunate to have an assistant principal in each elementary building. "Which is great because a lot of times they are the best candidates that we have," stated Ms. Clarke. A committee composed of teachers, support staff, parents, and administrators are brought into the interview process. Ms. Clarke admitted, "sometimes our committee needs to see outside candidates to understand how good their own people are." They have had a tendency to hire within their own corporation. The downfall has been that many committee members see the candidates within the parameters of only the interview. Ms. Clarke has seen strong candidates cut during this team process due to the limited view and targeted interview process. She has a broader view of the applicant because of her position as a corporation level administrator. She has been able to observe candidates in their roles as teachers, assistant principals, or curriculum leaders. Other members of the team in the interview process are not privy to that information. Their team is comprised of up to 10 members from primary and intermediate teachers, special area teachers, support staff, parents, and other stakeholders in the school.

One unique twist to the initial interview in Fruitvale is the phone call that comes within 24 hours of the meeting. Ms. Clarke contacts each candidate and asks then to prepare a 10-minute presentation to start off the interview. No further direction is given. The purpose for the last minute directive is what Ms. Clarke is really looking for in a principal candidate. Ms. Clarke stated,

I purposely leave the content of the presentation open; because I want to see what they think is important. I also want to see how comfortable they are with technology, how comfortable they are with presenting. It is interesting to see how they have chosen to do the presentation. I also want to see how they react to having to create something given a very short timeline.

Ms. Clarke shared that some candidates choose to talk about themselves or their philosophy of education. Others share more personal information about families. She is able to uncover answers to the interview questions by virtue of the presentations before the first question is asked. They are given 10 minutes, yet some ramble for 40; she learns quickly that those candidates have difficulty staying within parameters. "Fruitvale needs people who can react under pressure and prioritize what is important." This was the only time during my study that a performance was expected of principal candidates. She also can identify a team player by listening for what the candidate did versus what a team may have accomplished together. The principal candidates are then narrowed down to two or three of which Ms. Clarke makes a recommendation to the superintendent.

Boulevard County School Corporation

Located in south central Indiana, Boulevard County School Corporation (BCSC) provided educational services to just over 10,000 students in nine elementary schools, two middle schools, four high schools, a separate primary (K-2), and intermediate (3-5) school. Boulevard County had a poverty rate of 37.1% as estimated by the free and reduced lunch rate. Using the state accountability rating system, the corporation letter grade was listed as A over the last four years, an A or B rating had been the norm.

The corporation offices were located in an urban area directly across from their largest high school. This served as a great reminder of the day-to-day activities that occurred in the school system. The hustle and bustle of buses and parent drop off were evident as I arrived at the corporate offices. Since this was my final interview, I surmised a consistent pattern in all corporation buildings visited in this study. All building entries led in to a single receptionist who served as the gatekeeper of the building. In order to gain access, I was required to check in with the secretary and get buzzed in through locked doors to reach my destination. Ms. Jill Bird escorted me to the second floor conference room to complete our conversation after the customary check in procedure.

Hiring practices. Ms. Bird was the director of secondary education for BCSC and oversaw the operations at the middle schools, high schools, and the adult education program. She was in her sixth year as a hiring manager for BCSC and was unique to the other interviewees in that she was not an internal hire to the corporation. She came with a variety of experiences from other corporations in the state as well as some teaching experience in Kentucky. She too, was involved in the hiring practice as a principal in some of the corporations in which she served as the school leader. BCSC was distinctive in their hiring structure in that the Human Resources Department took the lead in the process rather than the elementary or secondary director. Not only did the postings come from the Human Resources Department as they did in other corporations, but the interview set up was orchestrated and delivered by the Human Resources Director. A committee of teachers, parents, students, and current principals participated in the interviews as the Human Resources Director ran the interviews without contributing in the decision-making. The committee narrows the candidate pool to two or three by a variety of questions that were compiled by the Human Resources Department. It was only at that time

other central office administrators became involved. Central office administrators would then interview the remaining candidates and make a recommendation to the superintendent. When asked if the initial interview team narrowed the selections by sending the most qualified people to the central office level, Mrs. Bird had some concerns about the perspectives of teachers and parents being different from the expectations of administrators. With a shrug, Mrs. Bird lamented, "That has been used here for years and the [Teacher's] Association selects the teachers who serve on the committee, so that is the process that is used." Mrs. Bird was uncomfortable to share any interview questions that might be used in their hiring process. She did seem to have a good understanding and knowledge of the Teacher Perceiver Instrument and stated she had some training years before but failed to keep up the certification. " I would say that after I went through that [Teacher Perceiver Training], I have never hired a bad one." Mrs. Bird did share that rather than a list of questions to ask, she was more apt to have them put themselves into a situation, and have them explain how they would react to it or work through solving a problem. Like the other corporations, BCSC was more likely to hire candidates from within the ranks of the school corporation rather that to look to outside candidates. She stated two reasons for that practice.

> There are not a lot of good candidates out there, and I believe that in the last five years, our model of PCLs (Professional Learning Communities) is significantly different from the experiences of other principals around Indiana. That puts our own candidates head and shoulders above outside people.

Looking at the overall practices of each school corporation, the hiring protocols emerged. All practices included a team of people to select the newest principal for each school and consisted of a strong practice of hiring candidates from within the school corporation. There was

an overwhelmingly positive attitude about the internal candidates that had been hired in the past, but a tepid response about the process that selected the new star of the show.

Subtheme 1 – The use of a cattle call approach in the interview process is consistent in all districts included in the study. In the world of acting, the dreaded cattle call was the best and fastest way to run prospective actors through the chutes and paddocks to see as many potential stars in a short period of time and select whoever rose to the top. In education, we have developed our own little cattle call in running candidates through a process we lovingly call the team approach. In all school corporations involved in this study, a team approach was an integral part of the hiring process. In these corporations, teachers and support staff from the school were included in the initial interview round. Dr. Sparks from Little Carter made it clear that because their teams consisted of parents and teachers they were careful to hold comments about candidates to the end and let their scoring system do the work. Dr. Hughes also from Little Carter had some concerns over the size of the team. "I do think there needs to be maybe another level or two of the interview process, especially for principals, because it is such a critical role." Mrs. Sparks equated the interview process to that of an on-line dating service, trying to get the right person for the right job.

Some of the concerns with the team approach came out during my questioning. Ms. Clarke shared, "One great leader in one building may not be a great leader in another building because the culture is so different." The team shares their scores anonymously, but still with so many different perspectives, "Sometimes people that should have made it, [to the next round] didn't make it." Ms. Bird's concerns centered more on the differences between the perspectives of parents, teachers, and administrators. Recommendations could be skewed since it was the teacher's association that selected who would serve on the committee, and they were not always

a good representation of the staff as a whole. So as the team approach has been solidified as current practice in the hiring of principals, the thinning of the herd in the cattle call does not always bring about the strongest bull.

Subtheme 2 – The practice of hiring internal candidates is a prevalent practice.

Another subtheme of hiring protocols that emerged was the corporations appointing candidates from their own teacher leaders. When asked whether they were more apt to hire from within or go outside the corporation, all gave reasons why they had been more successful identifying leaders within their ranks. They have seen those hires be successful in the principal roles. Dr. Sparks believed that because of their strong training program they were able to train and build leaders who understood the needs of their corporation and, therefore, grew into the principal position. Ms. Rapp explained that when they did hire outside there own corporation, they paid a "terrible price." She admitted that they may not have done their due diligence to get the background on the outside candidate, but he could "talk very well about things. He seemed to have the knowledge, but he didn't have the get out of your office and go meet people." Had this outside hire been part of their own corporation, they would have known more about him, and perhaps foreseen the problems that not being visible was going to create.

Ms. Bird credited their strong leadership-training program for generating good quality candidates from within. Ms. Clarke explained that since they had assistant principals in all of their schools, it was the best training they could get. "We hire inside because our people are so good," she expressed. By serving as assistant principals first, they are able to deal with difficult situations under the direction and support of the principal. It is almost as if they are working in an apprenticeship for the role of principal. In Little Carter, Dr. Hughes suggested having a teacher leader who could teach half days and do administrative duties the remainder of the day.

Of course, it is a budget issue. She had seen this intern practice in another corporation when the principal was retiring, and they were trying to acclimate his predecessor to the new role. It seemed to be a very effective way to prepare internal candidates.

   Subtheme 3 – Current interview rubrics and questions to identify effective principals. In order to determine what qualities hiring managers perceive their successful principals utilized, it was important to understand what qualities they looked for in the interview process. I was able to obtain three out of the four corporations sample questions used during principal candidate interviews. All had questions tied specifically to the nuts and bolts of the principal's role; looking at data, the evaluation system, and even talking about discipline, but I found no direct questions or scenarios that addressed the use of performance qualities. A few open-ended questions such as; "What are your three best leadership qualities?" left the door open for candidates to discuss ways in which they may see themselves as a performer, but no questions guided them in that direction. Only one corporation used their modified RISE rubric to guide their interview process. In that rubric, the quality of initiative was addressed briefly. Depending on the candidate or the interviewer, this question could be broadened to envelop performance. With a bit of a stretch, conversations and questions around the topic of professional development could be tied to the performance quality of casting. Professional development is the team building that is required for an effective principal to build their cast of characters. After talking to Ms. Rapp about performance qualities and how they may be linked to questions asked in an interview, she stated, "Your question is beginning to intrigue me, because I would say we don't ask a lot of questions about, how *do* you perform as a speaker in front of a group." So much of a principal's job is done in a fish bowl or better yet, up on a stage. Dr. Hughes went so far as to suggest that in order to get a better sense of performance qualities,

"The next time we do an interview maybe [we] even do some scenarios." With the absence of performance qualities in the interview questions, it was difficult for me to pass judgment as to how these qualities are being accessed other than to say they are probably not.

Primary Theme 2: Performance Qualities Inform the Interview Process

It is my aspiration to understand the performance qualities that are prevalent in successful principals, specifically, the performance and leadership attributes identified and compared by Dunklee (2000) and modified in Figure 1 (p. 31). These qualities served as the protocol to gain a better understanding of the interview process. The subthemes identified for exploration as performance qualities are (a) charisma (b) confidence (c) emotiveness (d) humor (e) inspiration (f) drive (g) gregariousness (h) theatrics and (i) casting.

Charisma

Charisma, identified as an air of likability, was the first performance quality discussed during the interviews. Ms. Clarke considered charisma as always valuable. "It is important, but you have to be a genuine person. People and teachers will always see through someone who is just performing." It is important to have a sense of authenticity along with charisma, regardless of the group you are working with.

Sitting in the room with a nervous principal candidate, it is hard to determine if charisma is a quality that is possessed. "That is one of the hardest things to determine in an interview" claimed Dr. Sparks when talking about the performance quality of charisma. She went on to share,

> I think of those personal traits and regardless, there are going to be tough days and tough
> situations, but it is in the way in which you react and handle those, and while it might be
> as stressful as can be, you have to have enough charisma to almost put on that act.

Because as a leader, they look to you and the way in which you react. They are going to internalize that, and if you have enough charisma and a dynamic personality, even in the most negative situations, to put a positive light or a positive spin on it, that's extremely important. I think there's got to be charisma, but it got to be authentic and its got to be genuine, because it is very easy with in the first few weeks to see through that.

In some cases, principals may not bring with them a sense of charisma, but Ms. Rapp believed that it can be developed. In sharing a story of a recent principal hire, she stated, "I do think that it [charisma] is important and that is an area that is still being developed in this person." Ms. Rapp has been a strong leader herself in the area of communication. She contracted with local news media to train her principals in how to present themselves and their schools. Whether it is a natural charisma or something that is practiced and learned, it is brought to the forefront as part of the job in Lincoln Township.

Ms. Clarke believed "charisma is always important. I once told people you couldn't be a leader if no one wants to follow you. It is important, but you have to be a genuine person." She was concerned that if charisma came across as fake or contrived, the message became lost in the lack of trust.

Ms. Bird believed it is especially important nowadays more than ever. "I don't say my top trait, but considering how public schools are now, and that you have to answer so many different audiences, charisma is huge, and a lot of work for them." When asked to name their three most important performance qualities, three of the six or (50%) of the hiring managers in the study named charisma as one of the most important qualities needed to be an effective principal.

Confidence

Confidence is the performance quality described as decisive in comments and interactions. When watching a principal in action, one would assume the principal would be a confident leader. Dr. Hughes talked about confidence in her principals,

If a principal can stand up in front of their staff and say, 'I don't have all the answers, but here's the plan and this is what I am going to do, I think they appreciate that. You have to have the confidence to be able to admit you don't know all the answers.

When talking about interviewing for new principals, she shared, "I think in an interview the same thing, we've seen people come and they [think they] know it all and they can do it all. I know they are trying to sell themselves." During the interview process, confidence can be seen in the way they answer questions or handle them. Dr. Sparks believes confidence,

Is very important, especially the building over here next door. The clients, many of them are professionals, and they have a certain expectation of their teachers and their principals. And that [Confidence] is very hard to determine in an interview. I do think it goes back to the confidence they have to be able to approach people and not be afraid. I think you have to be able to explain yourself and communicate and that comes from the confidence.

The current practice for interviews does not allow for an opportunity to showcase confidence in an authentic manner in front of a crowd. In discussing how to assess confidence during the interview process, Ms. Rapp exclaimed, "Just standing up and being comfortable in front of a group of parents is hugely important. And that's not a skill that we, I don't think that we speak to that."

Dr. Hughes shared, "I think that's pretty important and there's a confidence level, but it is not an arrogance, its just they have to kind of know or to exhibit a sense of self." That sense of self must surface within the confines of the interview rotations with groups of parents, teachers, and administrators. It must do so without coming across as arrogance.

In discussing the interview process for principals, Ms. Clarke contended, "they have to be confident because they are going to be challenged, and not many principals can face what they are going to have to deal with if they are not confident." Ms. Clarke believed that the interview questions created in their corporation included a way to look for those kinds of qualities. She continued, "sometimes people can appear confident to back up what they are saying, but can they give evidence to back up what they are saying? We look for evidence of whether or not that confidence is valid or false confidence." Simply stated, Ms. Bird claimed, "To be confident? Yes, I believe it is important."

Emotiveness

Emotiveness is a quality described as using both body and facial gestures. With all six interviewees this was a topic that did not carry as much clout; however, Ms. Patterson agreed that body language does send a strong message.

With the smiles and the eyes and all the body language with that it is very important. I think straightforward is good, but sincerity is really [key], you have to make sure that the professional piece is there. If it is done professionally you can handle so many different types of people.

Dr. Hughes equated emotiveness more to the showing of emotion, rather than just the use of body and facial gestures. "I think you really have to control your emotion." When discussing

stressful or fearful situations, Mrs. Hughes spoke of putting on an air of confidence so as not to cause undue concern with staff and students. Dr. Sparks admitted,

> I don't know that being emotive is something [I look for]. I've seen principals who are practically theater majors who are awesome and people respond [to them] but then I've seen quiet ones [principals] who aren't as emotive, but are just as well received for their work ethic and by their care and concern.

She claimed she was not sure where emotiveness fits in the big picture. It was clear she did not have emotiveness as an expectation for her principals, but felt it was a quality more prevalent in the elementary schools rather than the secondary schools.

Ms. Clarke understood the skill needed in speaking to large groups of students or parents. When speaking of emotiveness in her principals, Ms. Clarke pondered,

> I don't mean just having fun, if it is too dry then people tone you out. If you have no emotions or, I think one quality is they have to be a positive leader. They have to be a positive person.

She expects her principals to have some excitement in influencing staff members whether it is during the day-to-day activities or during professional development activities. If no one is paying attention, then no learning can take place.

Ms. Bird spoke more to the connectedness that is needed in order to elicit emotiveness with the principal candidates she has interviewed. Whether that connection can be made during a brief interview is highly unlikely. Therefore, internal candidates who have already established a connection prior to the interview have the upper hand. She commented,

> I think it's important because they have to connect to people, and if you're a dead fish, people don't see you as being enthusiastic about what you're doing. I just I don't know

that I've ever thought that I look for it, but I guess I do, because if they are just sitting there with her hands crossed [in the interview], then I'm thinking that they are just very polite.

Humor

The ability to use wit is the definition of humor. Although not much conversation centered on the performance quality of humor, all believed it was an important quality to have and use as a principal. Humor was not selected as the most important quality in the arsenal of effective principal qualities. Ms. Clarke stated, "You have to have a sense of humor and have fun and respect each other." Dr. Hughes commented, "I think all the humor is really keeping the focus on the kids." This was one a few comments made during the interview process that addressed the interaction with students rather than adults. Dr. Sparks was a person of few words about humor, simply stating, "Critical, I think so." And Ms. Bird remarked, "Yes, I think it is important for you to have humor to survive." How often has it been said that it is better to laugh than to cry? With the continued stressors added onto principals, humor is a must.

Inspiration

The ability to motivate and encourage others was how inspiration was presented. Ms. Clarke believed the principal role required an ability to inspire others, "There is always something else that is going to push you, and so you have got to be inspirational. You've got to motivate and that is something we all need to do."

Dr. Hughes believed that modeling servant leadership was more telling than that of being inspirational. "Inspirational is probably not what I would use, I lean towards more a servant leadership kind of model, so I think it's respect through modeling." Servant leadership is

inspirational without having to write a speech and generate a catch phrase. When the principal is doing the right thing, then that is inspirational.

Ms. Clarke contended, "They [principals] are going to have to motivate their teachers." With the education bashing that continues, teachers more than ever need a leader who can inspire them even with the non-stop negative press. The culture of the school begins to falter without an inspirational leader. "You have to inspire others or else your climate and culture isn't going to be where it needs to be," warned Dr. Hughes.

Ms. Clarke saw it as an even broader issue, "Being inspirational and being positive is something the teachers need but also something they [principals] are going to need." When looking at principal candidates, Ms. Bird looks for someone who, "will take initiative and to take steps to inspire others to grow professionally, perhaps principals that encourage the assistants to become principles, and teachers to become principals." She also shared, "those traits [of inspiration] enable somebody to be connected, and if you're able to inspire then you have to be connected." The role of principal can be lonely, all the more reason they need to connect to those around them.

Drive

Drive is defined as having perseverance and determination. When asked about the quality of drive, Ms. Rapp described what she observed with a recent principal hire and shared, "the word that comes to mind is gumption, she had the strength, the fortitude. We knew that she could do it and it would be done." In talking about the overwhelming role of the principalship, Dr. Hughes warned,

Well if you are not driven, you can easily get drowned. You have to stay on top of things, because for every old thing you have to do, two new things are going to come

along. I do think you have to be driven, because if not, it's almost like survival of the driven. There is no room for complacency.

Still, Dr. Hughes believed that if you do not have drive and you do not take the initiative to find out what is going on in both the schools and the corporation by being proactive, you become more reactive in all that you do. It goes along with setting the tone and expectations, to avoid problems, rather than waiting for them to happen to you.

Ms. Rapp shared a concern with an outside principal hire that exhibited little drive. "He seemed to have the knowledge, but he didn't have the *get out of your office* go meet the people [attitude]." It was the drive that he was missing and what may have made him an effective principal. Instead, Ms. Rapp implied he was more marginal.

Drive may be difficult to assess during the interview process, inferred Dr. Hughes, "Often times what we thought were the best prepared candidates when they really got in there, they were at a loss of what to do." But she continued, "I think if they are willing to persevere to find the answers and to problem solve they could be effective." In speaking of the overall job of a principal, Ms. Clarke shared,

> They have to have drive to do what they do. A lot of our principals have a lot of perseverance, because they have to advocate for their schools. That is important for them to be strong advocates. They have to have professional drive for them personally, but more importantly drive to be competitive.

She recognized the importance of having a competitive nature as a principal. Now more than ever, schools are competing with private and charter schools for students and time must be attributed to honing that skill. The competitiveness often time shows during the interview process but not necessarily by the questions that are asked.

Ms. Bird understood the necessity to be driven as an administrator. Staff members need to see principals take the lead and be out in front of things. She believed that it is imperative to be ahead of the problems that occur in the daily life as a principal, "They need to be proactive not just reactive."

Gregariousness

Gregariousness was defined as having an openness or extroverted manner. This quality met with a negligible reception from all interviewees. Ms. Clarke commented,

> Well I don't know if that is a number one trait, maybe in some buildings when I look at our principals right now, some of them are more gregariousness than others. Some of our buildings need that kind of leader and others maybe not.

Dr. Hughes understood that there are very different needs for very different situations. The culture and personality of the school helps to dictate the kind of principal needed. She shared,

> It almost goes with having the right person in the right building. In some buildings you need that very approachable, maybe a more quiet [sic] person. Where in other building, they want a more dynamic showy leader, and it just kind of knowing the community and the needs of the building and demographics.

The performance quality of gregariousness was not one that Ms. Rapp had considered important in the past.

> I don't know, I think we had it [a gregarious principal] before and it didn't prove to help in the situation, so I think you can have that and you can work that, but I don't think it's more important than these other things. If you happen to be gregarious and it is sincere and you can get the job done, more power to you.

Dr. Hughes also questioned the significance this quality, "You have very dynamic people but, yet, one of our principals that I can think of is somewhat sort of soft spoken but she is excellent." It becomes more of a situational quality. Each principal can bring a different quality to the circumstances and both can excel in the manner in which they address it. Not everyone is or should be gregarious.

Ms. Clarke admitted, "I don't know that I would say that a lot of our principals are gregarious." She also implied it was not something she conscientiously looked for in a principal candidate, but saw the value the quality of gregariousness might play in some situations. Those situations would be more centered on interactions with students rather than parents, community groups, or faculty. Ms. Bird agreed to the situational nature of this quality.

> I have effective ones [principals] that are very gregarious and effective ones that are not, I
> think it just depends on getting a connection with their students, with their teachers, with
> their parents, so I don't know if being gregarious is something I would look for.

Theatrics

Having flair was how the performance quality of theatrics was described. It held a negative connotation with several of the interviewees who saw it more as public relations. Ms. Rapp equated the term of theatrics more with professional athletes. "They have their PR person that does all that, and you can tell who does and who doesn't [have training in theatrics]." She compared theatrics more with emotion.

Ms. Patterson agreed that you could tell if they [principals] had been trained by how they spoke in public.

> I think emotion can be very important, but I think you have to be really careful if you're
> very emotional, because I think that you can jump and make assumptions about parents,

or even a teacher and react to it, and then you have to back up and this comes from an emotional person answering. You have to be careful of emotions in this job, but I think if you do it authentically, and you're careful and professional. I can think of a case where there was a person who is very emotional, very theatrical, very, very committed to the kids. I mean, honestly, it was 100% her life, but she has so many things going on with it all that she couldn't focus.

Ms. Clarke was more cautious about the use of theatrics in the role of the principalship.

You know theatrics that went to the extreme I wouldn't, you know, I think that one thing that everyone values is often authenticity. I think people want you to be authentic; they want you to be real. They don't want you to pretend to put on the show. I think theatrics implies that you're performing, performing as being something that you are not.

The discussion of theatrics lead more to conversation about working with students rather than the adults in the schools. The common practice of dying their hair, kissing a pig or donning costumes played right into the theatrical side of the principals. Theatrics as a means of communicating with students seemed to be a common practice, Ms. Bird claimed,

All of that kind of fits together, they have to be able to communicate with high school students and that helps with elementary too. I haven't really thought about it, but we have elementary principals always putting on some costume, and they are just great. And there are others who don't and they are just great. They see them as being genuine regardless of whether they are dramatic, theoretical, or not.

Casting

Casting is the theater term for filling the roles of a play or movie. For the purpose of this study, it was stretched to mean the selection process for hiring principals. The interviewees had

already made comments about fitting the right person for the right job. Dr. Hughes shared, "until you really know what talents and skills that everybody has, you don't know who to bring to the table. They must have a true understanding of who their community is." It is in the interview, or the audition, that those skills and talents can be highlighted. Mrs. Hughes was the only participant who selected casting as one of her three most important performance qualities.

Team building was important to Dr. Sparks, "I take a look at the work of their leadership teams in the elementary, because they were able to really build capacity and to me that is critical." It was the interactions within the teams that allowed Dr. Sparks to identify potential leaders in the teaching ranks that can be groomed to be effective principals.

Building effective teams by casting the right people in the right roles is a skill in itself. The skill comes with the selection of the right principal who has the right casting talent. Ms. Clarke believed they have principals in the corporation that understand the casting piece, "You're right, it's important that they know their strengths and weaknesses and that they can build teams that will support them as a whole group and our principals are really good with that."

Although not selected as one of her most important qualities, Ms. Bird does address casting in the interview process. She was sure to ask, "If you have the opportunity to hire someone, what considerations would you use to fill out your team?" This allowed her to see not only how the principal may fit in their new role, but also how they would go about filling their own team at the school level.

Summary: Performance Qualities Were Predetermined to Inform the Interview Process

When asked to review the nine performance qualities shared during the interview process and indicate which they felt were the most important in their experience with hiring a principal, all participants selected three qualities they believed were most important, even though they were

not limited to three. Participants from the same corporation were not in agreement when it came to the qualities they selected. Charisma, confidence, inspiration and drive clearly were most important as performance qualities to the interviewees. Three of the six participants selected these qualities as ones they would most want to see in their principals. The performance qualities of humor and casting were identified next as being important qualities. There was only one participant who selected each, and no one in the study selected emotiveness, gregariousness or theatrics, as a quality they felt was most important to the effective principal role. Table 3 lists all participants and characterizes the conclusions of the participant's responses.

Table 3

Summary of Participants Most Valued Traits

Participants	Charisma	Confidence	Emotiveness	Humor	Inspiration	Drive	Gregariousness	Theatrics	Casting
Dr. Hughes	X	X							X
Dr. Sparks	X			X					
Ms. Rapp	X				X	X			
Ms. Clarke		X			X	X			
Ms. Bird		X			X	X			
Totals	3	3	0	1	3	3	0	0	1

When asked if there were any other performance qualities that I had failed to consider in the study, Ms. Bird suggested the word connectiveness. Unless you are connected in some way

to the people that you work with, it is difficult to lead them. As the word connectiveness was discussed, we were able to tie several of the performance words into her definition. To stretch that to performance, it may be that some of those qualities allow the performer to come out in the principal in order to be connected to their audience.

Primary Theme 3: Districts Supported Professional Development for Both Aspiring and Practicing Principals

The topic of leadership training for principals and principal candidates emerged in discussions surrounding performance qualities. Ultimately, performance qualities were a focus of professional development, but not necessarily an emphasis through hiring protocol. Since all participants and their corporations were more apt to hire from within for principal positions, it was important to learn more about what training was being provided in order to prepare them for the vital role of principal. Training was not part of the original intent of the study. This non-linear discussion moved to whether any performance qualities were targeted within that training. Not only were most principals hired from within, but also most training provided them was from within the corporation. The participants viewed this inside training and hiring practice as a positive occurrence, but no research was conducted as to the effectiveness.

Internal

Dr. Sparks shared information concerning a leadership-training program that has lapsed over the last few years. "We're attempting to get what we call our Leadership Academy started again. We've asked principals to nominate potential administrators that they see taking on the roles in the building now." The Academy targets those internal teachers and curriculum coaches who would make strong leaders. The original program was started under the leadership of a previous superintendent. She went on to explain the academy as

the next step of teacher leadership. There are a couple [of teachers] that we were able to

pull from those ranks that are the workhorses. You know the volume of work that they

are able to do and the stress they are able of handle.

Dr. Sparks believed those were the teachers who would make the most effective

principals. They were the natural leaders that stepped up whenever needed. They had already

had opportunities to prove themselves by what they were doing in the teaching ranks. She went

on to share,

> [During the Leadership Academy, we] have really focused on collaboration and the
>
> collaborative aspect in this work in our Leadership Academies. Another focus of the
>
> academy is that of customer service. They learn more about identifying and working
>
> with parents, businesses, teachers, and community organizations. We have encouraged
>
> teachers who didn't necessarily want to be a principal to take advantage of these
>
> academies.

Dr. Hughes, who works closely with Dr. Sparks in Little Carter, would love to see more

of an intern program. She believed by getting some of the best candidates into an intern program

they would flourish when they earned that [principal] seat. They made no mention of

performance qualities in their training program.

Ms. Patterson brought attention to the coaching aspect of any training they provide. It

was the responsibility of the directors to assess the needs of principals and to provide appropriate

assistance. In transitioning a new principal, they focused much of their conversations around the

"community relations piece and the communications piece" of being an effective principal. They

believed that the better the communication, the more successful the principal.

How that ties back to performance qualities is a topic that was not pursued. She also described many teacher leaders that she believed would be fabulous principals, but, "they want to be teacher leaders and so you want to value their decision there too, because there is a need for both [strong principals and teacher leaders]." Ms. Rapp was also concerned with the communication aspect of the principal's role,

> I coach a lot on that [communication] with principals, cause its amazing how many principals come in and aren't as confident in that area, and it is essential to be good in that. I find that's probably a coaching area.

She shared that when Ms. Patterson came into the principalship, she didn't need help with communication, "But there's a couple of people who really did need a coach." Ms. Rapp saw her role as the facilitator for improvement. She assisted principals by matching strengths with areas of concern within her administrators.

Ms. Patterson agreed that because the assistant principals were given opportunity for the professional development provided to the principals, it made them more viable for any positions that may come open. So internal training allowed them to cultivate their own principals. Ms. Patterson contended, "I also think it is why a lot of our assistant principals have advantages to these because they see our programs, they see the things that we coach." The training has put them into an advantageous position once a vacancy becomes available. In the training that Ms. Rapp made available she insisted,

> I swear it is because of the development that goes on, we do leadership. One of the things I do is meet once a month with principals and then in the afternoon of that day, I do a leadership meeting with assistant principals, and that's really to keep them in the loop. The assistants used to say that no one ever met with them and no body ever

developed us, now we do. So you have to look overall, do they have the package of

what's needed there, and knowing that, the coaching part is just like a principal does with

teachers.

Mrs. Patterson shared,

Dr. Ritz [State Superintendent of Public Education] also started the leadership academy

last year, and that was basically for any administrator, teacher, anybody ever interested in

something other than their role like a leadership type role and we came together like three

times last year.

Mrs. Rapp added,

It was even if you were interested in being at central office. So we had our principals

who were great principals come into this too. So it was really good because it allowed us

to see who was interested in leadership positions. Who is here? How do they interact

with the people? It was really very helpful.

Ms. Clarke spoke about their internal training program that they referred to as clusters.

Teachers and administrator were involved in the clusters. As she described them, they replicated

what others may call PLCs.

They have cluster, which is our PD each week, they are part of that cluster, and they

have to know what is going on. The master teachers lead it, but they support it, they have

to truly understand what the instructional goals are for the building and for their cluster

groups based on their own data.

When sharing about the training that occurred during the PLCs in Boulevard County

School Corporation, Ms. Bird stated,

We do it all ourselves, we started out when we went into the PLC model, five years ago we started out with a huge push for teachers and actually with administrators and board members. We did that initially so that they would have a capacity on the topic, and then we moved into, I think the first year we took 225 teachers on the Summer Learning Summit.

Rather than sending teachers and administrators out to other locations for training, Mrs. Bird claimed, "All PD is in house. We are strong enough that we can, and our principals are strong." They do contract with outside groups such as Solutions Tree and Marzano Research Lab, but use their own people to deliver the staff development.

External

In Fruitvale, Ms. Clarke shared that once principals were hired they continued to provide professional development opportunities,

We learn every day and we do PD with our principals on an on-going basis, we have national experts that come in and meet with our principals during the year several times. As a leader, I am learning as well, so we look for someone [principal candidate] that is open, and can value other people's expertise.

Ms. Clarke wanted her newly-hired principals to know the principal's job was one that you continue to grow in. They must be willing and able to learn and develop. She believed that it was sometimes important to hear from outside experts either by attending conferences or bringing in those national experts. They do also provide many internal opportunities for professional growth from within the ranks of their own central office staff members.

Ms. Bird was trained as a principal to evaluate teachers using the Teacher Perceiver (Young & Delli, 2002). She remembered there being certain characteristics that led to a quality

teacher. "We got the training and had to be retrained and practice to keep certification." She saw the value in looking for specific characteristic. It allowed for consistency in hiring practices. She was aware that there was also training available with the Principal Perceiver (Young & Delli, 2002) and the Central Office Perceiver (Young & Delli, 2002). In her role at Boulevard, however, most of the training for principals was done from within.

With the funding cuts that have hit most school corporations in the past several years, opportunities to send principals and teachers for outside training or workshops have dwindled. The cost of paying for national experts to provide onsite training has also been cost prohibitive. In the short term, the lack of funding may have a minimal effect, but the long term may cause ideas and growth to become stagnant. The participants included in this study believed strongly that their best resources were the people that currently worked within the confines of their own corporation.

Summary

Six hiring managers were asked to voluntarily contribute to this study. They were interviewed to acquire an in-depth understanding of current hiring practices and the pros and cons of those practices. Primary themes in this study included (a) hiring protocols, (b) performance qualities and, (c) training.

All practices in hiring included a team of people to identify the newest principal for each school. In all corporations included in the study, a strong practice of hiring candidates from within the school corporation was prevalent. There was an overwhelmingly positive attitude about the internal candidates who had been hired in the past, and an assumed desire to continue to hire within. The process used in the selection of new school leaders was not met with a raving review.

When reviewing the nine performance qualities shared during the interview process, all participants selected three qualities they believed were most important. Charisma, confidence, inspiration and drive clearly were most important as performance qualities to the interviewees. Three of the six participants selected these qualities. The performance qualities of humor and casting were next to be identified as important qualities, and no one selected emotiveness, As a quality, gregariousness or theatrics, they felt was most important to the effective principal role.

Because most new principals were selected from within the corporation in which the candidate was employed, it was even more important to provide quality training and professional development opportunities for those who were targeted as potential leaders. Due to the hierarchy in the corporations, many assistant principals had ample training under fire prior to being given the opportunity to step into the principal role.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This qualitative case-study allowed for a deeper investigation into the principal interview process and the performance qualities identified in effect principals. This study was sparked by the curiosity of understanding if acting like an effective school principal, resulted in being an effective principal? The question of what performance qualities hiring managers perceive their successful principals utilize was also investigated.

In a study by DiSalvo (2008), she found indications that there are common characteristics between educational leadership and acting. "Principals exhibit theatrical acting behaviors in their leadership roles and consciously incorporate theatrical acting behaviors in their communication practices" (DiSalvo, 2008, p. 214).

Each of the four school corporations that participated in this study consisted of a minimum of 10,000 students. It was anticipated that with a larger student population, there would also be more school facilities yielding more principal positions and increased use of hiring protocol. This would also expand the potential for newly hired principals. All hiring managers included in this study had recently hired new principals and had a fresh perspective of the process used and the results of the most recent hires.

The overall findings of this study brought to light that in most cases, performance qualities were not purposely identified and sought after during the interview process. It was also

noted that the process for hiring new principals and the hiring of internal candidates had been grounded in past practice rather than a system for interviewing. Becoming a principal is not just a business, as Dr. Sparks noted earlier, it is much like joining an on-line dating service to get the right fit. Since a qualitative case study was used for this research, mistakes could have been made and personal bias interfered (Merriam, 1998). All observations and analyses of data were filtered through my worldview and, therefore, do not contain the protocols and design set forth within quantitative design. There may be bias of those in positions who hire principals toward those principals they were responsible for hiring. In interviewing six hiring managers, it was clear that they were committed to the principals that had been recently hired and were invested in their success. Because most of the recent hires to principal positions were internal candidates, the strong bias toward internal candidates was evidenced. This bias limits hiring protocol and influences hiring decisions.

It was interesting that all respondents in the request to participate in this study were women. My own personal bias led me to falsely assume that most hiring managers in the largest school corporations in the state of Indiana would be men. I was incorrect.

There were three overarching themes in this study that emerged during the interviews with six hiring managers practicing in four school corporations. The first theme revealed that hiring protocols are regularly utilized, but not necessarily focused on specific performance qualities. The second theme indicated that hiring managers intuitively sought out performance qualities in internal candidates' prior formal interviews, or may develop a sense for performance qualities in external candidates during an interview, but do not have specific interview protocol addressing performance qualities. The third theme suggested that performance qualities are

more specifically addressed through professional development for both aspiring and practicing principals.

Hiring Protocols Are Regularly Utilized But Not Focused on Performance Qualities

Systems for hiring are a prevalent part of each school corporation involved in this study. An exploration of the tools for questioning found few items that connected the principalship to performance. Business and industry CEO of MAP, Leo Froschhieser (2013) made the connection of leadership and acting.

> Like good actors, good leaders become the character of the moment, and their success depends greatly on the purity of their belief. Ironic but true, good acting is one of the strategies good leaders use to communicate with credibility, build trust among their people, and motivate others. (p. 1)

Three subthemes informed the discussion for hiring protocols. The first subtheme that emerged was team approach, which is the practice of using a team of stakeholders to interview and make a recommendation of a new principal. The second identified subtheme was hiring within which is the practice of elevating current employees into the rank of principal. The third subtheme investigated current interview questioning as past protocols emerged from the conversational line of this qualitative study.

In comparing the team approach of the interview process to the cattle calls of the performance industry, parallels can be made. The teams and committees assigned to the daunting task of naming the newest principal from a list of candidates generally consisted of central office administrators, teachers, parents, and support staff. They are pulled together for this specific objective with little interaction either before or after the interviews. Ms. Clark commented, "One thing I have noticed on all our committees, they really look for a person that

listens to them." The working relationship in both a school and a theater company depends on people listening to one another. Just as characters on stage must play off of one another to portray the richness of the role, the characters in the schools must have a dynamic that builds the climate, and over time, the culture of the school. Ms. Clarke went on to say, "Our principals are in a role that is different than it used to be, and they have to be able to entertain teachers, as well as entertain kids." The discussions generated over the consistent practice of running candidates through teams of interviewers did nothing to solidify this as best practice. This finding was not surprising and aligned with the research conclusions of Purser (2014) who identified pros and cons for using group interviews.

Pros:

- Allows employers to quickly qualify and/or eliminate first-round candidates

- Has the potential to create camaraderie and relax candidates

- Takes them out of a natural interview environment, allowing for less-prepared answers

- Forces candidates to speak up and show interest in the company

- Allows interviewers to see a candidate's natural reaction to a team environment

- If including more than one manager, allows for more objectivity in candidate assessment

Cons:

- Competition-focused

- Could overshadow quiet, equally qualified candidates

- Could produce an unnatural response, but this could be true for all interview types

- Requires creativity in implementing

- Requires a longer time period to execute, often one to two hours

- Usually requires more than one manager to execute effectively (p. 1)

The effectiveness of the team or cattle call interview was only as effective as the people involved and the questions asked. "Effective leaders surround themselves with the right people and build on each person's strengths. Yet in most cases, leadership teams are a product of circumstance more than design" (Rath & Conchie, 2008, p. 21). Perhaps this study can lead to a more focused approach to building the right teams to include in the interview and the broader range of questions to ask. I anticipated those involved in this study were more likely to look for performance qualities in the interview process simply due to n heightened awareness to the benefits of those qualities in the principal role.

Since all of the participants were more likely to hire from within, hiring managers all had opportunity to see the candidates in action in their pre-administrative roles. I frequently tell potential principal candidates that their job interview does not start when I call you into the office. It starts the moment I meet you and it contains all the comments I hear in the schools and community along the way. I am very apt to go see a new movie that has just been released based upon a particular actor, or not go for the same reason. It is the past performances that have helped me make my decision for my entertainment choices, and it is my past experiences that also guide my decisions in casting the role of principal. Dr. Sparks was also concerned with candidates who do not have a history within the community, "We've had principals come in and completely wowed us in terms or their interviewing skills and then in practice it was completely different." The practice of hiring principals from within the corporation was not a surprising finding. Again, the intent of the study was not focused on whether candidates were selected from within or outside of the corporation, but rather looked at performance qualities within those

hired. To assess how that was done, it was required to look deeper into who was being hired. Waters, Marzano, & McNulty (2003) reported a correlational effect size of .19 of administrative relationships to student achievement. Relationships were identified as, "The extent to which the principal demonstrates as awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff" (Waters et al., 2003, p. 11). In interviewing and hiring internal candidates, those relationships that Waters et al. found to be vital to student achievement have already been forged in the community. It is no surprise that a team of school stakeholders charged with the task of identifying the strongest applicant for the role of principal would look first to those already identified in the community as having relational skills that can be tied to the performance skills of confidence and charisma.

Reflecting on my own experiences interviewing for my first principal job, I remember not so fondly trying to anticipate what each stakeholder group wanted to hear. The right answer for the corporation level group was not necessarily what the parent group thought was most important. The teachers on the committee were committed to finding someone who allowed flexibility and freedom and the school board was looking for someone to shake things up. The team was no team at all. Fortunately over the years, we have gradually moved to a process in which the central office staff solicits input from the stakeholders, but are in the best position to see from a global perspective what the needs of the school are and the direction it needs to move. Hiring decisions are made at the corporation level now.

So what does that mean if corporations continue to use teams in the interview process? Rather than simply throwing a group together at the last minute when an opening occurs, a team could be training as a true collaborative group to work toward a common goal.

Regarding the actual tools used in selecting the best and brightest to lead our schools, what I discovered were more conversation guides and screening instruments. Rubrics were

loosely tied to questions, but relied heavily on gut reaction over practiced scripts. Information

garnered in the interview was rated very subjectively. Dr. Sparks shared, "You have this

opportunity to select great people and when it is an epic fail, then it's, how was I so blinded?"

Being blinded was a lack of deep questioning and background follow-through in most of the

cases that participants referred to. Looking back at the interview questions provided by the

participants, it would be easy for a candidate to recite the rehearsed monolog without any regard

to how he or she might really react to a situation. Changing up the questioning could add a new

dimension to the interview. After searching for a variety of questions used in principal

interviews, very few strayed away from items dealing with professional development, conflicts,

and student learning. "If your life was a movie, who would play the lead role?" (Sterrett, 2013,

para. 8). This question allows for an opportunity to think on your feet, show some humor, or

focus on your skills as a performer.

Performance Qualities Were Predetermined to Inform the Interview Process

The nine performance qualities as indicated in Table 3 (p. 70) were used to drive the

discussion around how principals use, or do not use, those performance qualities. These

performance qualities were inspired by research of Dunklee (2000). What this study uncovered

was reflective in comments from Ms. Rapp, "I'm going to say that your questions are beginning

to intrigue me, because I would say that we don't ask a lot of questions about how they would

perform as a speaker in front of a group." She also recognized that "we cannot be all things to

all people, but you have to pretend like you can."

Research suggests that acting and performing serve as elements of effective leadership.

Egnal (2013), author of *Acting Lessons for CEOs* stated,

> When Shakespeare wrote that 'All the world's a stage,' he could have been talking about executives. From town halls to phone calls, every interaction represents a leadership tool. So if you want to be a successful executive, take a lesson from the screen and stage world and act like one. (p. 2)

I began this study assuming that current interview questions used were not centered on performance qualities, but I believed that hiring managers still looked for them whether consciously or not. What I discovered was that all of the participants included in the study had not given it much forethought. One outcome of this study is that they do now.

I was able to reduce the nine performance qualities to four dominant qualities—charisma, confidence, inspiration, and drive, as seen in Figure 2 (see p. 92). This was accomplished through detailed discussions of what qualities study participants saw and admired in their best principals. Dr. Hughes said of performance qualities, "Until you really know what talents and skills everybody has, you don't know who to bring to the table." Once those talents are identified the hiring managers are able to begin to cast principals into the appropriate roles.

Charisma was identified by the participants of this study as an important performance quality and was defined for this study as an air of likability. Synonyms are charm and personality. In a study of charisma in superintendents, Younker (2013) summarized that most superintendents do not identify themselves as charismatic. That being the case, principals would most likely follow suit. She found that, "School boards seeking a candidate with transformational qualities or charisma would need to focus on the years of experience of a superintendent candidate" (Younker, 2013, p. 63). The years of experience were more closely aligned to charisma. "A leader with years of experience is more likely to exhibit the characteristic of charisma" (Younker, 2013, p. 60). Given that understanding for

superintendents, more research would need to be conducted to determine if experience is also a factor in identifying charismatic principals. Why does charisma matter?

The very term charisma draws controversy and debate from some who claim that it is merely salesmanship—a *slick* means for influencing others to buy into something that has no merit on it's own. Yet, it is possible that this might be one of the most effective leadership traits when organizational change is needed (Younker, 2013, p.57).

What does a charismatic leader look like? We can all point to someone we know whether in a church pulpit, political rally, or on stage at the theater. They command our attention and make it difficult to turn away. Whatever the message, we are inspired to take action or make changes. It is more the way they send the message rather then what the message is. Ann Landers is quoted as saying, "There are really only three kinds of people. Those who make things happen, those that watch things happen and those who say, *What happened*?" (as cited in Raudsepp, 1981, p. 47).

Confidence was identified as a second important performance quality identified in this study. Confidence was defined as decisive in comments and interactions. Another definition of confidence is the self-assurance in one's abilities. Whether confident or over-confident, we expect our leaders to display this performance quality. Frederick Grove stated "Very great achievements are brought about by passion and emotion rather than by practice, training, and knowledge" (as cited in Raudsepp, 1981, p. 1). Implied in this quote is the fact that good leaders do not have to know much, they just need to think they do. Confidence in itself does not make for an effective principal, but the participants in this study felt strongly that it was needed along with the skills and knowledge of the principalship to become an effective principal. "From the quietly confident doctor whose advice we rely on, to the charismatic confidence of an inspiring

speaker, self-confident people have qualities that everyone admires" (Mindtools, 2015, p. 1). If being admired brings with it an ability to lead, confidence is a performance quality that can be put to good use.

What does confidence look like? Confidence in the world of education is the ability to stand up in front of 600 five to 12-year olds and dance or dress up as a leprechaun. It is being able to stand facing an angry crowd of parents and winning them over; it is addressing a school board regarding a new educational initiative. Confidence is doing what others would like to do, but do not.

Inspiration was identified as another important performance quality in this study. The ability to motivate and encourage was a defining characteristic. Another definition of inspiration is the ability to influence others. Covey (2008) described his pyramid of influence:

> The base of the pyramid is *Modeling*, or example. Example is what is *seen*. Good example is what creates leadership credibility. Good example is what allows a teacher to believe what a principal has to say. Leaders themselves must be trustworthy. . . . The next level of the pyramid, *Relating*, represents the quality of the relationships we have with others. . . . The pinnacle of the Pyramid of Influence is *Teaching*. (pp. 167-168)

Covey's (2008) descriptions of influencing factors rely heavily on the modeling behaviors of leaders. The living of the expectations for others is what inspires them to follow and strive to be their best. I often have said and heard others interject, "I don't ask anyone else to do something I wouldn't do myself." It is that inspiration that the subjects of this study held up so highly in their expectations for principal candidates.

What does inspiration look like? When researching inspiration, a myriad of inspirational quotes appeared. It led me to ponder if inspiration is a more reflective or internal quality.

Kaufman (2001) in the *Harvard Business Review* stated,

> In a culture obsessed with measuring talent and ability, we often overlook the important role of inspiration. Inspiration awakens us to new possibilities by allowing us to transcend our ordinary experiences and limitations. Inspiration propels a person from apathy to possibility, and transforms the way we perceive our own capabilities. Inspiration may sometimes be overlooked because of its elusive nature. Its history of being treated as supernatural or divine hasn't helped the situation. But as recent research shows, inspiration can be activated, captured, and manipulated, and it has a major effect on important life outcomes. (para. 1)

Kaufman (2001) was referring to research by Thrash and Elliot who developed the Inspirational Scale designed to measure how frequently subjects experienced inspiration. This may be the performance quality that is least understood by hiring managers other than recognizing it needs to be done.

The principal leadership responsibility identified as *optimizer* by Walters et al. (2003) requires principals who "inspire and lead new and challenging innovations" (p. 4). They discovered a .20 correlational effect size for principal who demonstrated the skills of an optimizer.

Drive was identified as a final important performance quality identified by this study and was defined as perseverance and determination. "We have three innate psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When those needs are satisfied, we're motivated, productive and happy" (Pink, 2009, p. 72). It is when those needs are satisfied that Pink (2009) believed internal drive is optimal. The participants in this study believed the performance quality of drive was necessary in effective principals.

What does drive look like? Being affiliated with Indiana State University since the age of 11, it is only fitting I use the most famous ISU graduate to illustrate the quality of drive. Larry Bird *is* what drive looks like. In his book entitled *Drive*, Bird (1989) described his laser-like focus in an effort to be the best at whatever task at hand.

> I would play at 6 A.M. before school. I would duck into the gym in between classes to get a few shots up and play again after school and into the early hours of the next morning, feeling that sleep was a rude intrusion on my practice time. (pp. 5-6)

It is that kind of unyielding focus that leads athletes, business leaders, and principals to be the best they can be. It is not the natural talent, but the work ethic that pushes that natural ability to a higher level. If hiring managers observe principal candidates leave work at 3:15 p.m. and beat the students out of the door, the work ethic of drive may be missing. Effective principals are not the first ones done, but the ones who do things right with extra effort.

Districts Support Professional Development for Both Aspiring and Practicing Principals

Although performance qualities may not be an overt assessment of candidacy through hiring protocol, performance qualities were still addressed and manifested in two distinct ways: training that was orchestrated internally and training that was contracted from an external source. Whether this was because of financial restraints or a conscious effort to spend taxpayer money more wisely, most training was done internally. By using internal staff members to provide training for both principals and principal candidates, the needs of the corporation are sure to be focused. Central office administrators who know the strengths and weaknesses of their principals are able to target specific training to each. As stated by Ms. Clarke, "Because our 11 elementary principals are different, one great leader in one building may not be a great leader in this building because the culture is so different." She is able to cater to the needs of each

principal and each building under her direction. A team member on the interview committee would not be privy to the innuendos and back stories within the school and corporation. The culture and climate are the stage for the performance to occur; good leadership is equivalent to a good performance. "If you want to turn talent into performance, you have to position each person so that you are paying her to do what she is naturally wired to do. You have to cast her in the right role" (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 148).

The practice of providing leadership training or workshops to aspiring administrators was also a common practice. It was there that hiring managers could observe fledgling leaders come into their own under their watchful eyes. This mirrors the process of the cattle call as in acting when the aspiring leaders are able to rehearse as an understudy for the part of principal.

Professional development and training can take many forms. Rather than a broad stroke approach, focus must be paid to the needs of the learner. Although Danielson's (2011) framework for teachers is being used as a rating system for teachers, the original intent was much broader.

> The Framework may be used for many purposes, but its full value is realized as the foundation for professional conversations among practitioners as they seek to enhance their skill in the complex task of teaching. The Framework may be used as the foundation of a school or district's mentoring, coaching, professional development, and teacher evaluation processes, thus linking all those activities together and helping teachers become more thoughtful practitioners. (Danielson, 2011, p. 1).

Though not occurring often in these identified corporations, some external training has taken place in the past. Funding concerns have all but eliminated national workshops and conferences. Corporations that desire some outside influences are more apt to bring in

consultants as residential trainers to work with their schools and principals. It may be some time before it is realized whether the inbreeding of training has a negative, positive, or negligible effect.

Why is providing training and professional development important to principal candidates? As seen in this study, hiring managers, more often than not, hire their own internal candidates. By providing appropriate and specific professional development opportunities, the pool of potential principal candidates only becomes stronger.

Implications

Although generalizing from this case study to other school districts is not appropriate, there are insights that can be derived from the hiring managers who participated in the study as well as recommendations for future research based on lessons learned. Ms. Clarke generalized her hiring manager role as, "I'm looking for, in all cases, a strong leader that is a person who understands their value but understands the value of others as well." Whether a performer or a wallflower, when it came down to it, all participants in this study believed as Dr. Hughes did that, "We look for someone who is a good communicator."

Revised Conceptual Framework

Based on the study findings and conclusions from this study, my conceptual framework as introduced in Chapter 3 was revised and is a refined visualization of the school leader as found in Figure 2. It addresses my first research question as to whether acting as an effective principal results in being an effective principal. The model now depicts four essential characteristics that were modified from Dunklee (2000) to describe effective principals, in part. If a candidate possesses the knowledge and skill that makes him or her a viable candidate as a

school principal, as seen in the first rectangle, he or she would fall into the category of a manager as indicated by the downward arrow.

Figure 2. Revised principal performance qualities.

Knowledge and skills would be those basic understandings of school functionality in both educational process and building management. If that same candidate also possessed the talent to put those skills and knowledge into practice, they would move into the category of leader. The talent would be the lens in which the skills are used. The talent is the skills and knowledge within the confines of integrity, honesty, tactfulness, and reliability. The talent may be focused to promote the growth of students and/or teachers, but they are merely players. It is the principal that orchestrates the school. The talent can also be the ability to build a team or culture that supports the skill and knowledge. If the lens of talent were used with dishonesty or unreliability, a leader would have a negative impact rather than positive, but could still be considered a leader. It is the effective principal category that leaders strive for.
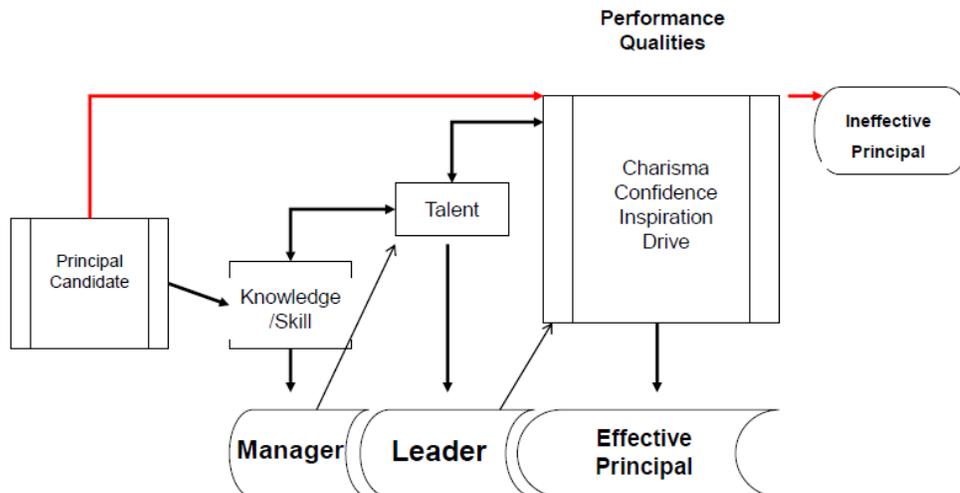

Figure 2. Revised principal performance qualities.

My research sought greater understanding of which performance qualities (as noted in Figure 2) are needed for effective leadership. As a result of my study, these now include charisma, confidence, inspiration, and drive. This is a reduction in qualities from the original nine used during the interview process (See Figure 3). The subject of my study selected those performance qualities that they found most useful in the role of principal. The talent lens still directs (i.e., influences) the positive or negative effects of the leader even with the performance qualities.

It is not to say that once a manager always a manager. It is conceivable that one with knowledge and skills in a manager role would be capable of developing the talents and move into a leadership role. Thus, with time and practice a leader who develops or taps into his or her own performance qualities could become an effective principal.

Looking at a principal candidate who only possesses performance qualities, as indicated by the red line (see Figure 2), it signifies that he or she would fall into the ineffective principal category. In order to be effective, a leader must also have the knowledge, skill, and talent to support the performance qualities listed. With a leader who possesses only performance qualities, the double-headed arrows show that it is not impossible to develop talent, skill, and knowledge in order to become effective but may be more difficult to obtain. Just as in a play, the curtain closes once the acting is over. Performance qualities alone cannot sustain the school. So, what is it that can be taken from this study? For those teachers or teacher leaders aspiring to become principals, one's first principal's job will probably be in the corporation in which you are currently employed. Do not take that for granted. Take advantage of professional development opportunities and step into leadership roles now. Hiring managers are watching and taking note of your strengths and weaknesses. They are watching how you perform under pressure. Do not

be disheartened if you do not get the first job you apply for. As clearly expressed by the hiring

managers in this study, they are looking for someone to fit a particular role. You may not fill the

bill for the first job, but your big break out role may come in the next opening.

Implications for Hiring Managers

A recommendation for hiring managers derived from this research would be to

investigate the practices that are currently in place for interviewing principals. Are these

practices in place because they are valid and reliable or simply because that is the way they have

always been conducted in the past? Are the right people involved in those hiring practices? Is

there consistency in the desired qualities of principals? Is there alignment between what is

desirable in a candidate and the question protocol? Current hiring managers need to have

discussions about past practice by answering, in part, the preceding questions. It is all too easy

to fall back into established habits of hiring while in the midst of it. Having conversations and

making decisions when it is not a pressing issue allows for a more open and thorough dialog.

Conversations around the types of performances that principals are expected to exhibit in concert

with position expectations will help generate questions or scenarios to draw out and understand

the potential for performance qualities as an effective principal. Rubrics for appraisal and

updated candidate questions could be tied to the most current expectations and practices for

administrators.

With the Indiana RISE (IDOE, 2012) evaluation rubric, or other approved model,

candidate questions could be tied to the expectations of evaluation. I found that most are not.

The IDOE's Indiana RISE evaluation is based upon Danielson's (2011) *Framework for*

Teaching.

The Framework for Teaching is a research-based set of components of instruction, aligned to the INTASC standards, and grounded in a constructivist view of learning and teaching. The Framework may be used for many purposes, but its full value is realized as the foundation for professional conversations among practitioners as they seek to enhance their skill in the complex task of teaching. The Framework may be used as the foundation of a school or district's mentoring, coaching, professional development, and teacher evaluation processes, thus linking all those activities together and helping teachers become more thoughtful practitioners. (Danielson, 2011, p. 1)

Indiana has developed a principal rubric that is modeled after the one designed for teachers. Again, this rubric could be used for mentoring, coaching and professional development, but I anticipate that it probably is not. Perhaps this is another area for research.

Although most hiring managers in this study acknowledged to hiring from within the ranks of their current district employees, another implication would be to ensure that employees are given every opportunity to fulfill their potential by providing as much training and professional development as possible regarding effective leadership. Professional development offerings should be delivered in a variety of ways. Just as an understudy works alongside the lead actor in order to step in at a moment's notice, an under-principal could work alongside as a proxy for the time that they get their big break into the principalship. If you are going to hire within, you must train within as well. Suggested delivery options include study groups, grade level teams, Principal intern projects, leadership focus groups or targeted faculty meetings.

A third implication is much more subtle. It is suggested that a greater awareness and understanding of principal performance qualities be pursued as a measure of effectiveness. There are numerous daily opportunities for principals to take the stage in their own schools—

morning announcements, parent meetings, assemblies, faculty meetings, welcoming new parents and kindergarteners to their first school experience, speaking before the School Board, or presenting at a service organization within the community. The mere recognition that principals are put on stage both at school and in the community brings a different meaning to the role of principal. The show must go on.

Implications for Future Research

With the limited number of participants involved in this study, it is recommended that future studies incorporate a broader demographic of participants. This study was limited to those corporations with 10,000 or more students in order to control the scope of the research. Urban results may be vastly different than rural, suburban, and metropolitan areas. By broadening the study to differing demographics, a more comprehensive study will help to inform the use of performance qualities.

There are 21 school districts in the state of Indiana that consist of 10,000 or more students. When I developed the contact list of both secondary directors and elementary directors, I discovered that of those 21 school districts, only nine of the 42 (21.4%) directors were men and the remaining 33 (78.5%) being women. Although the gender of hiring managers was not a descriptor in the study, it might be considered in future studies.

It would be worthy of investigation to discuss whether male or female hiring managers perceive performance qualities in the same manner. In doing so, a larger sample would be required to test validity. A study that involves additional hiring stakeholders other than hiring managers should be considered. By broadening from hiring managers to human resource personnel and superintendents included the study, it would be interesting to see if their perceptions regarding performance qualities were consistent with those of hiring managers.

This study initially began with nine performance qualities that were narrowed to four most desired qualities in an effective principal by the participants of this study. Building on this study, one might use the reduced list of those performance qualities and replicate the interviews. This would provide a narrower focus for discussion. Further research into the qualities themselves would provide a better basis for the inclusion of these four performance qualities as important to effective principals.

Another course of research would be to develop a quantitative survey surrounding the four qualities to garner information from a larger sample of hiring managers. This would allow a richer understanding of how hiring managers view the use of performance qualities in their effective principals and if there is a significant prediction that can be made based upon those qualities. Can effectiveness be inferred based upon performance qualities? A study assessing performance qualities among newly hired principals would greatly inform hiring managers for future interviews. Do the newly employed principals recognize performance qualities in themselves and if so, do they value them? If the study by Younker (2013) found that superintendents did not recognize the quality of charisma in themselves, will principals recognize their own performance qualities, or does it take someone observing them to assess those qualities? A final study could be one that develops a question protocol using the performance qualities as the underlying basis for both discussions and ratings of principal candidates.

As William Shakespeare (n.d.) professed, "All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts . . ." (p. 498). I must confess that all my world has been a school, and in all the many

parts I have played as teacher, principal, or hiring manager, I have been merely a player within that world of school.

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APPENDIX A: INITIAL TELEPHONE TRANSCRIPT TO REQUEST PARTICIPATION

"Hello, my name is Christi Fenton, and I am a doctorial student with Indiana State University. I am conducting a research case study about hiring practices as they relate to the use of performance qualities of principals. I am inviting hiring managers in corporations in the state of Indiana with enrollments of 10,000 or more to participate. I hope that either you or one of the other central office administrators in your corporation responsible for hiring principals would be willing to provide me with an interview."

"I would like to visit your corporation and conduct an interview at a date that is convenient for you. At that time we will review your rights as a human subject and there will be a consent form to sign. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and you may withdraw from participation at any time. I have a series of 17 questions regarding hiring principals. It should take only 60 minutes of your time, including the time to review and sign the consent form."

"I am required to keep all responses, whether they are handwritten or digitally recorded, confidential. I will only report aggregated results in any published dissertation. Participants will not be referred to by their given names, but will be assigned a pseudonym, such as John Jones."

"Would you be interested in participating in an interview? What would be a good date for the interview? Would you want a phone call/text 24 hours before the interview as a reminder?

"Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview for this research study. I will be sending a follow up e-mail to confirm your participation. If you need to contact me, please call me at (812) 462-4228 or email me at caf@vigoschools.org. I look forward to seeing you on

_____.

APPENDIX B: REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY WITH FOLLOW-UP

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

You are being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Christi Fenton and Dr. Brad Balch from the Educational Leadership Department at Indiana State University. This research is being conducted for the completion of a doctoral dissertation. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are the administrator responsible for hiring principals in your corporation.

- **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this qualitative case-study design is to identify and better understand the performance qualities that are prevalent in successful principals through a deeper understanding of the principal interview process.

- **PROCEDURES**

You will be asked to participate in a one-hour interview at your office. The interview will be audio taped, in addition to notes recorded by the researcher. You will be contacted via email for an optional follow-up interview to review your transcripts and cross check your responses. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may decline to participate at any time during the process. You will not be contacted in the future if you choose not to participate in the study. The interview questions will be directed toward your experiences as a hiring manager in hiring school principals.

- **POTENTIAL RISKS AND BENEFITS**

There is no direct benefit for participating in this study. The risks related to participating in this study are minimal. This study will benefit the field of education through increased awareness of the performance qualities used by effective principals.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The researcher will protect the confidentiality of the respondents by all means possible. Each school will be assigned a pseudonym on the master code list. Any identifiable information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and as required by law and will

be disclosed only with your permission. The master code list will be stored in my home office in a locked file cabinet. At the end of the required storage period, all data collected, including audiotapes, will be shredded and destroyed.

• **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You may choose whether or not to participate this study. If you volunteer to participate, you may withdraw at any time without consequences. You may also refuse to answer any questions during the interview process. There is no penalty to withdraw from the study at any time.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact:

Christi A. Fenton   Dr. Brad Balch, Professor
Principal Investigator   College of Education, Dean
Vigo County School Corporation   Indiana State University
686 Wabash Ave.   Bayh College of Education
Terre Haute, IN 47804   Terre Haute, IN 47809
(812) 462-4228   (812) 237-2888
caf@vigoschools.org   brad.balch@indstate.edu

• **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at Indiana State University, Office of Sponsored Programs, Terre Haute, IN 47809, by phone at (812) 237-8217, or e-mail the IRB at irb@indstate.edu. You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with ISU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____
Printed Name of Subject

_____   _____
Signature of Subject   Date

Date of IRB Approval: 11-24-14
IRB Number: #631307
Project Expiration Date: 11-24-15

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following questions will be used to guide the interview process:

Hiring Manager Background Information

1. What is your current position?

2. How many years have you been an educator and in what roles have you served?

3. How many years have you served in your current position?

4. How many years have you served as an administrator with hiring responsibilities for principals?

Organizational Framework

1. Please describe your central office in terms of personnel and organization.

2. Is there an established protocol for hiring new principals within your school system?

3. If so, describe the established protocol?

4. Do you use the RISE Principal rubric in the hiring process, and if so, how?

5. Do you have any interview instruments or forms that guide the interview you would be willing to share?

Effective Leadership

1. What do you believe are the necessary qualities that define an *effective* school principal?

2. Describe how you identify and assess *effectiveness* qualities during the interview/hiring process.

3. Within the last five years, have you been more likely to hire new principals from within your school system or from outside the system? Why?

4. As you think about the last principal you hired in his or her current leadership position, describe examples in practice regarding these performance qualities.

- Charisma (e.g., an air of likability)

- Confidence (e.g., Decisive in comments and interactions)

- Emotiveness (e.g., Uses both body and facial gestures)

- Humor (e.g., The ability to use wit)

- Inspiration (e.g., The ability to motivate and encourage)

- Drive (e.g., perseverance and determination)

- Gregariousness (e.g., Openness or extroverted)

- Theatrics (e.g., having a flair about them)

- Casting (e.g., selection process for hiring)

5. How important is it to assess the following performance qualities during the interview process?

- Charisma (e.g., an air of likability)

- Confidence (e.g., Decisive in comments and interactions)

- Emotiveness (e.g., Uses both body and facial gestures)

- Humor (e.g., The ability to use wit)

- Inspiration (e.g., The ability to motivate and encourage)

- Drive (e.g., perseverance and determination)

- Gregariousness (e.g., Openness or extroverted)

- Theatrics (e.g., having a flair about them)

- Casting (e.g., selection process for hiring)

6. Related to the leader's role as an *actor,* how would you identify the following performance qualities during the interview process?

- Charisma (e.g., an air of likability)

- Confidence (e.g., Decisive in comments and interactions)

- Emotiveness (e.g., Uses both body and facial gestures)

- Humor (e.g., The ability to use wit)

- Inspiration (e.g., The ability to motivate and encourage)

- Drive (e.g., perseverance and determination)

- Gregariousness (e.g., Openness or extroverted)

- Theatrics (e.g., having a flair about them)

- Casting (e.g., selection process for hiring)

7. Thinking of performance qualities through the lens of acting, are there additional qualities that should be considered other than the nine we have discussed?

Conclusion

1. Is there anything else you would like to add before we conclude?

APPENDIX D: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD CONSENT FORM

Indiana State University
More. From day one.

Institutional Review Board

Terre Haute, Indiana 47809
812-237-3092
Fax 812-237-3092

DATE: November 24, 2014

TO: Christi Fenton, Ed.S.
FROM: Indiana State University Institutional Review Board

STUDY TITLE: [631307-2] All the school's a stage: the teachers and students merely players
SUBMISSION TYPE: Revision

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: November 24, 2014
EXPIRATION DATE: November 23, 2015
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # 6/7

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this research study. The Indiana State University Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission. The approval for this study expires on **November 23, 2015**.

Prior to the approval expiration date, if you plan to continue this study you will need to submit a continuation request (Form E) for review and approval by the IRB. Additionally, once you complete your study, you will need to submit the Completion of Activities report (Form G).

This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Informed Consent: Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. **NOTE: You must use the electronically stamped informed consent document that has been uploaded into IRBNet.**

Reporting of Problems: All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported. Any problems involving risk to subjects or others, injury or other adverse effects experienced by subjects, and incidents of noncompliance must be reported to the IRB Chairperson or Vice Chairperson via phone or e-mail immediately. Additionally, you must submit Form F electronically to the IRB through IRBNet within 5 working days after first awareness of the problem.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by the IRB prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

Modifications: Any modifications to this proposed study or to the informed consent form will need to be submitted using Form D for review and approval by the IRB prior to implementation.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years. If those research records involve health information, those records must be retained for a minimum of six years.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Kim Bodey within IRBNet by clicking on the study title on the "My Projects" screen and the "Send Project Mail" button on the left side of the "New Project Message" screen. I wish you well in completing your study.