

# A FOCUSSED LITERATURE REVIEW OF POWER AND INFLUENCE LEADERSHIP THEORIES

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## ABSTRACT

This Narrative Theoretical Literature Review relates to the evolution and translation of two contemporary leadership theories and anchors these to a leadership theory framework that demonstrates where they fit within the leadership theory body of knowledge.

This literature review was an integral part of the preparation for a mixed-methods study related to leadership in the aged care sector which has successfully concluded and one of the major findings of that yet unpublished study is that the followership is positively influenced in their work performance with a reduced turnover intention if they considered that their leader was authentic and ethical. Authentic and ethical leadership appear to be escalating in importance and translatability to the health and social care environments struggling with unmet workforce demands and high consumer expectations.

The review contains a description and timeline of the development of each of the theories included. This literature review is useful for investigating either or both leadership theories or their application to health and social care or designing leadership training programs or leader performance assessment tools.

## KEYWORDS

Leadership; Leadership Theories; Power and Influence Leadership Theories, Authentic Leadership, Ethical Leadership

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This narrative literature review places power and influence leadership theories within an overarching framework and categorises them within one section of a grouping framework for leadership theories. Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute to the organisation's effectiveness and success. [1] Power and influence leadership theories hold at their core that the relationship between a leader, the

followers, and the process of influence, enablement, and motivation determines the leader's success. This paper is also an opportunity to articulate a framework for all leadership theories to determine where authentic and ethical leadership theories fit.

It must be made clear that the grouping framework developed to achieve this deliberately omits discussion of

Great Man theories of leadership. The author acknowledges great man theories as early theories of leadership and agrees with Mouton that the theory remains widely in use but is treated with scant respect because it does not drive the course of events in more contemporary times and merely think that they do. [2]

Table 1. is the grouping framework used and identifies notable researchers and authors who have developed and explained the theories, and it provides a broad development timeline.

**TABLE 1. GROUPING FRAMEWORK FOR LEADERSHIP THEORIES**

THEORY GROUP	EXPLANATION	RESEARCHERS AND YEARS
<b>Trait theories</b>	<p>Effective leaders share some common personality characteristics, which are called traits.</p> <p>Effective leadership occurs when there are publicly exhibited traits of integrity, ethical decision-making, assertiveness and compassion. These traits are behaviours manifested because of the individual's internal beliefs and processes to be necessary for effective leadership.</p> <p>This theory extends an early theory known as 'Great Man Theory', asserting that individuals are born with or without the necessary leadership traits.</p>	Stogdill, 1970s+
<b>Behavioural theories</b>	<p>These theories focus on 'what makes a good leader?'</p> <p>The theory posits that there are three types of leaders: autocratic, democratic and passive avoidant.</p>	<p>Lewin &amp; McGregor Theory X and Theory Y (1960s+)</p> <p>Blake &amp; Mouton (Mid 1960s+)</p>
<b>Contingency theories</b>	<p>It emerged from growing evidence that there is no one correct leader type.</p> <p>The theory posits that leadership style is contingent upon the situation, the people, task, the organisation and other environmental variables.</p>	<p>Adair (Mid 1960s+)</p> <p>Hersey &amp; Blanchard (Mid 1970s +)</p> <p>Tannenbaum &amp; Schmidt (Mid 1970s+)</p> <p>Fiedler (mid 1980s+)</p>
<b>Power and influence theories</b>	<p>Based on French &amp; Raven's Five Forms of Power, it highlights three: legitimate, reward, and coercive. It adds to additional sources of power, those being expert power and referent power.</p> <p>Transformational and transactional leadership theory fits within this group and includes the laissez-faire style.</p>	<p>Burns (1978+)</p> <p>Bass &amp; Avolio (mid 1980s+)</p>

THEORY GROUP	EXPLANATION	RESEARCHERS AND YEARS
	Ethical leadership uses ethical concepts of situational ethics, cultural relativism, professional ethics, value-based ethics, rule-based ethics and fairness-based ethics as a guide to managing subordinates. Ethical leadership is concerned with influencing people through the application of ethical principles.	Rawls, (1971) Greenleaf (1977) Ciulla (1995) Brown and Travino (2006) Walumba and Schaubroeck (2009)

Within the grouping framework shown in Table 1., authentic and ethical leadership fit within the power and influence theories.

### Power and Influence Theories

Power and influence are deeply ingrained in human consciousness and fundamental social phenomena. Toffler [3] argues that the human psyche is the product of power and that fascination with power is the basis of politics. [4] Organisational actors seek power to control and determine the future of organisations, the outcomes of interpersonal conflicts, and personal security perception in organisations. [5] Theories of power and influence take an entirely different approach to explain leadership from those previously discussed. Rather than personality traits or environmental factors, these theories consider the various ways that leaders use power and influence to achieve desired organisational outcomes. Mostly, they examine the personal style of the leader. They include the full range leadership model of transactional and transformational approaches to leadership and, by default, laissez-faire leadership. [6] This theory group includes the later developed theories of authentic leadership [7] and ethical leadership. [8] and the prior developed full-range leadership model by Bass and Avolio [6] includes three leadership styles, known as transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership.

### Transactional Leadership

This leadership style emphasises the importance of the relationship between the leader and followers. The focus of the theory is on mutual benefits derived from the 'contract'. The contract is how the leader delivers such things as rewards or recognition in return for the followers' commitment and loyalty. Bass and Avolio [6] derived

transactional leadership from early work on 'Servant Leadership' first described by Weber [9]. Weber posited that the style focuses on the primary management processes of controlling, organising and short-term planning [10] in contrast to the transformational leadership style, which are more aligned to the charismatic future-orientated transformational style described by Bass and Avolio. [6]

According to the theory, transactional leadership involves motivating and directing followers primarily through appealing to their self-interests. The power of transactional leaders comes from their formal authority and responsibility in the organisation. This theory posits that the leader's primary goal is to make the follower obey their instructions. [10] The leader applies motivation through a system of rewards and punishment. If a follower complies, a reward will follow. If the follower does not comply, punishment follows. According to this theory, there is a transaction between leader and follower to achieve routine performance goals. These transactions involve the observable dimensions between leader and follower of Contingent Rewards (CR) in which transactional leaders link the goal to rewards, clarify expectations, provide necessary resources, set mutually agreed-upon goals, and provide various kinds of rewards for the task's successful performance. [11] Active Management by Exception (MBEA) occurs where transactional leaders actively monitor the deviation and take corrective action to prevent mistakes. [12] Passive Management by Exception (MBEP) occurs when transactional leaders only intervene when unmet standards or performance are not expected. [13] A leader who deploys a transactional leadership style subscribes to a strategy of granting rewards based on employee performance and functions in a heavily

structured environment that encourages employees to achieve their best by applying workplace or team rules. [14]

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership theories were first described by Bass in 1985, asserting that, unlike transactional leaders, transformational leaders inspire followers to abandon self-interest for the sake of the organisation and have a profound impact on their followers. Bass found a resulting reduction in staff turnover and increased productivity with higher staff satisfaction levels. [15]

Transformational theories view the leader as a catalyst for a visionary approach while maintaining a strategic view of what needs doing. Transactional leaders value networking and collaboration [6]. These leaders are vigilant in their search for others who can also demonstrate transformational leadership skills. [16] The transformational leadership approach seems to have captured contemporary views on leadership. It appears to be the basis of the current industry preferred leadership capability frameworks relating to health and aged care leadership. [17, 18] Transformational leadership theories assert that people are motivated by the task that they must perform. Those who practise transformational leadership emphasise cooperation and collective action, and individuals exist within the organisation's or community's context rather than in competition with each other. [19]

### **The Laissez-Faire Leader**

Laissez-faire leadership is a leadership style where leaders allow group members to make decisions with disengagement from the team, the organisation's goals, and follower group members, expecting that they will solve their problems themselves. [20] The Laissez-faire leader provides an environment where the leader abrogates responsibilities and avoids making decisions, and therefore the group often lacks direction. A criticism of this part of the theory is that it is sometimes difficult to perceive the difference between this approach and the behaviourist approach described. [21] Authentic and ethical leadership fit into the power and influence groups of theories and are complementary to the transactional and transformational leadership styles of the full range leadership model.

Authentic and ethical leadership do not appear to be a subset of the full range leadership model but complementary. Findings and conclusions from a recent study completed by the author have been peer-reviewed

but not yet published, concluded that a leader's followership is most adversely concerned about leaders who practice with a laissez-faire style than those who practice the transformational or transactional style.

### **Authentic Leadership**

Authentic leadership finds its conceptual roots in positive psychology, and especially so in the concepts of growth and self-fulfilment. [22] Leadership scholars built upon these roots to further develop the construct. Authentic Leadership Theory is a prominent and contemporary theory for which George [7] is considered the primary theorist.

This theory postulates that leadership is composed of four distinct components:

1. Self-Awareness ("Know Thyself"). A prerequisite for being an authentic leader is knowing one's strengths, limitations and values. Knowing what one stands for and what values are critical. Moreover, self-awareness is needed to develop other components of authentic leadership.
2. Relational Transparency ("Be Genuine"). According to George and Sims, [23] relational transparency involves being honest and straightforward in dealing with others.
3. Balanced Processing ("Be Fair-Minded"). An effective, authentic leader solicits opposing viewpoints and considers all options before choosing a course of action. No impulsive action or "hidden agendas" and plans are well thought out and openly discussed.
4. Internalised Moral Perspective ("Do the Right Thing"). An authentic leader has an ethical core. She or he knows the right thing to do and driven by a concern for ethics and fairness.

The roots of authentic leadership come from ancient Greek philosophy that focuses on developing core or cardinal virtues. [24] These virtues are Prudence (fair-mindedness, wisdom, seeing all courses of action), Temperance (being emotionally balanced and in control), Justice (being fair in dealings with others), and Fortitude (courage to do the right thing).

Authentic leaders require a great deal of self-reflection and the courage to do the right thing, often involving a degree of selflessness. Authentic leadership theory has become popular as people search for leaders who exhibit the qualities previously defined. Authentic leaders demonstrate qualities of understanding their purpose, practising solid values, establishing connected relationships

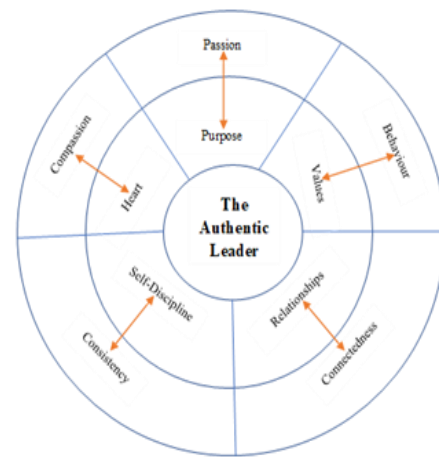
and demonstrating self-discipline. [7] George's Model focuses on an authentic leader's different qualities and asserts that demonstrating these qualities or characteristics promotes the follower group to recognise they are an authentic leader. In response, their followers will display positively, and the organisation will benefit. Each of the qualities espoused by George is associated with an observable characteristic of purpose and passion, values and behaviour, relationships and connectedness, self-discipline and consistency, and heart and compassion.

Authentic leaders display a sense of purpose to their follower group, knowing what is critical and the direction that the follower group should take. The manifestation of purpose is passion. [25] Passionate people are interested in what they are doing, are inspired and intrinsically motivated, and care about the work they are doing. [26] Authentic leadership occurs when individuals enact their true selves in their role as a leader [27]. Those who practise authentic leadership have organisationally known values, know what they are, and do not compromise those values. [7] This quality manifests itself through the leader's behaviour, and authentic leaders act only according to their values. The ability to build relationships with others and have connectedness with their followers is also an attribute of authentic leaders, willing to share their experiences and listen to others' experiences and are communicative with their followers. [26]

Self-discipline and consistency comprise the fourth dimension of authentic leadership. Self-discipline and consistency provide for leader focus and determination and the ability to focus on a goal and move forward towards that goal even in the face of setbacks. Self-disciplined leaders remain cool, calm, and consistent during stressful situations [26]. Importantly, leaders have "heart" and demonstrate this by showing their compassion. They are sensitive to others' needs and are willing to help them. [7, 26]

Acquiring the five dimensions of an authentic leader is not a sequential process; instead, leaders develop continuously throughout their lives. Figure 2 represents the five sections of a circle that blend to form the authentic leader.

**Figure 1 - Five Qualities of Authentic Leadership [7]**



There is a growing demand for increased transparency, integrity and ethical behaviour within organisations that have led to authentic leadership development. [24] The practice of authentic leadership principles improves follower job satisfaction. [22, 28, 29] The strengths of authentic leadership are that it fills a need for trustworthy leadership, [30-32] and it provides broad guidelines for leaders with an explicit moral dimension. [33] In turn, authentic leaders interact with their follower group in ways that build the team's authentic leadership capacities, such as transparency, morality, ethical dealings, and future orientation. [34-37] Luthans and Youssef [38] describe the emerging authentic leadership development literature succinctly:

authentic leaders are developed through the concerted contributions of life experiences and stable personality traits, positive psychological states, and a supportive, developmental organisational climate.

There are criticisms of authentic leadership theory that it claims positive psychology as its basis. There are questions relating to the necessity of including positive psychological capacities that focus on confidence, hope, optimism and resilience rather than a preoccupation with repairing the worst of things. [39] While there is ongoing research, some assert that it is not clear how authentic leadership leads to positive organisational outcomes. [40] Some criticisms relate to the relative infancy of the theory and that it lacks a fully developed evidence-based. This criticism implies an insufficient explanation of the moral component, which has led to further exploration of ethical leadership.

## Ethical Leadership

Leadership is fraught with ethical decisions and deliberations at every level. These include allocating scarce resources, colleagues and workforce issues, meeting performance targets, improving organisational culture, responsibilities of disclosure and transparency to identify errors or misadventures. While this list of ethical decisions is not exhaustive, the decisions made for these crucial areas in any organisation mean that ethical leadership has increasingly become an important theory of leadership.

Ethical leadership as defined by Brown, Treviño [8]

The demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships promotes such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making.

There are five principles of ethical leadership, which are respect, service, community, justice and honesty, [7] and ethical leadership draws upon concepts of:

1. Situational Ethics, where the 'right' action is dependent on the context of the situation. [41]
2. Cultural Relativism determines what is 'right', and it is unethical to judge other cultures based on one's own culture. [42]
3. Professional Ethics considers that what is right is determined by a code of ethics of a specific profession that people in the profession should follow. [43]
4. Value-based Ethics in which a person's values should guide their behaviour. [44]
5. Rule-based Ethics where the rules of a specific group or organisation determine what is right. These include the society's rules, religion's rules and an organisation's rules; [44] and,
6. Fairness-based Ethics is a core issue of stakeholder theory in which fairness determines the 'right' actions and behaviours requiring fair and equal treatment of everyone. [45]

Ethical leadership has trust and the maintenance of good relationships at its core and provides a balance between the wellbeing of the followers, the wider community, and its sustainability or profitability. Modern ethical leadership theory places importance on the idea of service, in that the leader is a 'servant' of their followers. This understanding of leadership emerged from Greenleaf's concept of servant

leadership [46], which postulated that the service to others is the primary concern of leaders. More recent literature has made similar claims. [47, 48]

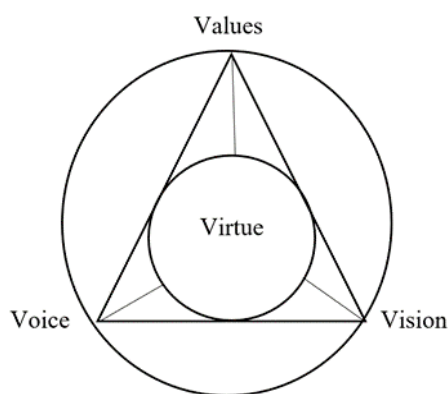
In the modern context, ethical leadership draws upon multiple ethical theories to equip leaders to unpack and consider their work's ethical dimensions through various lenses to arrive at a well-considered decision. Importantly, ethical leadership requires leaders' consistency to act and ethically lead, whether it is apparent to the follower group or not. Ethical leadership requires that the leader's actions be consistent and within an ethical framework integrated into everyday leadership practice.

Ethical leadership is associated with authentic leadership, with May, Chan [37] linking authentic leadership, ethical decision-making and positive organisational behaviour to develop a decision-making model to understand how authentic leaders make morally appropriate decisions. In organisations, ethical leadership centres around respect for others' ethics, values, rights, and dignity. It entails the leader's attributes of honesty, integrity, trust, and fairness in leadership practice by demonstrating respect for ethical beliefs and values and maintaining others' dignity and rights, leading by values, vision, voice, and virtue. [49] It is a form of leadership in which the leader's behaviour sets the standard for themselves and the follower group. Leadership practice is aimed at the common good and composed of being the example to others, championing ethics by their conduct and communicating this to each member of their follower group. Central to ethical leadership is allowing open conversation within the follower group and building camaraderie with individuals among their team and throughout the organisation.

The 4-V Model [50] invites leaders to think about four aspects of leadership (virtues, values, vision and voice) and align internal beliefs and values with the external behaviours to pursue the common good as they apply in a particular context. The 4-V Model has four elements, with Virtue being the centrepiece achieved by Values, Vision and Voice, and is related to trust, honesty, consideration and charisma, as shown in Figure 3.



**FIGURE 3. THE V-4 MODEL OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP**



Adapted from: Centre for Ethical Leadership, 2014

There has been considerable discussion on ethical leadership failures in different settings, resulting in an increased interest in exploring ethical leadership in organisations. [49, 51, 52] The study of organisational ethics is an important topic in organisational behaviour and organisational psychology, with increasing research focus on the behavioural and perceptual view of ethical leadership. [51]

Unethical leadership may lead to follower disappointment and distrust, leading to a lack of interest and commitment, consequently negatively impacting patient outcomes and organisational effectiveness. [52] Schaubroeck, Hannah [53] examined how leadership and culture relate to followers' ethical thinking and behaviours. These researchers found that ethical leaders embed shared understanding through influencing ethical culture in follower teams. They also found that ethical leaders positively influence followers' ethical cognition, behaviour and performance. Mayer, Aquino [54] described a similar set of findings demonstrating that employees are less likely to engage in unethical behaviour when the leader models desired ethical behaviours and have less relationship conflict with co-workers. Mayer, Aquino [54] concluded that reinforcing leaders' moral identities may promote ethical behaviours at several organisational levels.

Ethical leadership based on trust, respect, integrity, honesty, fairness and justice promotes positive relationships. Research into the intersection of ethics and leadership remains mostly unexplored, and there are opportunities for further research and leadership practice development. [8] Leadership theories such as transformational leadership and authentic leadership overlap with ethical leadership. [49] They are all ethically principled, share a social motivation and require an engaging leadership style. It has

been associated with positive results in organisational commitment from nurses, [55] increasing the retention of the healthcare workforce, [56] engagement of employees [57, 58] and the development of trust in the workplace. [58]

## CONCLUSION

This narrative literature review tracked the evolution and synthesised the literature relating to authentic and ethical leadership theory and contextualises them to the power and influence theories of leadership in a grouping framework. The review explored the nexus between authentic and ethical leadership theories and transactional and transformational theories of the full range leadership model developed by Bass and Avolio. [6] The review makes the case that authentic and ethical leadership theories offer a significant opportunity for further research relevant to the health and social care sectors and provides a treatise related to power and influence leadership theories.

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