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Front Cover: The cover artwork is a stylized photo by Steve Buffington. “An image of a Christian leader is the rope braking device used in repelling. If its integrity is compromised, your life could be in danger. However, a braking device that functions as its creator intended allows risks and activities unable to be experienced in any other way.”
THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES REQUIRED FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERS OF SECULAR ORGANIZATIONS TO TRANSFORM ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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ABSTRACT: This project was designed to assess the development antecedents needed for a Christian Chief Executive Officer (CEO), of an organization that is not distinctly Judeo-Christian or biblical in purpose or mission, to realize transformational impact in alignment with the character qualities and virtues captured in the Lanctot and Irving Character/Virtues Model. In any type of organization, Christians often climb to the highest levels of leadership because of their character and virtues. Followers of these Christian leaders can move one of two ways: 1) toward servant leadership virtues and biblical morality, or 2) away from the leader’s virtues and values toward self-focused priorities and values more in alignment with post-modern relativism. A guiding question of this study focuses on the factors that separate an effective Christian CEO-level leader, in terms of enduring and transformational moral impact on his/her followers and the organization, from a leader who struggles to maintain his/her spiritual vitality amid the stresses of a demanding leadership role. A structured interview process was developed to assess the development antecedents and spiritual formation process experienced by these Christian CEO-level leaders. In addition, the interviews sought evidence of transformational impact on the organization’s culture. The findings of the CEO-level interviews were compared to the character development, spiritual formation and impact of two biblical leaders, Joseph and Daniel, who uniquely served as senior level leaders in non-Judeo-Christian contexts.

KEYWORDS: Christian Leadership, Spiritual Formation, Transformational Leadership, Leadership Development Antecedents, CEO-Level Leadership

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The Character Development and Spiritual Disciplines Required for Christian Leaders of Secular Organizations to Transform Organizational Culture

This study is based on a series of structured interviews with Christian CEO-level leaders of organizations that are not explicitly Christian or biblical in mission or purpose to assess the development antecedents, spiritual formation process, and spiritual disciplines that allowed them to flourish as leaders and Christians, and to realize cultural transformation among followers, including non-Christians and non-practicing Christians. Jim Laub (2010) refers to culture as “a mindset that permeates the organization; a collection of shared values, beliefs and assumptions that end up driving organizational behavior” (115; paraphrasing Morgan 2006, 6). A premise of this study is that a transformed leader should positively impact cultural change in an organization, in alignment with his/her biblical worldview.

The interviews took place between October and November 2017 with Christian current and retired CEOs. The interview format was intended to go in depth, beyond a surface level conversation or survey, to ascertain the key obstacles, crucibles, and development antecedents that shaped the leader's character, virtues, resilience, and self-differentiation (Howard and Irving 2014). In addition to this, the interviews focused on 1) the spiritual disciplines practiced by these leaders to maintain their spiritual vitality, soul health, and self-differentiation; and, 2) the adoption across the secular organization of the Judeo-Christian virtues as summarized in the Lanctot and Irving Character/Virtues Model (Lanctot & Irving, 2010) as shown in Figure 1 below. Since the groundbreaking work of Robert Greenleaf (1970) on servant leadership, various lists of character traits, attributes, and virtues have been formed, from a wide variety of philosophical underpinnings, to emphasize the importance of morality and leadership (Patterson 2010). The Lanctot and Irving Character/Virtues Model is a strong fit with this study given their work was based on a Judeo-Christian worldview (37).

In addition, this study analyzes the spiritual formation, and corresponding spiritual disciplines of Joseph and Daniel, who were very senior-level leaders in non-Judeo-Christian organizations and cultures. The development antecedents of these biblical leaders, who demonstrated transformative impact in secular contexts, will be compared to the experiences and practices of the modern-day Christian CEOs.

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1 The researcher will use the word “secular” interchangeably with references to non-Judeo-Christian organizations and cultures. Please note: the researcher does not subscribe to a strict secular-sacred divide in the realm of vocation, work, and organizations; however, an important hypothesis of this study is the belief that there is a different and unique set of challenges faced by religious Jews and Christians leading secular organizations, where most members, staff, and colleagues possess a worldview different than or hostile to the leaders.
LEADERS ARE MADE MORE THAN BORN

Aspiring Christian leaders frequently climb the management ranks within a secular organization because their Judeo-Christian-based value system emphasizes virtues such as diligence, humility, courage, discernment, and integrity. For many of these Christian leaders, they understand the passages in the Bible that emphasize the value and benefits of trials and obstacles as a means of developing desirable leadership characteristics such as resilience, determination, and humility (Howard and Irving 2014, 474). Nevertheless, there is a big difference between intellectually understanding the benefits of trials and crucibles versus experiencing and growing through a crucible or trial that truly transforms an emerging or existing leader into a much more impactful leader. A premise of this study is that leaders are more made than born. The researcher seeks to understand at a deep level how these influential leaders grew through trials, overcame obstacles and ultimately spiritually thrived while leading and serving people with sometimes very different worldviews and motives. How did these CEO-level leaders develop and maintain their spiritual vitality and growth during very demanding leadership expectations in a post-modern culture? What can be learned by comparing the experiences and practices of these modern-day CEOs to Daniel and Joseph? Ultimately, what can we learn from Jesus and his own spiritual formation while on earth and his spiritual disciplines?
CEO-LEVEL INTERVIEWS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The CEO-level interviews were designed to identify themes and patterns around how God develops character and virtues within an effective leader of an organization that is not explicitly Christian or biblical in mission or purpose. Careful attention was given to the development, management and maintenance of the “private world” of the leader (MacDonald 2003, 14). In addition, the researcher sought evidence of enduring impact on the leader’s direct reports and the organization in terms of the adoption of biblical values and virtues. This study assumes the internal transformation and development of a leader should align with the external impact on people. In terms of measuring transformative impact, Greenleaf ([1977] 2002) put it this way,

The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived? (27).

For the CEO-level interviews, the last and final question revolved around how the internal transformation of the leader led to external impact on people and the world.

Emphasis was placed on quality over quantity of CEO-level interviews. Five in-depth interviews were conducted. Action research methodology championed by Jean McNiff served as a guide for the researcher (2013). A core aspect of this methodology is deep critical self-reflection to weigh the literature and interview findings against the researcher’s own experience leading secular organizations as a Christian. The researcher spent five days in solitude in the mountains of Colorado reflecting on his own development antecedents and spiritual formation journey, filtering them through the research findings on the spiritual formation of leaders. In this way, the researcher attempted to place the interviews in a broader context of scriptural truth, orthodoxy; and his own leadership experiences, orthopraxy.

In advance of each interview, the researcher provided a set of four probing questions with a request for deep reflection on each question, intended to elicit thoughtful answers versus top-of-mind responses. The four major areas covered in the interviews included, 1) crucibles of leadership development, 2) spiritual disciplines essential to formation and sustained fidelity to biblical virtues, 3) evidence of transformational impact, and 4) attributes that are critical to successfully leading a secular organization as a Christian. The researcher spent at least two hours with each interviewee, not including pre- and post-interview discussions and dialogue. The interviews were highly engaging for the researcher and the interviewee. The interview questions and the actual dialogue were informed by and filtered through Irving and Lanctot’s Character/Virtues Model (Lanctot 2010, 37) and the “Art of Self-Leadership” by Samuel Rima (2000).

For this type of research, interviews were selected because of the importance and power of stories, ideas and feelings. The CEOs were very open and vulnerable about key learning and character forming events in their past and while leading secular organizations. The interview questions were carefully chosen to draw out both linear and analytical thinking, and dialogical and relational logic. This allowed the researcher to test the validity of the data against the spiritual formation of Daniel and Joseph in scripture and his own leadership journey.
CEO-LEVEL INTERVIEWS: KEY PATTERNS AND THEMES

A careful review of the interview notes revealed certain patterns and reoccurring themes that are instructive for any emerging or existing leader. The research showed that certain development antecedents, and the obstacles that led to the acquisition of servant leadership virtues, are often similar; and, when compared later in this study to how God developed the biblical leaders Joseph and Daniel for senior level leadership roles in morally challenging organizations and environments, patterns develop around a biblical development model for emerging leaders embedded in a secular or non-Judeo-Christian context. The researcher utilized the list of development antecedent types, summarized by Howard and Irving (2014), that showed a clear relationship to leader resiliency (473). These antecedents included:

- increased responsibility;
- project requiring change implementation;
- persevering through perceived personal or professional barriers;
- training or individual courses;
- working in a different culture;
- job transition or rotation;
- overcoming traumatic or emotionally-laden life experiences;
- engagement with organizational stakeholders;
- influence of parents or significant mentors;
- internship, apprenticeship, or intentional mentoring/coaching;
- experiencing challenging childhood experiences;
- and personal mistakes.

The CEOs experienced a significant number of these development antecedents, as summarized in the table below. The researcher chose to phrase the development antecedents in the language of the interviewee rather than match the language in the list above, however there is overlap. The narrative summary that follows is focused on the particularly impactful and revealing stories that were shared about development antecedents, spiritual disciplines, and transformational impact. In addition, each CEO shared his view on the attributes that are critical for a Christian leader to generate widespread transformative impact on an organization.

INTERVIEW NARRATIVE SUMMARY: CRUCIBLES

In response to a question about the “crucibles” and “obstacles” that significantly impacted the interviewee’s development in authenticity and self-differentiation, confronting unethical leaders or behaviors was a reoccurring theme. Because this obstacle involved delicate personal morality issues, this obstacle was referenced as requiring courage, discernment, love, integrity, diligence, and respect (for the broader organization, the company’s stakeholders, and the person receiving the feedback). Researchers George, Sims, McLean, and Mayer (2007) offered this valuable insight: “The
values that form the basis for authentic leadership are derived from your beliefs and convictions, but you will not know what your true values are until they are tested under pressure” (134). This is referred to as a process of “discovering your authentic leadership” by these authors.

Table 1: CEO-Level Interviews – Summary of Themes, Patterns, and Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundational Interview Questions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development antecedents, crucibles or obstacles critical for your leadership development?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Paul Olson</td>
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<td>Dr. Jerry White</td>
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Theology of Leadership Journal
As an example of how one of the interviewees developed authentic leadership, Tom Schmidt shared how as a young lieutenant in the Army, he made a very difficult choice to confront his commanding officer about an affair he was having with a female enlistee under his command, which went against several regulations. Schmidt knew this affair was undermining morale and hurting the commanding officer’s moral authority with the troops. Schmidt prayed and then courageously confronted the commanding officer taking an “assume the best, but clarify” approach. The commanding officer came clean and then married the enlistee whom he apparently truly loved. Through this experience, Schmidt grew immensely as a courageous leader, which greatly influenced his ability to overcome challenges and obstacles in setting up a business in a predominantly Muslim context.

Another personal and spiritual formative event shared by Schmidt is instructional regarding the role of internal or philosophical obstacles in developmental antecedents for a CEO-level leader in a non-Christian culture or context. Schmidt shared that two years into the development and launch of Sanulet Resort, “I woke up one morning keenly aware that I’d grown to actually dislike the very people I came to serve and provide employment.” Almost all the employees, contractors, and trading partners came from a predominantly Muslim cultural context. There was continual small-scale theft, laziness, and lying among key stakeholders and employees. Schmidt almost “threw in the towel.” The turning point came when a wise mentor boldly confronted Schmidt about his attitude and shared some timeless wisdom from scripture: “It’s not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (Mark 2:17). This mentor reminded Schmidt that the people he worked with daily and served as a leader were precisely the kind of people he originally sought to influence and transform toward biblical virtues and ideals. Schmidt was greatly encouraged and humbled by Psalm 121, which took on new levels of meaning for him, particularly verses 3–8 that speak of God’s promise to help and continually protect us from harm, both day and night.

Schmidt spoke of finding new meaning in Bible passages, well known to him for decades, as a mindset shift and turning point in how he viewed his Muslim staff and followers. Through this event Schmidt forged the “virtues of moral relationship” including love, respect, and humility in a new way (Lanctot and Irving 2010, 37) Now, ten years after this event, a remarkable transformation is happening in the Muslim communities and families working at the resort as evidenced by a nearly 100% participation in an “Exemplar Family” small group study that is biblically based. The Muslim leaders came to Schmidt and said, “We see a big difference in how you treat your wife, children and neighbors, and we want our marriages and families to be happier and less violent. Will you teach us how to have better marriages and families?” The transformation of a culture is underway. Schmidt stated that without these “breaking points” he never would have changed his perspective, deepened his leadership focus, developed important virtues, and ultimately finished what he came to start and do.

Another revealing crucible story that speaks to obstacles as development antecedents was shared by David Wessner, who felt overwhelmed when he was named CEO of Park Nicollet Hospitals and 8,000 employees. He was initially filled with self-doubt which was further fueled by some doctors who wanted a fellow doctor in the CEO role. Wessner felt like he had to prove himself worthy as a leader. He overcame these fears by meditating on his preparation to succeed in this role, which came in large part by observing his father who owned and led the company Service Master. It also helped Wessner to reflect on his belief that this line of work was “worthy of Christian
work.” He believed that God created everyone with “the capacity to heal.” Injecting a deep sense of purpose into his leadership mental model helped immensely. In addition, Wessner decided to share openly about his faith at a monthly new employee and leadership values training day. Wessner said it was a natural forum for him to share how his personal values were aligned with the company values. For ten years, nearly everyone who joined the company or went through leadership training heard about Wessner’s faith. Wessner shifted the company’s values statement to reflect biblical language. The words “joy,” “service,” and “stewardship” are still prominent in the company’s culture and mission statement.

Paul Olson shared with some emotion a crucible moment that nearly broke him, but eventually made him a “meeker” leader, more “sensitive and wise” at the same time. As CEO, Olson decided to do a mass promotion of over ten higher level leaders to the next level up on the organizational chart. Almost immediately, an employee filed an $8 million lawsuit claiming gender discrimination. Olson was unable to address the allegations openly for a long time, which gave him the opportunity to grow in patience and wisdom. He had to resist becoming defensive and wait patiently on the process and on God for justice and exoneration. Eventually the company and Olson were cleared of all charges. The lengthy court process, and civil trial, forced Olson to develop a lot of new virtues such as humility, respect, love, and discernment. Olson suggested this development antecedent changed him into a wiser and more discerning leader.

Lastly, a crucible that was mentioned by all the interviewees was a fear of failure and doubts about their leadership capacity. This obstacle was referenced as so crippling that it kept leaders awake at night. All but one of the CEOs suggested time in prayer and scripture helped them to overcome these fears. Several mentioned their spouses and family heritage as important factors in helping them deal with fears. It is reassuring to know these successful leaders all had to overcome self-doubt and fear of failure, which once conquered was referenced as a key source of resilience and self-awareness.

INTERVIEWS NARRATIVE SUMMARY: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

The next interview question focused on the spiritual disciplines practiced by the CEO-level leaders to maintain their spiritual health and intimacy with God. The researcher was careful to ask a similar set of questions in this area regarding soul keeping and spiritual formation practices, keeping in mind the wisdom of Dallas Willard as quoted by Ortberg (2014): “If your soul is healthy, no external circumstance can destroy your life” (40). More than other areas, the responses differed the most in reference to the spiritual disciplines. White and Schmidt, having spent time with the Christian organization called the Navigators, emphasized the same practices: morning “quiet times,” “making disciples,” spiritual retreats, and mentors. Wessner answered very honestly that he has never been consistent with any of the classic spiritual disciplines, including studying the Bible. He credited his wife, who has been a lead lecturer for Bible Study Fellowship for over ten years, and his family heritage for giving him guideposts and a “culture” of integrity, diligence, respect, and humility. Wessner’s comment underscores a premise that a family with strong traditions around biblical virtues promotes desirable leadership attributes. Olson made a similar assertion about the benefits of family heritage and a strong marriage relative to the need to practice spiritual disciplines. From these statements, the researcher posits that a leader’s family heritage and quality of marriage has a significant impact on a leader’s ability to live out the “Virtues of Moral Personhood” described
in the Lanctot and Irving Character/Virtues Model, with less emphasis on practicing all or some of the spiritual disciplines.

Schmidt, of all the interviewees, had clearly given a lot of thought to the spiritual disciplines, which he believed were mainly “designed by and for introverts.” Schmidt is an extrovert who benefits little from times of solitude and struggles to concentrate during extended spiritual retreats. Nonetheless, Schmidt articulated a well-thought-out set of spiritual disciplines that works for him, including conversational prayer characterized by daily times with God speaking out loud about scripture, issues and requests; preaching, which forced Schmidt to dig deep into the Bible; journaling, which for an extrovert like Schmidt involved “thinking and reflecting out loud on paper”; exercising, which for Schmidt is a spiritual discipline; and, mentorships, both discipling others and being mentored.

Paul Olson suggested personal time with God in Bible study and prayer, fellowship with like-minded believers, and serving others were his three main spiritual disciplines. Olson stated that serving on multiple boards might sound exciting to a lot of people, but for him it was often a sacrifice of time, energy, and money. By intentionally investing his leadership wisdom and resources in emerging leaders and organizations, Olson maintains a servant-like attitude that draws him closer to Jesus.

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**INTERVIEWS NARRATIVE SUMMARY: TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT**

It is often the job of a CEO to formulate and articulate the company’s values to the employee base. If a CEO does not personally demonstrate the company values, the impact can be devastating to a company’s culture. Nonetheless, values statements are often buried on websites or annual reports, and never fully embraced or sometimes even known by key leaders and the broader employee base. For these Christian CEOs, value statements offered an opportunity to bring biblical virtues and language out into the open. Wessner used a values training session to demonstrate his faith and he aligned the company’s value statement to biblical virtues and language. Schmidt, in the context of a Muslim community in Indonesia, used a company values statement to underscore most of the servant leadership virtues contained in the Character/Virtues Model (Irving and Lanctot 2010, 37). Irving and Lanctot assert that servant leadership requires more ethical and moral considerations relative to any other leadership style (40). Given Schmidt’s motive of evangelism and disciple-making amongst his staff and their families, focusing on the virtuous behaviors necessary for servant leadership made a lot of sense to the researcher.

Another insight observed indirectly from the interviews was the variation among the CEOs in their approaches for divulging their Christian faith to direct reports and the organization. This topic elicited strong views and often passion from the interviewees because of the challenges related to sharing a biblical worldview in a hostile or apathetic environment. In short, some of the CEO-level leaders preferred to show their faith in actions with few words, whereas others articulated a strong belief in the necessity of ensuring as many people as possible in the organization were made aware of the leader’s Christian faith and biblical values. The differences in approach for how these leaders preferred to reveal their faith played a significant role in shaping their approach to transformative impact. The data also suggested that the type of organization, and whether the leader was a part or full owner of the company, also influenced the leader’s approach to divulging their...
faith. John Wing, for instance, suggested it was easier to openly share, going beyond merely demonstrating, his faith and biblical values because he was the founder and majority owner of the company.

In summary, some of the most important similarities between the CEO-level Christian leaders included the way they dealt with and learned from adversity, which affirms an assertion by Bennis and Thomas (2002) that “one of the most reliable indicators and predictors of true leadership is an individual’s ability to find meaning in negative events and to learn from the most trying of circumstances” (p. 41). All of the interviewees spoke at length about overcoming significant obstacles, including questions about their competence, attacks on their Christian faith, unhealthy challenges to their leadership authority, lawsuits and ethical dilemmas. In other areas, certain important differences emerged, particularly around the spiritual formation of the leader and the spiritual disciplines they practiced, which seem to have been heavily influenced by personality type, family heritage, and denominational background.

INTERVIEWS: ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES FOR A CEO SERVING A SECULAR ORGANIZATION

Jerry White finished his career in the Air Force Reserves as a Major General (two stars) while serving simultaneously as Executive President of a global Christian organization called the Navigators. White can uniquely speak to the challenges and differences of leading in a highly secular context, the military, and a Christian organization. In reference to his ability to have influence and impact as a Christian in the Air Force, White said the most critical attribute for a leader is competence, which he called a “crucial starting point.” If a leader is incompetent or lazy according to White, then other positive Christian virtues will be overlooked by both superiors and staff. Secondly, White suggested that authentically “caring for people” allows a Christian leader in a secular setting to stand apart. Any leader must “learn to be highly relational” to be effective with non-Christian followers. Other critical attributes mentioned by White included trustworthiness, consistency, and “service before self.”

David Wessner shared a powerful story about how he “broke down social barriers” in a very hierarchical organization and industry. Wessner explained that in a large hospital system, there is often a well-established caste system that hinders teamwork, process improvements, and community. The doctors are at the top of this hierarchy, then the administrators, followed by the nurses, technicians, office personnel, and cleaning staff. Based on his Christian and family values, Wessner believed “all people have equal value before God” and therefore can contribute to an organization’s goals in areas like efficiency, safety, patient care, process improvements, and building a sense of community. Wessner established a cross-functional, cross-hierarchy set of meetings every Friday. Staff of all ranks were placed on these cross-functional teams, which met for only 20 minutes at a time to ensure directness, focus, and participation. The meeting structure was designed to focus on one idea at a time; anyone on the team could fill out a form to lead the discussion and the group would formulate an action plan. The result of Wessner putting his values into practical action through this meeting was an “explosion” of innovative ideas, friendships across job categories, improvements for patients, and a deeper sense of community. Wessner’s short list of critically important attributes for a Christian leader of a secular organization included humility, learning attitude, and respect for everyone.
Tom Schmidt had created a word that combined two attributes, “humbition”: humility and ambition. In addition to living out humbition himself, Schmidt said he looked for this combination of attributes in emerging leaders on his staff and with potential partners. Schmidt said the starting point for any Christian leader is a “worldview that all people are valued by God.” In addition, a “deep biblical foundation” was a key attribute for Schmidt “to maintain joy and peace amid difficulties, theft, staff problems, and opposition.”

In summary, the most reoccurring attributes referenced by the interviewees was authenticity, humility, competence, care for people, and honesty. All of these leaders shared powerful stories of how crucible events or moments softened their edges, made them wiser, and ultimately led to the authentic embracing of these attributes.

CHARACTER AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF BIBLICAL LEADERS

Very few examples can be found in the Bible of leaders that led and served large organizations or governments at a senior executive or CEO-equivalent level in settings that were not primarily Jewish or Christian in orientation, and with supervisors, associates, and direct reports that were not of the same faith background. Leaders like Nehemiah may have served a non-Jewish king at a high level, but the focus in scripture is less on this aspect of his life and more on his time leading fellow Jews, and we know very little about his development antecedents. Similarly, Esther served as a queen in a non-Jewish regime, but we know very little of her childhood and young adult experiences that forged the strong leadership characteristics displayed later in her life. Other prominent leaders in the Old Testament, such as Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon, spent most of their time and energy focused on leading fellow Jews. All these leaders certainly had to deal with competing worldviews and cultures. It could be argued that leading their own community was at least as difficult, or even more so, than leading foreigners in a completely non-Jewish system and culture. Certainly, some universal leadership principles and best practices can be gleaned from all leaders in scripture.

Nonetheless, Joseph and Daniel stand apart for effectively maintaining their spiritual vitality and leadership impact in the context of completely non-Jewish cultures and leadership constructs, and the Bible provides valuable insights into their spiritual formation and character development. Joseph and Daniel had to learn local languages and customs, understand radically different religions, learn to please their secular bosses who undoubtedly had large egos, learn to work closely with non-Jewish colleagues, and ultimately maintain their spiritual vitality amid tremendous power and wealth. Christians who are called to lead secular organizations can draw direct leadership lessons from Joseph and Daniel, and encouragement from their faithfulness, longevity and transformative impact.

Using the development antecedents identified by Howard and Irving (2014) as having a clear relationship to leader resiliency (473) and character/virtue formation, the researcher assessed the role of each antecedent in the spiritual formation and character development of Joseph and Daniel (Table 2).

Table 2 – Howard/Irving Development Antecedents – Joseph and Daniel
### Character Development: Halverson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Antecedent</th>
<th>Experienced by Joseph</th>
<th>Experienced by Daniel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased responsibility</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 39:2-6; 41:33-40)</td>
<td>Yes (Dan 1:19-21; 2:46-49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project requiring change implementation</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 41:46-56)</td>
<td>Yes (Dan 6:10-24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persevering through perceived personal or professional barriers</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 39:21-23)</td>
<td>Yes – Personal barriers related to maintaining integrity in a secular culture (Dan 1:8-10)</td>
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<td>Training or individual courses</td>
<td>Yes – Not formal, but informally at Potiphar’s house and when managing the jail</td>
<td>Yes – Formal (Dan 1:3-6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working in a different culture</td>
<td>Yes – Egypt</td>
<td>Yes – Babylon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job transition or rotation</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 39:1; 22-23; 41:46)</td>
<td>Yes (Dan 1:18-21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming traumatic or emotionally-laden life experiences</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 37:12-36)</td>
<td>Yes – Lion’s Den; and, Daniel may have endured castration to become a forced eunuch (Osborne 2015, 42).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement with organizational stakeholders</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 39:22; 41:39-40)</td>
<td>Yes (Dan 1:8-14; 2:14-16)</td>
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<td>Influence of parents or significant mentors</td>
<td>Yes – Early in life (Gen 37:3-10)</td>
<td>Hard to know, but his strong youthful convictions suggest a strong family values heritage</td>
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<td>Internship, apprenticeship, or intentional mentoring/coaching</td>
<td>Indirect at best – Potiphar and the jail manager (Gen 39:1-3; 39:21-23)</td>
<td>Yes - Under the king’s direction in a forced servitude construct (Dan 1:3-18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing challenging childhood experiences</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 37:12-36)</td>
<td>Hard to know, but being uprooted at a young age was likely traumatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal mistakes</td>
<td>Yes (Gen 37:5-10)</td>
<td>No (at least not identified in scripture)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher believes it is remarkable that both Joseph and Daniel experienced nearly all of the Howard/Irving key development antecedents for resiliency. It also noteworthy that many of
these development experiences happened to them at a young age. We can posit that God, in his infinite wisdom, orchestrated a sweeping and in-depth leadership development program for both Joseph and Daniel.

CONCLUSIONS

There are many leadership development similarities between the lives of Joseph, Daniel, and the Christian CEOs who were interviewed for this study. At a young age, these leaders began to forge biblical leadership virtues. Later in life, they showed authenticity and servant leadership virtues while serving in secular settings. They learned to nurture their spiritual formation and leadership skills by overcoming obstacles and adversity, while leading people and organizations with worldviews often very different or contrary to their own. So, what can Christian CEOs, aspiring leaders, leadership coaches, educators, and leadership trainers learn from this study?

Crucibles and obstacles are opportunities to forge Christian leadership virtues that will help the leader reflect the biblical character qualities and virtues summarized in the Lanctot/Irving model. Although trials and failures are often painful and confusing in the present, learning how to overcome them leads to increased self-awareness, self-respect and self-differentiation.

Authenticity is a worthy goal, particularly when serving in a secular or non-Judeo-Christian context. The ability to naturally and wisely share who you are and what you believe as a follower of Christ builds a healthy accountability between the leader and the organization in the areas of biblical morality and servant leadership virtues. Authenticity is an engaging quality that shows an organization that the leader is self-differentiated, comfortable with his/her Judeo-Christian values.

Increased self-awareness and humility should lead to a deeper understanding of the importance of practicing a mix of spiritual disciplines that are essential for the leader’s spiritual growth and vitality. When unexpected obstacles and crucibles emerge well into a leader’s tenure at the top of an organization, it is the tried and tested spiritual disciplines that will sustain and encourage the leader to stay true to his or her faith and outwardly focused on serving his or her followers and the organization.

It is important to see evidence of transformative impact among the leader’s followers and across the organization. Because Christian leadership emphasizes empowering and equipping followers to become higher quality employees and better people, the leader should start to see the adoption of servant leadership virtues and the biblical values of the leader. An alternative scenario, which also confirms transformative impact, is the onset of opposition among followers who resist servant leadership virtues.

Christian senior-level leaders of secular organizations can learn a tremendous number of leadership lessons from Joseph and Daniel. Both leaders experienced a wide variety of development antecedents at a young age and again as older, experienced leaders. They finished well, in terms of both spiritual vitality and transformative impact. We can learn from their fortitude, faithfulness, and servant leadership virtues, which ultimately resulted in the saving of thousands of lives.

This study yields personally enriching and actionable insights for aspiring or current Christian CEO-level leaders. Leaders, and anyone working with leaders, can benefit from a deeper understanding of the importance of practicing a mix of spiritual disciplines that are essential for the leader’s spiritual growth and vitality.
understanding of the development antecedents that forge the character and virtues necessary to 1) thrive spiritually, and 2) successfully influence his/her followers to flourish as individuals and adopt the leader's Judeo-Christian virtues and values. A second expectation of this study was a deeper understanding of the spiritual disciplines practiced by leaders when serving as CEOs of secular organizations. This is one area that warrants further study. All of the CEOs, with the exception of Tom Schmidt, suggested this is one area they would like to do better. Several suggested they needed training in this area. Another expected result of this study was the gaining of insights into evidence of transformative impact on followers and the surrounding society stemming from the leader's character and virtues. Clearly, the CEOs, Daniel, and Joseph cared immensely about impact, and the CEOs were quite animated when discussing stories of impact on their followers. Finally, the two biblical leaders Joseph and Daniel provide a timeless portrait of powerful leaders in the making and in action. Their faithfulness to God, His closest followers, and the secular society around them is exemplary and instructive for any leader serving in a secular context.

REFERENCES


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