

# Defining Leadership for Innovation: Challenges and Opportunities in a Sport Organization

Larry Jinkins

While leadership was the initial focus of this case study, innovation emerged as a key theme, revealing how leadership fragmentation directly impedes organizational adaptability and innovation capacity. In contemporary sport organizations, defining leadership remains a persistent challenge, where diverse interpretations among executives shape decision-making, organizational culture, and innovation capacity. This study investigates the impact of leadership perceptions within the executive team of a prominent sport organization on strategic alignment, team cohesion, and the adoption of innovation-driven practices. Using contextual inquiry methodologies, including interviews, observational analysis, and leadership framework comparisons, the research identifies 63 distinct leadership attributes that highlight both commonalities and disparities in leadership conceptualization. Findings reveal that fragmented leadership definitions contribute to inconsistent decision-making, internal conflicts, and a lack of clarity in strategic direction, ultimately limiting the organization's ability to foster innovation. Moreover, the absence of structured leadership development programs and formalized mentorship leaves emerging leaders unprepared, thereby further exacerbating leadership fragmentation and reducing the organization's ability to adapt to technological advancements and evolving market demands. To drive innovation and sustain competitive advantage, this study underscores the need for a unified leadership framework that aligns executive practices, facilitates collaboration, and integrates leadership development as a core organizational priority.

Keywords: leadership, innovation, organizational context, definitional variability, stakeholder perspectives, sport industry, contextual inquiry, decision-making, leadership development, management roles, employee satisfaction, organizational coherence

---

Larry Jinkins, PhD, is an assistant professor of sport and recreation management at Indiana University Kokomo. His research interests include sport leadership and innovation related to sport and business. Email: [jinkinsl@iu.edu](mailto:jinkinsl@iu.edu)

## Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of the sport industry, leadership remains a critical yet inconsistently defined construct—one that directly influences how organizations evolve, adapt, and innovate. This study explores a central question: How does an inconsistent definition of leadership limit innovation in the context of a modern sport organization? This study examines how managers, directors, and executives (MDEs) within a prominent sport organization conceptualize leadership and the extent to which these diverse perspectives influence strategic direction, team cohesion, and the organization's capacity for innovation. A lack of consensus on leadership definitions leads to fragmented decisions, unclear performance expectations, and internal conflicts. Confusing leadership with management further blurs roles, reducing efficiency and stifling innovation in a competitive industry.

A key challenge identified in this study is the insufficient support and guidance provided to new leaders during their transition into executive roles. Power dynamics and organizational politics often shape leadership policies, reflecting personal interests and subjective values rather than a unified organizational vision (Maes & Van Hootegeem, 2022). The absence of structured development programs and formalized leadership frameworks leaves emerging leaders underprepared, fostering inconsistent leadership practices and inhibiting organizational adaptability (Landells & Albrecht, 2017). Given the fast-paced and innovation-driven nature of on-field activities in the sport industry, leadership fragmentation can hinder an organization's ability to respond effectively to emerging market trends, fan engagement strategies, and technological advancements.

The role of front office leadership must evolve to become more innovation-drive in an era in which artificial intelligence (AI) and technological advancements are reshaping the sport industry. The rapid digital transformation of fan engagement, data analytics, player performance tracking, and business operations requires that MDEs not only adopt emerging technologies but also cultivate a culture that encourages adaptive thinking and creative problem-solving. However, leadership fragmentation within sport organizations can hinder innovation, as inconsistent strategic visions and siloed decision-making impede the effective integration of AI-driven solutions. Leaders who fail to align their teams around a shared commitment to technological advancement risk falling behind in an increasingly competitive landscape. This study explores how leadership clarity, organizational cohesion, and structured leadership development programs can enhance innovation readiness in sport organizations, ensuring that executive decision-making supports both short-term competitiveness and long-term industry disruption.

## Literature Review

Innovation is widely recognized as a critical driver of success across industries, enabling organizations to navigate challenges in an increasingly complex and dynamic environment. At its core, innovation emerges at the intersection of leadership and collective collaboration. The relationship between leadership and human capital is particularly influential in fostering innovation, motivating teams, and developing essential skills (Costa et al., 2023). However, barriers to creativity and innovation often arise due to internal conflicts, misalignments in organizational culture, and a lack of clarity in the organization's vision (Clapham & Meyer, 2024). To overcome these challenges, leaders must cultivate a shared understanding of leadership and innovation, align team efforts with strategic objectives, and foster an environment conducive to creative problem-solving.

Despite the extensive literature on leadership, the absence of a universally shared definition remains a persistent challenge. While leadership has been studied from multiple theoretical perspectives, empirical research on the direct consequences of this definitional ambiguity remains limited. Cheng et al. (2024) propose that organizational silence—where individuals withhold input or concerns—directly affects leadership's role in shaping innovation. This study builds upon that discussion by examining whether the absence of a shared leadership definition contributes to ineffective leadership behaviors. When leadership is collectively defined, it establishes clear expectations, mitigates inconsistencies in decision-making, and fosters alignment in behavioral standards (Hiller et al., 2006). A unified leadership framework further enhances training and professional development consistency, equipping leaders with the necessary competencies to drive innovation and maintain organizational coherence.

A clearly defined collective agreement on leadership is a benchmark against which leadership behaviors are measured and evaluated, promoting consistency and accountability across all organizational levels (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). However, much of the existing leadership research emphasizes traits, personality attributes, and expected behaviors rather than addressing the fundamental nature of leadership itself (Northouse, 2021). As a result, ongoing research continues to explore these traits and behaviors within various situational contexts and theoretical frameworks. The diversity of perspectives contributes to challenges in developing a universally accepted definition of leadership at the macro level (Yukl, 2013).

The absence of a shared leadership definition not only affects internal organizational dynamics but also influences talent recruitment and evaluation. Reports from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2018, 2024) show that college graduates often fall short in key areas, especially leadership. This reflects wide variation in how organizations define and assess leadership

potential, which affects how well new hires are prepared. Research also shows that employers tend to hire people who resemble those they're replacing, reinforcing outdated leadership models and limiting innovation. These patterns continue to widen leadership gaps across industries, including sports.

Without a clear and shared leadership framework, organizations risk fostering idiosyncratic leadership practices that reflect personal biases rather than strategic, innovation-driven leadership approaches (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Northouse, 2021). In contrast, when leaders and followers operate within a shared understanding of leadership, it enables trust, communication, and collaboration to improve, leading to enhanced organizational performance (Schein, 2010). Establishing a well-defined leadership framework is therefore essential not only for promoting consistency and accountability but also for fostering an environment that supports creativity, innovation, and long-term organizational success.

## Methodology

This study employs a single-case study design, utilizing contextual inquiry (CI) to examine how varying leadership definitions among executives and managers within a Midwest-based sport organization influence decision-making, organizational coherence, and employee satisfaction. A case study approach allows for an in-depth analysis of leadership perspectives within a specific organizational setting, making it particularly suited to the sport industry, where unique cultures, leadership dynamics, and traditions significantly shape behaviors and interactions (Gummesson, 2017; Robson & McCartan, 2016). CI enhances this exploration by capturing leadership behaviors, providing a nuanced understanding of how leadership is enacted, communicated, and perceived across multiple organizational levels. Furthermore, unlike standardized surveys, CI enables researchers to observe leadership in action, revealing how decisions are made, authority is exercised, and innovation is encouraged within the organizational context.

The study employed semi-structured interviews, direct workplace observations, and informal observations. A purposive sample of 15 executives and managers—including the CEO, president, two vice presidents, nine directors, and seven managers—participated in the study, representing 100% of the organization's management team. Over two weeks, participants engaged in individual interviews guided by a structured, seven-question protocol designed to assess leadership definitions, competencies, and practices. The questions focused on how leadership is defined, what competencies are prioritized, how leadership is developed and evaluated, and the role of higher education in preparing leaders for the sport industry. Direct workplace observations provided additional context,

capturing leadership behaviors and interactions in natural settings, while informal observations revealed subtleties in leader-member exchanges that further contextualized the data.

The seven interview questions explored key leadership dimensions: defining leadership, identifying competencies, preparing leaders for critical challenges, evaluating leadership effectiveness, integrating leadership development in new hires and interns, assessing internal talent pipelines, and aligning industry expectations with higher education leadership training. These questions were designed to uncover discrepancies in leadership perspectives and their impact on training, decision-making, and organizational performance. Thematic groupings emerged from this inquiry, linking leadership definitions to organizational cohesion, leadership development, and innovation potential.

## Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. First, transcripts and observation notes were thoroughly reviewed for familiarization with the data. Initial coding was then conducted to identify recurring patterns, such as inconsistent leadership definitions and competency prioritization. These codes were clustered into broader themes, including leadership development gaps and subjectivity in promotions. Themes were then reviewed, refined, and named, emphasizing their relevance to organizational leadership dynamics. Findings were synthesized, linking themes to observed leadership practices and decision-making challenges.

Multiple validation techniques were employed to enhance validity and credibility. Triangulation was used to compare interview responses, direct observations, and organizational documents, ensuring consistency in findings. Formal network analysis mapped relationships among leadership behaviors, identifying how leadership definitions influenced organizational cohesion and decision-making structures. Bracketing techniques, including reflexive journaling and timestamping, were utilized to minimize researcher bias. Data saturation was achieved when no new insights emerged, reinforcing the study's reliability (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

## Results

The study's findings, derived from 15 formal interviews and more than 83 hours of field observations, revealed significant inconsistencies in leadership definitions, training approaches, promotion criteria, and leadership development within the sport organization. These inconsistencies affect decision-making, organizational culture, and talent identification.

## The Lack of a Unified Definition of Leadership

A central theme that emerged from the interviews was the lack of a unified definition of leadership. While some participants emphasized leadership as aligning personal and organizational goals, others described it as building consensus, achieving results, or simply guiding and overseeing a group. Many struggled to provide a precise definition, often pausing or requesting to revisit the question later. One participant explicitly stated, “I don’t know . . . leadership seems to be evolving and changing,” reflecting the ambiguity surrounding leadership conceptualization within the organization. This definitional inconsistency extends to leadership competencies. Some interviewees prioritized interpersonal skills such as empathy, adaptability, and relationship-building, while others emphasized performance metrics, decisiveness, and work ethic as the most critical leadership attributes. Without a shared understanding of what leadership entails, leadership training, evaluation, and promotion practices vary widely across departments.

The organization lacks a formal leadership development program. Leadership competencies are primarily assessed through informal observation, experience-based evaluations, and personality assessments such as DiSC. While some leaders encourage mentorship and one-on-one coaching, others acknowledge that leadership development is largely “left to experience” rather than structured training. Several respondents noted that “leadership cannot be taught in a classroom” and instead must be “learned on the job.”

## Training, Evaluation, and Promotion

Participants highlighted the absence of a structured onboarding process, particularly for new hires and interns. One interviewee stated, “Onboarding is difficult and not something we do well here,” while another mentioned that “interns are essentially in a nine-month interview process” where leadership potential is observed over time. Training inconsistencies result in departmental silos, where each leader applies their own leadership philosophy rather than following an organization-wide framework.

Promotion practices within the organization are largely based on seniority rather than demonstrated leadership competencies. Several interviewees noted that “years of service trump everything else,” and there is no formalized leadership assessment guiding promotion decisions. One respondent described promotions as being “based on gut feeling,” while another noted that “the loudest voice seems to get precedence over ability.” This subjectivity has led to employee

dissatisfaction and reduced morale, as high-performing individuals may feel overlooked due to an opaque promotion process.

Without objective leadership evaluation tools, leadership potential is largely assessed through informal conversations, daily interactions, and observations of team dynamics. Leaders often look for “who speaks up,” “who takes initiative,” and “who can handle a challenge without being told what to do.” While this informal method can highlight natural leaders, it risks reinforcing biases and overlooking less vocal but highly capable employees.

## Decision-Making Practices

The variability in leadership definitions and training approaches directly affects organizational decision-making. Some leaders prioritize consensus and collaboration, while others favor a top-down decision-making approach. Observational data revealed that in some meetings, decisions were made unilaterally, while in others, lengthy discussions delayed resolution due to a lack of clear authority structures. Additionally, different departments have conflicting success metrics. While some leaders evaluate effectiveness based on team cohesion and morale, others focus strictly on performance outcomes. This disconnect complicates strategic alignment and creates inconsistencies in accountability standards. One leader acknowledged this issue, stating, “We don’t even evaluate leadership the same way across departments.”

## Higher Education’s Role

When asked about higher education’s role in preparing future leaders, participants expressed mixed perspectives. While some believed leadership must be learned through experience, others noted that colleges should do more to integrate real-world leadership scenarios into their curriculum. Several respondents cited group projects and mock negotiations as valuable leadership development experiences. Others suggested that higher education should focus on interpersonal skills, industry-specific competencies, and real-world simulations rather than theoretical leadership concepts.

One interviewee stated, “College doesn’t teach leadership. It teaches technical skills, but leadership is something you develop by doing.” Another noted, “Graduates often lack the ability to communicate effectively in professional settings.” These findings align with industry reports suggesting that college graduates often fall short in leadership preparedness, further emphasizing the need for structured leadership development both in higher education and within organizations.

## Conclusion

The results of this study highlight the organizational challenges stemming from inconsistent leadership definitions, subjective promotion criteria, informal leadership training, and conflicting decision-making practices. The lack of a shared leadership framework limits innovation, organizational cohesion, and talent development, while subjective promotion practices contribute to employee frustration and morale issues. Additionally, the study reinforces the need for higher education to integrate more practical leadership experiences into their programs to better prepare graduates for leadership roles in the sport industry.

### Limitations

While rich in qualitative insight, this study is bound by several limitations inherent in its design. As a single-case analysis focused on one organization within the sport industry, the findings may not fully translate to other industries or contexts. The unique characteristics, culture, and internal dynamics of the case organization mean that the applicability of these results to different settings is limited. Additionally, the reliance on qualitative methods, including interviews and direct observations, may introduce bias through subjective interpretations and participant responses. Although efforts were made to triangulate data for greater validity, the findings are still shaped by the individuals' perspectives and the context in which the study was conducted. Finally, the purposive sampling method, while comprehensive within the organization, constrains the generalizability of these results to broader populations or settings.

## Discussion

Organizational innovation and creativity are directly related to leadership. The findings of this study highlight how inconsistent leadership definitions, subjective promotion criteria, and fragmented leadership development negatively affect the organization's ability to foster innovation. Without a shared leadership framework, organizations struggle to cultivate the necessary alignment, vision, and strategic collaboration required to support innovation-driven growth. The absence of standardized leadership development and evaluation processes creates systemic challenges that stifle creativity, hinder decision-making, and limit opportunities for emerging leaders to contribute innovative ideas.

### Definitional Inconsistencies as a Barrier to Innovation

One of the most significant barriers to innovation identified in this study is the lack of a unified leadership definition. Leaders within the organization expressed

widely differing perspectives on what constitutes effective leadership, leading to inconsistencies in decision-making, leadership expectations, and training priorities. This variability fosters internal conflicts and reduces organizational cohesion, both of which are critical factors in building an innovative culture. Research suggests that innovation thrives when leadership provides a clear vision, empowers employees, and creates a psychologically safe environment for experimentation and risk-taking (Clapham & Meyer, 2024). However, without a standardized leadership framework, employees may hesitate to introduce new ideas, fearing rejection or misalignment with leadership expectations. The findings suggest that this lack of clarity contributes to organizational stagnation, as departments struggle to align in strategic initiatives that could drive creative problem-solving.

### **Talent Development and Promotion Challenges**

Another major implication of poor leadership is its direct effect on the development and retention of innovative talent. The study found that the organization's promotion criteria rely heavily on tenure and informal decision-making processes rather than structured assessments of leadership potential. This reliance on seniority over merit discourages high-potential employees from pursuing leadership roles, as they perceive limited opportunities for advancement based on creativity or strategic vision. The lack of transparent and objective promotion pathways reinforces a leadership culture that favors stability over adaptability, restricting the influx of fresh perspectives necessary for driving innovation. This misalignment between leadership development and innovation objectives further weakens the organization's competitive advantage in an industry where rapid adaptation is essential.

### **Training Silos and Onboarding Limit Innovation Readiness**

The inconsistencies in leadership training and onboarding processes also present significant challenges to fostering an innovation-friendly culture. Leaders reported that training is largely informal, with new hires and interns receiving little structured guidance on leadership expectations. This approach creates silos in leadership development, where different departments cultivate their own leadership philosophies without a unified vision for innovation. Effective leadership training programs emphasize cross-functional collaboration, critical thinking, and the ability to navigate uncertainty, which are key skills for leaders in innovation-driven environments (Costa et al., 2023). Without an integrated training program, the organization struggles to equip its leaders with the skills needed to foster a culture of continuous improvement and creative problem-solving.

## Decision-Making Fragmentation Hinders Agility

Decision-making inconsistencies further hinder the organization's ability to implement innovative strategies effectively. Some departments prioritize consensus-driven leadership, while others operate under a more hierarchical, top-down approach. This fragmentation slows the decision-making process, as employees must navigate conflicting leadership styles when proposing innovative solutions. Observational data revealed that in some cases, employees were excluded from strategic discussions, limiting their ability to contribute novel ideas that could drive operational improvements. A unified leadership approach that encourages open dialogue and cross-departmental collaboration would enhance the organization's ability to rapidly adapt to industry changes and integrate innovative practices.

## The Education-Industry Leadership Gap

Finally, the study's findings highlight the broader role of leadership in bridging the gap between higher education and industry expectations for leadership development. Many participants expressed concerns that graduates entering the workforce lack the necessary leadership skills to contribute meaningfully to organizational growth. This disconnect between academic training and practical leadership application further underscores the need for organizations to take a more structured approach to leadership development. Collaborative initiatives between industry and higher education, such as mentorship programs, experiential learning, and leadership simulations, could help cultivate future leaders who are better prepared to navigate the complexities of innovation-driven organizations.

## Future Research Recommendations

The findings of this study demonstrate that poor leadership structures, characterized by inconsistent leadership definitions, subjective promotion practices, inadequate training, and fragmented decision-making, pose significant barriers to organizational innovation. Without clear leadership expectations, employees lack the guidance and support necessary to develop and implement creative solutions. The lack of structured leadership development programs further exacerbates this issue, limiting the organization's ability to build a sustainable innovation pipeline.

The limited research available in the context of leadership in sport organizations should catalyze further investigation. It is reasonable to hypothesize that other organizations may encounter similar challenges related to varied leadership definitions and the effect of these discrepancies on training and

development practices. Conducting longitudinal studies that adopt a unified definition of leadership might illuminate its broader implications, including effects on employee satisfaction, retention rates, and long-term organizational cohesion and performance.

Introducing leader-member exchange scales or other standardized assessment tools could enrich our understanding of how organizational leadership styles influence employee evaluations and promotions. Future research should explore how leadership standardization affects innovation outcomes, particularly in organizations that rely on cross-functional collaboration. Furthermore, examining how leadership alignment affects organizational agility and responsiveness to industry changes would provide valuable insights into optimizing leadership structures for innovation-driven growth.

To address the leadership inconsistencies identified in this study, organizations should implement the following:

**1. A standardized leadership definition and framework to ensure consistency across departments and provide a foundation for leadership training and evaluation**

A standardized definition of leadership is essential for ensuring consistency across departments and providing a foundation for effective leadership training and evaluation. Research by Hiller et al. (2006) emphasizes that inconsistencies in leadership understanding contribute to fragmented decision-making and misaligned innovation strategies. A clearly defined leadership framework enhances role clarity, aligns performance expectations, and fosters an environment that encourages innovation to thrive. Future studies should investigate how organizations that adopt a unified leadership framework compare in terms of strategic alignment and operational efficiency with those that have more fragmented approaches.

**2. Competency-based promotion criteria to identify and elevate leaders with innovation-oriented skill sets rather than relying solely on tenure**

Traditional promotion systems in sport organizations tend to prioritize tenure over competency, limiting opportunities for emerging leaders with innovative skill sets. Studies on leadership selection (Mumford et al., 2000) indicate that competency-based promotion criteria focusing on strategic foresight, adaptability, and collaboration are better predictors of leadership success than tenure alone. Future research should explore the effect of competency-driven leadership selection on innovation adoption, decision-making quality, and organizational agility in sport organizations' front offices. By prioritizing innovation-oriented skill sets, organizations can ensure that leadership transitions support long-term strategic goals.

### **3. Structured leadership development programs that integrate training in strategic thinking, decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving**

Another critical area for future research is the effectiveness of structured leadership development programs in preparing leaders for the complexities of modern sport management. The study revealed that many sport organizations' front offices rely on informal mentorship rather than structured training, leaving leadership development to chance rather than design. Avolio and Hannah (2008) highlight that structured programs integrating strategic thinking, decision-making under uncertainty, and collaborative problem-solving significantly enhance leadership effectiveness. Future studies should examine how targeted leadership training programs can enhance innovation capabilities and improve leadership continuity within sport organizations.

### **4. A cohesive decision-making model that encourages cross-departmental collaboration and creates space for employees to contribute innovative ideas**

Cross-departmental collaboration is vital for fostering innovation in sport organizations' front offices, yet many organizations operate with fragmented decision-making structures. Some departments favor consensus-driven approaches, while others operate under hierarchical decision-making models, leading to inefficiencies and stagnation. Research by Edmondson (1999) underscores that psychological safety and structured collaboration improve knowledge sharing and innovation. Future research should investigate how cohesive decision-making frameworks, such as agile leadership models, affect sport organizations' ability to rapidly adapt to industry changes and integrate innovative practices.

### **5. Stronger partnerships with higher education institutions to align leadership development curricula with industry needs, ensuring that future leaders are better prepared for innovation-driven roles**

Further research is needed related to the role of higher education institutions in bridging the gap between academic leadership training and industry expectations. The study found that many sport executives believe college graduates lack real-world leadership experience, reinforcing the need for stronger academic-industry partnerships. Perlmutter and Nelson (2019) suggest that tailored leadership curricula and experiential learning opportunities can enhance graduate readiness for leadership roles. Future research should explore the effect of structured internships, mentorship programs, and university partnerships in preparing the next generation of sport leaders to navigate innovation-driven challenges.

By implementing these changes, organizations can create an environment in which leadership actively enables innovation rather than obstructing it. A strong, unified leadership culture forms the foundation of an adaptive, forward-thinking organization—one that can navigate challenges, seize emerging opportunities, and sustain long-term competitive advantage. Ultimately, an organization’s ability to foster innovation depends on how leadership is defined and enacted. When leadership is inconsistently understood, it leads to misaligned priorities, operational inefficiencies, and missed opportunities for growth. Defining leadership clearly and consistently is not merely a structural improvement, it is a strategic imperative for cultivating a culture of sustained innovation and adaptability.

## References

- Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *16*(3), 315–338.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Cheng, Y., Hu, C., Wang, S., & Huang, J. (2024). Political context matters: A joint effect of coercive power and perceived organizational politics on abusive supervision and silence. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, *41*, 81–106. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-022-09840-x>
- Clapham, M. M., & Meyer, C. K. (2024). Leadership for creativity and innovation. *Journal of Business & Educational Leadership*, *14*(1), 49–60. <https://research-ebSCO-com.proxyko.uits.iu.edu/c/s36x4q/viewer/pdf/ha2pr44d7j>
- Costa, J., Pádua, M., & Moreira, A. C. (2023). Leadership styles and innovation management: What is the role of human capital? *Administrative Sciences*, *13*(2), 47–69. <https://doi-org.proxyko.uits.iu.edu/10.3390/admsci13020047>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Dietvorst, B. J., Simmons, J. P., & Massey, C. (2015). Algorithm aversion: People erroneously avoid algorithms after seeing them err. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *144*(1), 114–126.
- Employers, N. A. (2018). *Job outlook 2018: The attributes employers want to see on new college graduates’ resumes*. NACE.
- Employers, N. A. (2024). *Job outlook 2024: Employer priorities and competencies*. NACE.
- Flick, U. (2018). *An introduction to qualitative research*. SAGE Publications.
- Fusch, P. I., & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(9), 1408–1416. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1721368991?accountid=11650&sourceType=Scholarly%20Journals>
- Hiller, N. J., Day, D. V., & Vance, R. J. (2006). Collective enactment of leadership roles and team effectiveness: A field study. *Leadership Quarterly*, *17*(4), 387–397. <https://research-ebSCO-com.proxyko.uits.iu.edu/linkprocessor/plink?id=ea999a35-b171-3f01-aa2b-177845bc2a09>
- Jenkins, L. E. (2022, December). Leadership assessment disparity between employers and college graduates in the sports industry: A constructivist research paradigm. *Doctoral Dissertation*. Liberty University.

- Kahneman, D., Sibony, O., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). *Noise: A flaw in human judgment*. Little, Brown Spark.
- Landells, E., & Albrecht, S. (2017). The positives and negatives of organizational politics: A qualitative study. *Journal of Business Psychology*, 32, 41–58. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-015-9434-5>
- Maes, G., & Van Hootegeem, G. (2022). Power and politics in different change discourses. *Administrative Sciences*, 12(2), 64–82. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci12020064>
- Mumford, M. D., Todd, E. M., Higgs, C., & McIntosh, T. (2017). Cognitive skills and leadership performance: The nine critical skills. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 28(1), 24–39. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.10.012>
- NACE Staff. (2018, February 19). *Are college graduates “career ready”?* <https://www.naceweb.org/uploadedfiles/files/2021/resources/nace-career-readiness-competencies-revised-apr-2021.pdf>
- Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Sage Publications.
- Patil, S., & Bernstein, E. (2022). The power and pitfalls of people analytics. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 100162.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership*. Jossey-Bass.
- Yukl, G. (2013). *Leadership in organizations*. Pearson.