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Theory and Design for Women's
Leadership Development Programs

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We conceptualize leadership development as identity work and show how subtle forms of gender bias in the culture and in organizations interfere with the identity work of women leaders. Based on this insight, we revisit traditional approaches to standard leadership topics, such as negotiations and leading change, as well as currently popular developmental tools, such as 360-degree feedback and networking; reinterpret them through the lens of women's experiences in organizations; and revise them in order to meet the particular challenges women face when transitioning into senior leadership. By framing leadership development as identity work, we reveal the gender dynamics involved in becoming a leader, offer a theoretical rationale for teaching leadership in women-only groups, and suggest design and delivery principles to increase the likelihood that women's leadership programs will help women advance into more senior leadership roles.

Taking Gender into Account:

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For at least a quarter of a century, women have been entering the professional and managerial ranks of U.S. corporations at about the same rate as men, yet they remain dramatically underrepresented at senior levels. Women currently constitute only 2.2 percent of *Fortune* 500 CEOs (Catalyst, U.S. Women in Business, 2011) and about 15 percent of these companies' board seats and corporate officer positions (Catalyst, Women in U.S. Management, 2011). The gap widens for women of color, who account for about twelve percent of the managerial and professional labor force (Catalyst, Statistical Overview of Women in the Workplace, 2011) but a scant three percent of *Fortune 500* directors (Catalyst, African American Women, 2011); only three of the 500 CEOs are women of color. Women have fared no better in Europe, where they make up about a third of managerial positions but still only 1.8 percent of CEOs and about ten percent of board seats of *Financial Times* 500 companies (Catalyst, Women in Europe, 2010); and in India, just eleven percent of large-company chief executives are women (EMA Partners International, 2010). Even among recent graduates from leading business schools worldwide, women's career progress lags relative to comparable men's (Carter & Silva, 2010). Furthermore, progress in women's advancement achieved over the past several decades has slowed considerably in recent years (Carter & Silva, 2010). An earlier generation's hope that filling the pipeline would eventually produce parity up through the ranks has clearly not materialized. At the same time, organizations' widespread adoption of policies prohibiting sex discrimination, while opening many doors to women, have also failed to close the gender gap at more senior levels, suggesting that impediments to women's advancement are more complex and elusive than deliberate forms of sex discrimination (Sturm, 2001).

Organizational research on the causes of women's persistent underrepresentation in leadership positions has thus shifted away from a focus on actors' intentional efforts to exclude women to consideration of so-called "second generation" forms of gender bias, the powerful yet often invisible barriers to women's advancement that arise from cultural beliefs about gender, as well as workplace structures, practices, and patterns of interaction that inadvertently favor men (Calás & Smircich, 2009; Ely & Meyerson, 2000; Kolb & McGinn, 2009; Sturm, 2001). For example, organizational hierarchies in which men predominate, along with practices that equate leadership with behaviors believed to be more common or appropriate in men, powerfully if unwittingly communicate that women are ill-suited for leadership roles; people's tendency to gravitate to those who are like them on salient dimensions such as gender leads powerful men to sponsor and advocate for other men when leadership opportunities arise (for a recent review of these forms of bias, see Eagly & Carli, 2007). Such biases accumulate and in the aggregate can interfere in a woman's ability to see herself and be seen by others as a leader. If constructing and internalizing a leader identity is central to the process of becoming a leader, as recent theory would suggest (DeRue & Ashford, 2010b; Ibarra, Snook, & Guillen Ramo, 2010; Lord & Hall, 2005), then these subtle yet pervasive forms of gender bias may impede women's progress by obstructing the identity work necessary to take up leadership roles. The result is self-sealing: women's underrepresentation in leader positions validates entrenched systems and beliefs that prompt and support men's bids for leadership, which in turn maintains the *status quo*.

This perspective on gender and leadership calls for a new developmental agenda for women in and aspiring to leadership roles. Such an agenda is timely given that companies are increasingly turning to leadership development programs designed specifically for women in response to clients' demand for more diversity among their service providers (McCracken, 2000) and to ensure that their best and brightest are reaching their potential (Hewlett, 2007;

Zahidi & Ibarra, 2010). To meet this growing demand, top business schools, such as Harvard, Stanford, INSEAD, Northwestern, UCLA, Duke, and IMD as well as institutions like the Center for Creative Leadership and the Simmons School of Management, which pioneered women-only leadership programs in the 1970s and 1980s, have created a new niche in leadership education for women, offering both company-specific programs as well as a range of open-enrollment courses.

Pedagogical theories, however, have failed to keep pace with practice. Practitioners and educators lack a coherent, theoretically-based, and actionable framework for designing and delivering leadership programs for women. Lacking such a framework, many adopt an "add-women-and-stir" approach (Martin & Meyerson, 1998: 312), simply delivering the same programs to women that they deliver to men. This approach assumes that gender either does not or should not matter for leadership development. Others take a different tack, adopting a "fix-the-women" approach (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). These programs assume that gender matters a great deal, but they locate the problem in women: women have not been socialized to compete successfully in the world of men, and so they must be taught the skills their male counterparts have acquired as a matter of course. While both approaches may impart some useful skills and tactics, neither adequately addresses the organizational realities women face nor is likely to foster in participants a sustained capacity for leadership.

In this article, we offer a framework for women's leadership development grounded in theories of both gender and leadership. Our framework is distinctive by taking into account how gender shapes women's path to leadership without either victimizing or blaming women, while at the same time cultivating in women a sense of agency. We first provide an overview of research and theory on leadership development as identity work and describe how second generation gender biases interfere with the identity work of women leaders. Next, drawing from our experience designing and delivering women's leadership programs, we illustrate

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how standard leadership topics, such as negotiations and leading change, as well as currently popular developmental tools, such as 360-degree feedback and networking, can be reinterpreted through the lens of second generation bias to facilitate women leaders' identity work and movement into leadership roles. Extrapolating from both theory and practice, we then propose principles to guide leadership education for women. Finally, we discuss how our analysis of women's leadership development informs leadership theory, education, and practice more broadly.

Leadership Development: Challenges for Women Leaders

Leadership Development as Identity Work

How people become leaders and how they take up the leader role are fundamentally questions about identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010b; Ibarra et al., 2010; Lord & Hall, 2005; for a review, see van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). A leader identity is not simply the counterpart to a formally held leadership position but rather evolves as one engages in two core, interrelated tasks: internalizing a leader identity (DeRue & Ashford, 2010b) and developing an elevated sense of purpose (see, e.g., Quinn, 2004).

Internalizing a leader identity entails a set of relational and social processes through which one comes to see oneself, and is seen by others, as a leader (DeRue & Ashford, 2010b). A person takes actions aimed at asserting leadership, others affirm or disaffirm those actions, encouraging or discouraging further assertions, and so on. Through this back and forth, the would-be leader accumulates experiences that inform his or her sense of self as a leader, as well as feedback about his or her fit for taking up the leader role.

The recursive and mutually-reinforcing nature of the leader identity-construction process can produce positive or negative spirals (DeRue, Ashford, & Cotton, 2009; DeRue & Ashford, 2010b). On the positive side, receiving validation for one's self-view as a leader bolsters self-confidence, which increases one's motivation to lead (Chan & Drasgow, 2001;

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Kark & van Dijk, 2007) and to seek new opportunities to practice leadership (Day & Harrison, 2007; Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009). As one's opportunities and capacity for exercising leadership grow, so too does the likelihood of receiving collective endorsement from the organization more broadly, such as assignments to formal leadership roles (DeRue & Ashford, 2010b). Recognition and affirmation strengthen one's self-identity as a leader, which in turn fuels the search for new opportunities, growth, and so on. Internalizing a leader identity helps to sustain the level of interest and fortitude needed to develop and practice complex leadership skills (Lord & Hall, 2005) and to take the risks of experimenting with unfamiliar aspects of the emerging identity (Ibarra, 1999). In this positive spiral, the leader identity moves from being a peripheral, provisional aspect of the self, indicative of one's leadership potential, to being a more central and enduring one, grounded in actual achievement (Lord & Hall, 2005). On the negative side, failing to receive validation for one's leadership attempts diminishes self-confidence as well as the motivation to seek developmental opportunities, experiment, and take on new leadership roles (Day et al., 2009), thus weakening one's self-identity as a leader (DeRue & Ashford, 2010b).

A leader's identity is tied to his or her sense of purpose. Leaders are most effective when they pursue purposes that are aligned with their personal values and oriented toward advancing the collective good (Fu et al., 2010; Lord & Hall, 2005: 594; Quinn, 2004). Such purposes satisfy a basic human need for relatedness and thus are inherently rewarding to pursue (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Sheldon et al., 2004; for reviews, see Podolny, Khurana, & Hill-Popper, 2005, and Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). Leaders who advance such purposes experience themselves and are experienced by others as authentic (Fu et al., 2010). An elevated sense of purpose challenges leaders to move outside of their comfort zone, shifts their attention from what is to what is possible, and gives them a compelling reason to face down their fears and insecurities and take action in spite of them

(Quinn, 2004). When leaders are connected and connect others to larger purposes, they inspire trust, increase others' sense of urgency, and help them find greater meaning in their work (Jung & Avolio, 2000; Podolny et al., 2005; Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006).

When leaders become overly focused on being seen in a certain way in order to advance their careers, they become excessively concerned with meeting others' expectations, unable to step outside their comfort zone, and disconnected from their core values (Quinn, 2004). In search of recognition and approval, they can easily lose sight of a larger purpose. Leaders who are driven by fears and insecurities inspire the same in others (Bennis, 1989). When subordinates perceive leaders as self-interested, they trust them less and feel less committed to the organization (Fu et al., 2010). Hence, a central part of constructing a leader identity and of being seen as a leader is developing an elevated sense of purpose and conveying that sense to others.

Impediments to Women's Leader Identity Development

The social interactions in which people claim and grant leader identities do not occur *ex nihilo* but are shaped by culturally available ideologies about what it means to be a leader. In most cultures, the meaning is masculine, making the prototypical leader a quintessentially masculine man: decisive, assertive, and independent (Bailyn, 2006; Calás & Smircich, 1991; Dennis & Kunkel, 2004; Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002; Willemsen, 2002).

By contrast, women are thought to be communal—friendly, unselfish, care-taking— and thus lacking in the qualities required for success in leadership roles (Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Schein, 2001; Fletcher, 2004). Women of Asian descent are particularly likely to be stereotyped as passive, reserved, and lacking in ambition, and Latinas are often seen as overemotional (for a review, see Giscombe & Mattis, 2002), characteristics that would appear to disqualify these women for leadership. The mismatch between qualities

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attributed to women and qualities thought necessary for leadership places women leaders in a double bind and subjects them to a double standard. Women in positions of authority are thought too aggressive or not aggressive enough, and what appears assertive, self-confident, or entrepreneurial in a man often looks abrasive, arrogant, or self-promoting in a woman (for a review, see Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007). African American women are especially vulnerable to such stereotypes and risk being seen as overly aggressive and confrontational (Bell & Nkomo, 2001). In experiment after experiment, women who achieve in distinctly male arenas are seen as competent but are less well liked than equally successful men (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004: 416). Merely being a successful woman in a male domain can be regarded as a violation of gender norms warranting sanctions (e.g., Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). By the same token, when women performing traditionally male roles are seen as conforming to feminine stereotypes, they tend to be liked but not respected (Rudman & Glick, 2001: 744): they are judged too soft, emotional, and unassertive to make tough decisions and to come across as sufficiently authoritative (Eagly & Carli, 2007). In short, women can face trade-offs between competence and likability in leadership roles.

If a central developmental task for an aspiring leader is to integrate the leader identity into the core self, then this task is fraught at the outset for a woman, who must establish credibility in a culture that is deeply conflicted about her authority (Ely & Rhode, 2010). Workplace biases exacerbate the problem, posing challenges for women at every stage. We describe these challenges below.

Few role models for women. Relative to their male counterparts, aspiring women leaders have less social support for learning how to credibly claim a leader identity. People learn new roles by identifying with role models, experimenting with provisional identities, and evaluating experiments against internal standards and external feedback (Ibarra, 1999). Yet a dearth of women leaders leaves younger women with few role models whose styles are

feasible or congruent with their self-concepts (Ely, 1994; Ibarra, 1999), a problem that may be particularly acute for women of color, who cite lack of company role models of the same race or ethnicity to be a major barrier to advancement (Giscomb & Mattis, 2002). And because women receive less latitude for making mistakes in the learning process (Foschi, 1996; Bell & Nkomo, 2001), they may be more risk-averse, further curtailing experimentation (Kanter, 1977).

Women's under-representation in senior positions can also signal that being female is a liability, which can discourage would-be women leaders from turning to senior women for developmental advice and support. In a study comparing experiences of women law associates as a function of women's representation in their firm's partnership, those in firms with few women partners were less likely to experience gender as a positive basis for identification with senior women and less likely to perceive senior women as role models with legitimate authority (Ely, 1994). Hence, not only were senior women scarce, but also their scarcity made them seem unfit as role models. Both factors make role modeling difficult for young women aspiring to leadership.

A study of identity development among young professionals transitioning to more senior roles illustrates how these dynamics may play out for women (Ibarra, 1999; Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2008). Whereas men making the role transition relied on imitation strategies, which involved experimenting with traits and behaviors selected from a broad array of mostly male role models, women tended to rely on true-to-self strategies, transferring to the new role behaviors that had worked for them in the past. Men more aggressively sought to signal credibility by displaying behaviors that conformed to their firm's norms, even when these behaviors felt unnatural. In contrast, women modestly asserted more neutral, uncertain, or qualified images in an effort to avoid disapproval. For example, women sought to prove their competence by demonstrating technical mastery over the long term; in contrast, men were

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intent on making a positive first impression. Women cited their reliance on "substance rather than form" as a more "authentic" strategy than their male counterparts', and thus as a source of pride; yet they were also frustrated with their inability to win superiors' and clients' recognition. Ironically, women's attempts to remain authentic ultimately undermined their ability to find and internalize identities that were congruent with the kind of professional they aspired to become.

As others have noted, "when the best of their male counterparts have built the foundations of a new identity and are ready to move on, equally high-potential women may still be searching for the raw materials" (Ely & Rhode, 2010: 393). Lacking a firm foundation, women may have difficulty seeking and receiving the developmental opportunities that could help to cement a leader identity.

Gendered career paths and gendered work. Because most organizational structures and work practices were designed when women had only a small presence in the labor force, many taken-for-granted organizational features reflect men's lives and situations, making it difficult for women to get on—and stay—the course to leadership (Acker, 1990, Bailyn, 2006, Hewlett, 2007). For example, the conventional career path to senior roles in many companies has included formal rotations in sales or operations, jobs men are more likely to have had than women. Yet those requirements may be based on narrow construals or outdated assumptions about the kinds of experiences that best prepare a person for leadership (Kolb, Williams, & Frohlinger, 2010). Organizations may also better support men to undertake such careers. For example, expatriation arrangements for career-enhancing global assignments often assume a "trailing spouse" who has no career and can easily move—an arrangement far fewer women than men are likely to have (Kolb & Williams, 2000). How work is valued may similarly favor men, making their bids for leadership seem more valid. Research suggests that visible, heroic work, more often the purview of men, is

recognized and rewarded, whereas equally vital, behind-the-scenes work (e.g., building a team, avoiding crises), more characteristic of women, tends to be overlooked (Fletcher, 1994). Now taken as the *sine qua non* of organizational life, these practices appear to be gender-neutral but cumulatively place women at a disadvantage, despite a lack of discriminatory intent.

The result is a vicious cycle: people see men as better fit for leadership roles partly because the paths to such roles were designed with men mind; the belief that men are a better fit propels more men into leadership roles, which in turn reinforces the perception that men are a better fit, leaving gendered practices intact. Thus, a challenge for women is to construct leader identities in spite of the subtle barriers organizations erect to women's leadership advancement.

Women's lack of access to networks and sponsors. If constructing a leader identity is a fundamentally relational endeavor, then people's informal networks should play a key role in the process of becoming a leader. Informal networks can shape career trajectories by regulating access to jobs; channeling the flow of information and referrals; creating influence and reputation; supplying emotional support, feedback, political advice, and protection; and increasing the likelihood and speed of promotion (e.g., Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1985; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Ibarra, 1993; Podolny & Baron, 1997; Westphal & Milton, 2000). In other words, the composition of one's informal network can open doors to leadership opportunities, determine who will see and grant (or not) one's leadership claims, and shape what one learns in the process.

Systematic differences in men's and women's formal organizational positions, together with people's preference to interact with others of the same sex, yield differences in the composition and structure of men's and women's networks (Ibarra, 1992; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001), which in turn can affect their ability to construct a credible

leader identity. In settings where men predominate in positions of power, women have a smaller pool of high-status, same-gender contacts on which to draw and fewer ties to powerful, high-status men (Ibarra, 1992). Both white women and women of color cite lack of access to influential colleagues with whom to network as a major barrier to advancement (Catalyst,Women in Corporate Leadership, 2003; Giscomb & Mattis, 2002). Moreover, the ties women do have tend to be less efficacious: men's network ties provide more informal help than either white or black women's (McGuire, 2002), and men's mentors are more likely than women's to get them promoted (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010). On the flip side, powerful, high-status men tend to support and channel career development opportunities to male subordinates, whom they judge as more likely to succeed than women (McGuire, 2002). Thus, women's networks yield fewer leadership opportunities, provide less visibility for their leadership claims, and generate less recognition and endorsement.

Women and men also use their networks differently. Whereas men's networks are homophilous (i.e., mostly men) and multi-purpose, women tend to build functionally-differentiated networks, obtaining instrumental access from men and friendship and social support from women (Ibarra, 1992). Women's bifurcated approach is partly pragmatic: men are better resourced, and women are easier for women to relate to on a personal level (Ragins & Kram, 2007). Yet this bifurcation can detract from workplace centrality (Groysberg, 2008; Ibarra, 1992) and interfere with building the kind of deep, trusting relationships with powerful men that are often necessary for promotion, especially when performance in the next role is hard to predict (Kanter, 1977).

Differences between women's and men's networks may also stem from reluctance women may feel to undertake the instrumental activities required to build a strong network. Women may fear that these activities will appear inauthentic and overly instrumental. In a business school experiment designed to test whether this fear is valid, two groups of students

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were asked to discuss a case about a venture capitalist whose network-building skills were superlative (Flynn, Anderson, & Brion, unpublished manuscript). The cases were identical, with one exception: for one group, the case protagonist was named Heidi Roizen, and for the other, Howard Roizen. Following the case discussion, students rated the protagonist. Consistent with previous research (see Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007), they rated Heidi and Howard as equally competent, but saw Howard as more likeable, genuine, and kind, and Heidi as more aggressive, self-promoting, and power-hungry. Anticipating this judgment, women may hold back from building sufficiently strong networks to support their leadership ambitions.

Women leaders' heightened visibility. Some women rise to leadership positions in spite of these challenges, but structural impediments and cultural biases continue to shape their developmental and leadership experiences. As women rise in the hierarchy, they become increasingly scarce; as women become scarce, they become more visible and subject to greater scrutiny. Under the microscope, women can become risk-averse, overly focused on details, and prone to micro-manage (Kanter, 1977; Kram & McCollom-Hampton, 1998), losing sight of their larger purpose as leaders. Cultural attitudes toward women in authority compound the problem. Some women manage the competence-likeability trade-off by downplaying feminine qualities in the interest of conveying competence, while others attempt to strike the perfect balance between the two. Either way, being overly invested in one's self-image can be self-defeating. When people are focused on how they are coming across to others, they divert emotional and motivational resources away from the larger purposes at hand (for a review, see Crocker & Park, 2004; Steele, 2010). While any leader can become overly focused on self-preservation and self-image, heightened visibility and identity contradictions may be a particular trigger for women leaders.

In short, cultural and organizational biases that inadvertently favor men impede the identity work of talented, ambitious women in or aspiring to leadership roles. Below, we describe how women's leadership programs can help women address these challenges.

Teaching Leadership in Light of Second Generation Gender Bias

In this section, we draw on our collective experiences of designing and teaching in more than 50 women's leadership programs (WLPs) over the past ten years to illustrate how standard leadership topics and tools can be taught to address the particular challenges women face when transitioning to more senior leadership roles. Specifically, we describe how to use 360-degree feedback and teach about networking, negotiations, leading change, and managing career transitions in light of impediments posed by second generation forms of gender bias. We draw our examples from WLPs we have delivered to women-only groups in open-enrollment as well as custom-designed, company-specific executive education programs. Table 1 presents the publicly-available materials we use.

360-degree Feedback and Coaching

Collecting, delivering, and processing 360-degree feedback[1] is a fixture in most leadership development programs. Three-sixty-degree feedback tells managers how their bosses, peers, direct reports, and clients or customers perceive them. It is a basic tool for building self-knowledge and increasing awareness of one's impact on others (Day, 2001)— skills that are part and parcel of identity development (Hall, 2004). Feedback from 360s can challenge managers' self-perceptions and help them identify areas for development (Conger & Toegel, 2003).

Three-sixty feedback has three particular uses in leadership programs for women. First, because women tend to receive less—and less candid—feedback than men (Heffernan, 2004), a 360 often gives WLP participants more comprehensive feedback on their leadership

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[1] Three-sixty-degree feedback instruments can be company- or educator-generated or selected from among the many commercially-available products, and coaching to interpret and act on the feedback may be provided individually or in small groups (Conger & Toegel, 2003; Day, 2001; Kets de Vries & Korotov, 2007).

than they have ever received. In a program for managing directors of an investment bank, for example, receiving feedback on leadership dimensions was a new experience for participants. These women had typically met their revenue goals and thus received positive annual reviews on their business performance, along with commensurate bonuses. When they received the 360-feedback during the program, however, they were shocked and visibly upset at how low their bosses had rated them on numerous dimensions, such as "meeting client needs" and "building effective teams"—areas in which they had felt competent and their direct reports had given them high ratings. Together with coaches and peers, who helped them make sense of these discrepancies, they brainstormed constructive ways to respond. Some realized that recent changes in their company meant that that their bosses were likely unaware of the work they were doing; others received counsel on how to use the feedback as an opportunity to begin a dialogue with their boss about how they could work more productively; still others began to consider opportunities they might pursue elsewhere in the firm.

Second, processing 360-feedback with a coach and peers can help participants identify and deal with gender stereotypes and double binds. Consistent with research (see Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007), participants in WLPs—accomplished, high-potential women—are typically seen as competent but sometimes fail the likeability test. For example, in one program, participants tended to receive high ratings on instrumental dimensions, such as "exceeds goals," "acts decisively in the face of uncertainty," and "is not afraid to make decisions that may be unpopular," but low ratings on relational ones, such as "treating people fairly and with respect," "takes others' viewpoints into account," and "uses feedback to learn from her mistakes." We also often encounter participants whose 360-feedback seems contradictory, as when we collated the feedback women partners in a professional service firm received. For example, some were told they needed to "be tougher and hold people accountable," but also to "not set expectations so high"; to "say no more," but also to "be

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more visible"; to "be more decisive," but also to "be more collaborative." Similarly, WLP participants from an engineering firm, who had thus far succeeded by fitting in with their firm's aggressive, sales-oriented culture, were now being told that to advance to the next level, they needed to "trim their sharp elbows."

In a WLP, interpreting these messages in the context of double binds helps participants make sense of them; encouraging them to connect to their larger leadership purposes helps them to see a way out. The contradictory feedback can leave women puzzling over how to strike just the right balance between two seemingly opposing styles; being told to soften a hard-charging style that has heretofore been effective can be heard as a charge to be more feminine. Both messages can lead women to become preoccupied with how they are coming across to others, and both can engender women's resentment. These reactions draw women's energies away from the work at hand. Reminding women of their larger leadership purposes can shift their focus outward, away from themselves, and toward shared goals and the work necessary to accomplish them (Morriss, Ely, & Frei, 2011; Quinn, 2004). For example, when the women from the engineering firm focused on what their direct reports needed from them to accomplish their work, they were able to see how both a hard-driving *and* supportive style were necessary. These discussions are opportunities for participants to consider how they may have implicitly bought into the culture's dominant constructions of leadership by choosing "competence" in the competence-likeability trade-off and to see how advancing their leadership goals often requires relational skills as well. With this insight, they are able to see how seeking to fit the dominant cultural image of a leader can be self-defeating: in their efforts to appear competent, they can sometimes lose sight of their larger goals and of the qualities necessary for effective leadership. In short, reconnecting with larger goals helps participants construct a better vision of who they need to be as leaders. Enacting this vision makes their leader claims more credible and grants by others more likely.

Third, participants can share their feedback with bosses, direct reports, and peers to counter gender stereotypes that might otherwise bias these coworkers' perceptions of participants' leadership potential and leadership effectiveness. In study after study, women consistently receive higher ratings from bosses, peers, and direct reports on a range of leadership dimensions (see e.g., Ibarra & Obodaru, 2009; Kabacoff, 2000; Perrault & Irwin, 1996; for a review, see Merrill-Sands & Kolb, 2001). Yet research shows that people fail to recognize women's leadership potential even as they acknowledge women's leadership competencies. In a large-scale study of managers, supervisors who rated women subordinates somewhat higher than men in leadership competencies rated the same women lower in long-term leadership potential (Cochran, 1999). And in another study, although bosses rated senior women executives equally high or higher than their male counterparts on many leadership dimensions, including stereotypically masculine ones, such as ""employing a forceful, assertive and competitive approach to achieving results" and "seeking out positions of authority," they associated such stereotypically masculine dimensions with leadership effectiveness for men but not for women (Kabacoff, 2000). These findings suggest that observers may need to recalibrate their assessments of women's fit for and effectiveness in leadership roles in light of women's competencies. By explicitly linking concrete feedback received in the 360 to their leadership capability, participants can help observers see them in a new light. In addition, participants can share the feedback with bosses as a basis for matching assessed strengths and developmental needs to appropriate job assignments going forward (Day, 2001).

In our WLPs, we give participants opportunities to practice having conversations in which they share what they have learned from their 360-feedback to bolster their leadership claims. We may, for example, use a short case that features a protagonist who has just returned from a WLP and asks to be considered for a regional leadership role. The woman's

supervisor does not believe she is ready for the role and instead offers to put her in charge of a local initiative. Participants take turns role-playing how they could use their 360-feedback to help justify the protagonist's leadership claim.

Leadership Networks

The higher one goes in an organization, the less likely bureaucratic policies apply and the more critical one's informal network becomes (Kanter, 1977). To meet this need, leadership development programs often involve helping participants build their networks by increasing networking opportunities, expanding the depth and range of developmental relationships, and highlighting the benefits of networking (Day, 2001).

Because women tend to have less access to sponsors and reap fewer returns from similar kinds of relationships and network positions relative to men (e.g., Burt, 1992; Ibarra, 1992, 1993; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001; Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 1998), WLPs must go beyond giving women generic tactical advice about how to build a strong network and equip them with networking strategies that take these differences into account. The networking module in a WLP gives participants a framework for exploring how gender may be operating in their networks as well as opportunities to identify areas and strategies for improvement.

Participants use a network assessment tool to systematically examine their current networks (for the exercise, see Ibarra, 1996). They compare their network results to other participants' and assess how their networks stack up relative to the different networks women and men tend to build, as reported in the literature. These analyses help participants to evaluate how well or poorly their informal relationships position them for developmental opportunities, internal leadership roles, and connections to external stakeholders. Based on this assessment, participants consider whom they need to add to their networks.

In light of sex differences in career advancement returns from networks (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010), participants learn that enhancing their network is not simply a matter of expanding it, but also entails deepening it by finding more occasions to interact with key players both internal and external to their organizations. In our WLPs, we encourage participants to identify potential sponsors beyond their bosses and help them develop strategies for building those relationships when they leave the classroom. In WLPs that span several off-sites, participants have an opportunity to work with such sponsors between sessions. In one program for a large bank, women managing directors participated in several sessions as advisers to participants, reinforcing their positions as key members of participants' networks. In another program, the client organization had matched participants with sponsors. In teams, participants discussed how best to build those relationships and identified other senior leaders with whom mutual learning might occur. As the program progressed, the teams developed ideas about how to share insights from the program with their sponsors and how to enlist their sponsors in career action-planning. In a later off-site, participants' sponsors participated in a panel to discuss what they had learned from these experiences.

We often observe that women are reluctant to engage in networking activities for at least two reasons. First, they experience networking as "inauthentic," akin to "using people," and, in fact, a good deal of networking advice can convey that message. We address this problem by helping participants develop a compelling rationale for networking, noting that as people broach the transition from functional manager to organizational leader, they must begin to think beyond their immediate domain of expertise and concern themselves with organizational goals (Ibarra & Hunter, 2007a). We ask people to consider the question: networking for what purpose? We find that when participants can tie networking to a larger purpose, such as organizational goals, they become less reluctant. Along these lines, we also

suggest that participants help others develop their networks by serving as mentors and sponsors themselves. Second, many women find networking unappealing because they think they must engage in activities, like the proverbial "playing golf," that either do not interest them or are difficult to schedule given constraints in their lives outside of work. To counter this view, we point to research showing that larger networks are not always better and encourage participants to brainstorm how they might strengthen their networks in more efficient ways. For example, they can integrate networking into daily activities by using projects, committees, and assignments strategically as opportunities to develop new relationships.

Everyday Negotiation

Negotiation happens every day in the work place, but people do not always recognize when they are negotiating (Kolb & McGinn, 2009; Strauss, 1978). In fact, people negotiate over a host of issues embedded in the ongoing routines of work, including asking for expanded roles and job opportunities, seeking support to move ahead, securing the resources (e.g., time, money, people) to get work done, setting reasonable goals and objectives, and claiming credit for their work (Kolb & Williams, 2000; 2003). These negotiations entail not only assessing which options might lead to mutually acceptable agreements, but also defining issues and enlisting parties (Kolb & Putnam, 1997; Lax & Sebenius, 2006).

Our perspective on negotiation differs from the popular view that "women don't ask" (Babcock & Laschever, 2003), which overlooks these everyday kinds of negotiations, in which women routinely engage. Women do ask; they negotiate over issues that matter to them. Women negotiate for time and flexibility (Bohnet & Greig, 2007) and when they are able to connect what is good for them to what is good for their group or their organization (Kolb & Kickul, 2006). They negotiate on behalf of others—negotiations in which they

outperform men (Bowles & McGinn, 2008). And perhaps most often, women negotiate to overcome disadvantage and unfair treatment (Bowles, Bear, & Thomason, 2010).

Even when not addressing gender issues directly, women's negotiations often require raising awareness of and pushing back on gendered structures and work practices. For example, negotiating a flexible work arrangement reveals how an organization's practices make it difficult for mothers to succeed (Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007); negotiating for a leadership role can call attention to the fact that women have been overlooked; and claiming value for invisible work can show how bias operates in performance reviews and compensation (Fletcher, 1999; Martin, 1994). Hence, while negotiation is a critical skill for all leaders, it serves a particularly important function for women leaders by giving them the wherewithal to counter the effects of second generation gender bias.

Whereas traditional approaches to teaching negotiation focus on how to make good deals (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991; Movius & Susskind, 2009), we take a broader approach tailored to the situations women are likely to face. First, we enlarge the domain of what constitutes negotiation. In our programs, participants come to appreciate how they can use negotiation skills to deal with many kinds of issues that come up routinely and to put on the table issues they might not have seen as negotiable in the past. Participants practice these skills using short cases that feature issues and contexts in which second generation bias may be a hindrance—for example, a protagonist who is putting herself forward for a leadership role.

Second, we use a "shadow negotiation" framework, with its focus on strategic "moves and turns," to give women tools to negotiate over potentially controversial issues and decisions (Kolb & Williams, 2000; 2003). In this framework, preparation for "moves" entails not only figuring out what to ask for but also positioning oneself to feel legitimate to do the asking and understanding the potential sources of the other's resistance. In this process, the

negotiator must come to see her own value and find ways to make it visible, learn about how others have fared in similar circumstances, explore possible alternatives to agreement in order to guage her dependence on an agreement, and develop an appreciation for why the other may resist her requests. Finally, this framework helps negotiators think through how to "turn" the discussion so as to quickly regain one's footing when challenged in the negotiation (Kolb, 2004; Kolb and Williams, 2001).

Finally, we give women practice in using this framework by having them identify, prepare for, and practice an important negotiation they will undertake upon return from the WLP. Most participants choose issues from the newly expanded domain of negotiation. As participants become better acquainted with their roles and identities as leaders, they may negotiate for a new opportunity or to build support for a new initiative. Some negotiate for the resources and backing they will need to be maximally effective in a new role, while others might negotiate to alter their current roles and claim value for the work they already do. Still others practice negotiating with difficult people on their team to better align them with team goals.

Our approach to negotiations develops participants' sense of agency, a crucial feature of the program in light of gender analyses that could otherwise leave participants feeling disempowered. With new tools and strategies, they can push back when they identify a pattern of behavior, policy, or work practice that excludes them or causes others to overlook them. By showing women how their goals are aligned with the goals of the organization and framing negotiation as a way to advance both sets of goals, we help women see that negotiating what they need to succeed is, in fact, a mark of leadership (Kolb & Kickul, 2006).

Leading Change

Most leadership development programs aim to help people assume roles as change agents by improving their capacity to create a sense of urgency for change, craft and

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communicate a vision of the future, get stakeholder buy-in, and motivate and inspire people. Developing women's capacity to lead change may be even more critical as women are often selected to lead in turnaround, high-risk situations—the so-called "glass cliff" phenomenon (Ryan and Haslam, 2007; Brückmiller & Branscombe, 2011). In addition, leading change, by definition, depends on adeptly using influence and persuasion and thus is difficult for even the most accomplish manager (Kotter, 2007), but women can be further encumbered by gender stereotypes: the directive behaviors that people associate with leadership tend not to be viewed as typical or attractive in women (for a review, see Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007).

Using case studies featuring women protagonists as change agents can help participants identify and recognize themselves as leaders undertaking this role and exposes them to a range of effective leadership styles for women. In one of our programs, for example, participants compare and contrast two very different women leading change: one, Charlotte Beers at Ogilvy and Mather Worldwide, is directive and decisive but is sometimes perceived as lacking empathy and inclusiveness (Ibarra & Sackley, 1995); the other, Vivienne Cox at BP Alternative Energy, is viewed as sensitive and principled but also as less energetic and visionary (Ibarra & Hunter, 2007b). Comparing and contrasting these cases helps participants recognize their own stereotypes about women leaders and frees them to consider their personal leadership styles independent of gender stereotypes.

Even if not preparing for a formal change role, participants' deeper appreciation for how second generation gender bias operates in their companies often engenders a commitment to being a change agent on behalf of other women. One way to be a change agent is to change organizational narratives that have subtly kept second generation biases in place (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). For example, in one custom WLP, participants changed the organization's narrative about success and failure. They had entered the program with a

wholly individualistic view of whether leaders succeeded or failed: leaders in their company "sink or swim on their own merit." As they began to share their stories, however, it became clear to them that leaders who had support networks were likely to swim, while those who did not tended to sink. Women committed to support each other and to identify and support other promising leaders who might not have had optimal networks for success. They also committed to make visible what they were doing and to talk about why they were doing it, so that others could learn from their actions. In another custom program, alumnae from across several cohorts united to exert pressure for change. Through the program, they had come to understand some of the factors that prevented the firm from advancing women into senior leadership roles and to see how a talented woman's readiness for such a role could be systematically overlooked. These participants worked together to sponsor a specific woman for a newly vacated senior role. They were successful in helping her get the appointment and in the process helped others see how the company needed to change to enable women's success.

Women are also galvanized to make change when they recognize how they have sometimes participated in keeping second generation practices in place, and how they have the power to stop. In a program for women partners in a professional service firm, participants observed that they tended to take on smaller, more, and more-diverse operational roles than their male counterparts, whose roles tended to be larger and more-bounded. When they strategized about how to alleviate this role overload, they saw how they had become complicit in perpetuating the problem by asking for help on projects from junior women, whom they expected to comply, more often than they asked junior men, whom they expected to resist. They committed to change their behavior by asking the men to help and by helping women to see that they did not always have to say yes.

Sometimes a cohort of participants decides to act as a group to initiate systemic change. For example, one cohort decided to address how people in their company were groomed for top roles. While the process was neither consistent nor transparent, these participants noticed that men seemed to be given more strategic roles, whereas women were assigned more operational ones, signaling women's lower potential. They proposed to senior leadership that the company provide clear criteria for identifying who would receive developmental assignments, be transparent about how high-potential is evaluated, and give clear direction as to which kinds of experiences best developed a person's potential. To get their recommendations implemented, they then created a strategy for building alliances with key stakeholders.

Another example of a cohort undertaking systemic change comes from a program for senior managing directors, who targeted the promotion process directly. They noticed that people made different attributions about performance and thus different assessments of potential in promotions committee meetings, depending on whether the candidate was a woman or a man. They also recognized that the typically solo woman on the committee might have a tendency to silence herself when discussing women candidates so as not to be seen as the "the woman who defends women." The group created a system of advocacy, enlisting one of their male colleagues to pay attention to the process and speak out if he noticed differential treatment. This move not only educated him, but it also led one promotions committee to analyze how they had evaluated women in the past.

Career Transitions

People who are nominated for leadership development programs have typically demonstrated leadership potential, and nominators expect such programs to facilitate participants' transitions to more senior leadership roles. Successful transitions involve shedding professional identities that do not suit the demands of the roles that lie ahead and

developing new identities that are more fitting (Ibarra, 1992, 2003). Yet people often feel ambivalent about leaving the comfort of roles in which they have excelled and thus have a hard time shedding their outdated professional identity (McCall & Lombardo, 1978). Hence, leadership development programs often prepare managers to make leadership transitions by helping them see that they are at such a juncture, work through any ambivalence they may feel, and anticipate the identity requirements of their careers going forward.

While these junctures are rife with derailment potential for men and women alike, second generation gender biases can make them more challenging for women. For example, women may worry that a more senior role will require them to develop an overly masculine leadership style or to renegotiate arrangements already in place to accommodate work-family demands. Making a significant leadership transition may also require relinquishing work one enjoys and does well—stepping outside of one's comfort zone—which can feel particularly threatening for women, who may worry about their ability to sustain success as they move up the corporate ladder. The fewer women in the organization's upper echelons, the more vulnerable a woman may feel to the possibility of failure. She may therefore have a particularly hard time relinquishing the hard-won recognition she receives in her current role or the feeling of being indispensible to those who have come to depend on the role she has mastered. These worries and concerns often emerge organically in the course of the program. By sharing experiences, dilemmas, and strategies with women in similar situations and analyzing the career trajectories of case protagonists, participants can learn how to manage these feelings and more effectively navigate these transitions.

Getting stuck in informal roles can also derail women's transitions to more senior leadership positions. We surface this dynamic by asking people to consider the possibility that the talents and skills that "got you here won't get you there." In this module, we help participants identify the informal roles they have tended to take up in their organizations; we

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then ask them to consider how playing these roles has benefitted them and others but also how it may preclude opportunities to develop and master other kinds of leadership skills (see Wells, 1995, for a description of how this dynamic works in organizations). In one program, for example, a participant identified her informal role as the "project manager": an operational expert who, if a group was stalled, was called to step in and take over. By taking on this operational function in teams, she was not as available to play more strategic roles in her firm. Another participant found that she played the role of "fixer": the go-to person for solving difficult, urgent problems. Needed to handle crises, she moved from project to project and thus was never considered for a line leadership role. These kinds of informal roles are hard to give up because they are gratifying to play and others appreciate them. Yet they can be dead-ends, precluding opportunities for larger, more strategic assignments and curtailing women's leadership claims; moreover, they keep others from developing those skills for themselves. Once participants realize how taking up these roles can be limiting, they are more open to giving them up and looking for new opportunities to grow.

Cases that delve into the arc of a woman protagonist's career, such as Margaret Thatcher, Patricia Fili Krushel (Time Warner), and Cathy Benko (Deloitte), provide a forum for discussing key personal and career transitions, the ups and downs of careers, and the drivers of women's leadership journeys, including: ambition; the accumulation of human capital; loyalty; and commitment to a mission, family, community, and others (Dotlich, Noel & Walker, 2004). When placed later in the program, these cases can serve an integrative function by demonstrating how content from earlier sessions, such as feedback, networks, and negotiations, can be used to build expertise, power, and credibility over the course of one's career. Participants also map their own leadership stories to better understand how their experiences in both personal and professional realms help to explain who they are and who they might become as leaders. Finally, in some custom programs, we have invited

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senior women from the organization to talk frankly with participants about their key leadership transitions, the paths they took, and the ones they rejected. These women can serve as inspiring role models (Mirvis, 2008), and their involvement in the WLP signals their willingness to help and support other women in the firm.

Principles for the Design and Delivery of Women's Leadership Programs

Recognizing that a successful leadership program is more than the sum of its parts, we offer three design principles that we believe should undergird any leadership program designed for women: (1) situate topics and tools in an analysis of second generation gender bias, (2) create a holding environment to support women's identity work, and (3) anchor participants on their leadership purpose.

Principle 1: Situate topics and tools in an analysis of second generation gender bias.

By using research on second generation gender bias to inform the way leadership topics and tools are taught, WLPs offer women an empirically-based framework for diagnosing their workplace experiences and taking effective action. Addressing the issues begins with awareness. Once aware of how second generation gender bias manifests in organizations—whether the problem is too few role models, organizational practices that fail to take women's lives into account, suboptimal networks, or excessive performance pressure—women are already less susceptible to its effects. Identifying individual areas for change and strategies for facilitating one's leader identity work follows. Finally, by giving women a framework for diagnosing and intervening in their organizations, WLPs can set in motion a virtuous cycle in which women leaders create conditions that help propel themselves and other women into leadership roles.

Absent this framework, women are left with stereotypes, reinforced by popular media, to explain why women as a group have failed to achieve parity with men: if women fail to reach the top, they are told, it is because they "don't ask" (Babcock & Laschever, 2003), are

"too nice" (Frankel, 2004), or simply "choose not to" (Belkin, 2003). These messages tell women who have managed to succeed that they are exceptions and those who have experienced set-backs that it is their own fault for failing to be sufficiently aggressive, nasty, or committed to the job. The implication is that women need simply to learn the rules of the game and change their behavior accordingly. This advice is misguided, however, because it fails to take into account how gender bias can give rise to double binds and double standards. Research shows, for example, that women who do ask may be penalized for violating feminine gender norms (Bowles, Babcock & Lai, 2007); women who are not nice enough are dismissed as unlikeable, or worse (Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007); and women who ostensibly "opt out" may in fact have been pushed out by workplace bias, inflexibility, and lack of support (Williams, Manvell, & Bronstein, 2006; Stone, 2007).

Our WLPs give participants a more nuanced understanding of the subtle and pervasive effects of gender bias, how it may be playing out in their development as leaders, and what they can do to counter it. In these programs, women see how they may sometimes internalize gender biases and even help to reinforce them—for example, pulling their punches when negotiating to avoid being seen as "too pushy," over-relying on technical mastery to demonstrate competence in a highly visible role, or taking up a hyper-masculine demeanor to convey a sufficiently leader-like image. By grounding diagnosis and action-planning in participants' lived experiences and by anchoring them on larger leadership purposes (see Principle 3), our WLPs help women recover and sustain a sense of agency in their ongoing development and exercise of leadership.

Principle 2: Create a holding environment to support women's identity work.

Establishing a safe space for learning and experimentation and building a community of peer support are critical elements of any effective leadership development program, but how a program creates these elements depends on who the participants are and what kind of

work they will do together (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010; Kets de Vries & Korotov, 2007).

Our participants are doing identity work and learning how to recognize and overcome subtle

forms of gender bias. Hence, our programs go beyond teaching women what they need to

know and do; they also support women in understanding and shaping who they are and can

become. To promote this kind of work, a WLP must create a "holding environment" for

participants, that is, "a social context that reduces disturbing affect and facilitates sense-

making" (Petriglieri & Petriblieri, 2010: 44).

At least two mutually reinforcing design features are essential for creating a holding

environment. First, the program must help participants construct narratives about their

experience that are both personally acceptable and socially legitimate (Petriglieri &

Petriglieri, 2010). In a WLP, this requirement inevitably means helping participants come to

terms with prevalent cultural and organizational discourses about gender, which can cut two

ways. On the one hand, confronting gender bias, especially the subtle, hard-to-pin-point-in-a-

single-action kind, can be discouraging and prompt women's resistance (Clayton & Crosby,

1992; Valian, 1998). High achieving women who have worked hard to ensure that gender

does not limit them may wish to deny the existence of gender bias. On the other hand,

confronting one's personal limitations and choices that have not panned out can also be

difficult. High achieving women who have experienced set-backs may point to gender bias

as a defense against taking personal responsibility for career disappointments. In both cases,

the discourse at hand is a social defense against anxiety, limiting people's ability to learn and

change, distorting their assessment of the challenges they face, and interfering with effective

problem-solving (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010: 47). A key function of the WLP is to help

participants surface, examine, and challenge these social defenses. In this process,

participants construct coherent and actionable narratives about who they are and wish to

become, grounded in candid assessments of the cultural, organizational, and individual factors shaping them.

Second, to provide a holding environment for identity work, a leadership development program must create a "sentient community" (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010), or group to which participants can experience a sense of belonging and identification. In our WLPs, that group comprises similarly positioned women, who can offer feedback, serve as references for social comparison, and become "emotional anchors" for each other's personal learning (Higgins & Kram, 2001: 278). Because women attending WLPs occupy relatively senior positions—positions in which women tend to be scarce—limiting enrollment to women gives participants a rare opportunity to spend time with women peers, who are able to identify and empathize with each other (Debebe, 2011). Identification and empathy increase participants' willingness to talk openly, take risks, and be vulnerable without fearing that others will misunderstand or judge them (Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2010; Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010). These kinds of connections are especially important when discussing such sensitive topics as gender bias or when reflecting on one's personal leadership challenges, which could easily generate feelings of identity threat and resistance, especially if men were present (Ely, Meyerson, & Davidson, 2006; Kolb & Blake-Beard, 2009; Davies, Spencer, & Steele, 2005). Participants become more open and less defensive as they learn that other women share experiences they thought were unique. In short, women-only programs give participants the opportunity to interact with similar others who are uniquely fit to give the support, validation, and social comparison they need as they figure out who they are and want to be in their next leadership role (Debebe, 2011).

Principle 3: Anchor participants on their leadership purpose.

Leadership programs often have sessions designed to connect participants to meaning, values, and purpose (see, e.g., George & Sims, 2007)—a key step in helping them more

firmly ground their personal identity in the leadership role (Quinn, 2004)—but such sessions can be particularly helpful to women. All leaders are susceptible to letting their personal aspirations to advance turn their attention inward, as when they become overly focused on managing others' impressions of them (Quinn, 2004). When people are focused on how they are coming across to others, they are less clear about their goals, less open to learning from failure, and less capable of self-regulation (Crocker, Moeller, & Burson, 2010). In short, leaders' personal career aspirations can divert attention and energy away from their larger leadership purposes. While women are likely no more susceptible than men to such diversions, subtle cultural and organizational biases can easily turn women's attention inward as they try to reconcile conflicting messages about how to behave as leaders. Anchoring on their larger leadership purpose gives women the wherewithal to redirect their attention outward toward shared goals and to consideration of who they need to be in order to advance those goals.

Conflicting messages, not surprisingly, can cut two ways. Some women repudiate certain strategies, such as networking and negotiating for themselves, on grounds that they feel "inauthentic" or are "what men do," preferring strategies that feel "more comfortable" and come more "naturally" to them as women. But women can easily mistake feeling comfortable for being authentic. Conventional gender ideology reinforces this interpretation by inculcating the notion that some behaviors come instinctively to men but go against women's nature (Ridgeway, 2009). Our WLPs advance a different point of view. We contend that people's gender and leader identities are malleable (Ely & Meyerson, 2010; Ely & Padavic, 2007) and that learning how to be an effective leader is like learning any complex skill: it rarely comes naturally and usually takes a good deal of practice (DeRue & Ashford, 2010a). We then help women to see that authenticity is not about acting in ways that feel comfortable or familiar, but rather is about acting on one's core values in order to advance

the work required to accomplish shared goals (Fu et al., 2010; Morriss et al., 2011; Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006?). This framing invites women to redefine who they need to be and what they need to do in light of what they value and want to accomplish, unencumbered by identities that no longer support their objectives.

Other women may take the opposite tack, avoiding the appearance of femininity for fear that others will see them as un-leader-like. Yet enacting conventionally feminine traits, such as warmth and consideration, is often what people need in order to advance larger purposes (Bass, 1997; Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996). For this reason, leadership development programs that teach women to act like men in order to get ahead are misguided and likely to misguide women leaders. Such approaches not only fail to give women strategies for countering the effects of gender bias, but they also encourage women to become overly focused on self-image to the detriment of the central leadership task: to enable others to be maximally effective in service of shared goals.

In short, by anchoring women on their leadership purposes, our programs offer women a way to navigate the double bind and remain authentic in the process. The task of constructing a credible leader image becomes a means to achieving one's leadership purpose rather than an end in itself (Ely & Rhode, 2010; Morriss et al., 2011). Instead of defining themselves in relation to gender stereotypes—whether rejecting stereotypically masculine approaches because they feel inauthentic or rejecting stereotypically feminine ones for fear they convey incompetence—women leaders can focus on developing and enacting identities that advance the values and purposes for which they stand.

Implications for Leadership Theory and Education

The demand for teaching leadership to women has far outstripped the pace of research and theorizing on women's leadership development. By integrating insights from two streams of research—one on leader identity development and the other on subtle forms of cultural and

organizational gender bias—we provide a conceptual framework that helps educators better understand the expectations, needs, and experiences of the growing number of women participants in executive education. These ideas are especially relevant for corporate university and business school instructors, who would benefit from understanding how gender dynamics affect identity development in work settings and how women's leadership programs can assist women in the process of internalizing a leader identity while staying focused on a leadership purpose.

Leadership development programs that provide women with a framework for understanding how second generation gender bias can derail their leadership transitions and a holding environment in which to discover, recover, and sustain a sense of agency and purpose in their ongoing exercise of leadership occupy an important place in the portfolio of developmental experiences that will help women advance into more senior leadership roles. Participants in such programs invariably develop a strong network of peer support that often extends beyond the life of the program. One benefit of building such a network is that it can support WLP participants to initiate change in their organizations, and many do.

Skeptics may argue that women-only programs do women a disservice. Some may worry that such programs create an artificial environment that removes women from the kinds of interactions they must contend with in their organizations in order to be effective. Others may note that in contrast to mixed-sex offerings, women-only programs deprive women of an opportunity to add to their networks male peers with whom they can later exchange information and collaborate. Such opportunities are an important reason for attending a leadership development program, especially prestigious high potential programs like GE's famed Crotonville offerings or courses at elite business schools.

We take a different view. Leadership development can—and should—occur in a variety of venues over the course of one's career. Successful leaders develop and learn from

many experiences inside and outside their companies. Just as managers might receive training in technical skills at one point in time and managerial competencies at another, women leaders can attend both women-only and mixed-sex programs to achieve different objectives. Moreover, a women-only leadership program is a novel context for participants, and novel contexts can shed light on more familiar domains (Houde, 2007; Mirvis, 2008). Women-only programs foster learning by putting women in a majority position, and this contrast to the more familiar, male-dominated work context can provoke powerful insights.

We are often asked if WLP faculty should be women as well; we do not think so. That said, being conversant in second generation gender issues and comfortable engaging in the controversial discussions that often arise in the classroom are prerequisites for teaching in these programs. In our experience, nuanced gender issues come up almost from the start in a WLP, as participants are eager to explore how gender affects their personal leadership styles, effectiveness, and careers. Instructors in these programs, therefore, must be willing and able to discuss second generation gender bias and appear credible on these issues to participants.

Our approach to women's leadership development has several implications for the theory and practice of leadership development. First, we extend current theorizing about leadership development as an identity transition (Day et al., 2009; DeRue & Ashford, 2010b; Ibarra et al., 2010) by calling attention to the impact of gender on the processes of claiming and granting a leader identity. While the notion of developing a leader identity as a critical element of leadership development has gained popularity (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; DeRue & Ashford, 2010b; Lord & Hall, 2005; van Knippenberg et al., 2004), it has not been linked to theory and research on the gender dynamics associated with leader identity development (for an exception, see Hogue & Lord, 2007). Our curriculum brings these two perspectives together.

Second, by linking second generation gender bias to leadership development, we offer practical insights for managers and companies interested in closing the gender gap in leadership. Our approach can educate executives who are seeking to develop and promote women leaders and who are puzzled about why the problem has seemed so intractable despite their well-intentioned efforts. For example, just as women may need to proactively negotiate for promotions they might otherwise not get, managers can reconsider the relevance of the implicit criteria they use to fill mission-critical roles. Managers can also learn about how subtle biases can affect their feedback, assessments of potential, and decisions about whom to sponsor, despite their good intentions.

Implications for practice extend beyond individual leaders: in the spirit of leadership (as opposed to individual leader) development, our WLPs contribute insights and frameworks that expand "the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes" (Day, 2001: 582). For example, the kinds of subtle biases that hold women back are likely to affect talented men who, like many women, might otherwise go unrecognized. Showing executives how subtle gender bias is not the result of intentional acts but rather is built into an organization's normal routines and practices illustrates that standard practice may not always be best practice, especially in light of the rapidly changing business environment (Rapoport et al., 2002; Bailyn, 2006; Ely & Meyerson, 2000). By bringing a gender-sensitive, critical eye to their organization, these executives can enhance the organization's health and well-being not only by unleashing previously untapped leadership potential, but also by updating outmoded policies and practices. In short, what is good for women may also be good for business (McCracken, 2000).

In sum, our approach to leadership education for women advances the field well beyond programs that teach women the rules of the game as established by men. Such

programs, premised on the idea that women have not been properly socialized for leadership roles, inadvertently undermine women's leadership by encouraging them to focus on image to the detriment of purpose and others. Our view of leadership development as identity work moves us to take a radically different perspective on what women need to learn to be effective leaders: when women consider the dynamics of gender in their organizations and connect to purposes that are larger than themselves, they are far better prepared to take up— and take in—the leadership role.

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Table 1. Recommended cases, exercises, and readings

Topics/Session	Cases & Exercises	Readings
360 degree feedback		Women & The Vision Thing (Ibarra & Obodaru, 2009) Dammed if you do; Doomed if you don't (Catayst, 2007)
Leadership networking	Heidi Roizen (HBS case) Network Assessment Exercise: Executive Version (Ibarra, 1996)	How Leaders Create and Use Networks (Ibarra & Hunter, 2007) How star women build portable skills (Groysberg, 2008)
Everyday negotiations	Caitlin's Challenge (case and video), Case Clearinghouse, Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School	Her Place at the Table (Kolb, Williams, Frohlinger, 2010) Breakthrough Bargaining (Kolb & Williams, HBR, 2000)
Leading Change	Charlotte Beers at Ogilvy & Mather (HBS cases) Vivienne Cox at BP Alternative Energy (ECCH)	Just because I'm nice don't assume I am incompetent (Cuddy, 2010) A modest manifesto for shattering the glass ceiling (Meyerson and Fletcher, HBR, 2000)
Career Transitions	Margaret Thatcher (HBS cases) Pat Fili-Krushel, (HBS Case) Cathy Benko (HBS Case)	What's Holding You Back (Morriss, Ely & Frei, 2011)

Responses to Editor's Comments

RESPONSE: In Fu et al.'s study, leaders who held self-transcendent values are, in fact, "leaders who advance such purposes." "Such purposes" refers in our paper to "purposes that are aligned with [leaders'] personal values and oriented toward advancing the collective good." This is precisely what Fu et al captured in leaders who held self-transcendent values and engaged in transformational leadership behaviors—these were the leaders in their study whose followers showed the highest levels of organizational commitment and the lowest levels of turnover. According to Fu et al, "self-transcendent values emphasize the enhancement of others' happiness, the transcendence of selfish interests, and the acceptance of others as equals and thus are consistent with transformational behaviors"; "transcendental leaders [are] . . . aware of the needs of others"; "CEOs who hold a high level of self-transcendent values will likely regard the advancement of the well-being of others as their leadership purpose or life goal" Transformational leaders motivate followers by articulating a compelling vision and holding followers to high performance standards. According to Fu et al., leaders with self-transcendent values who enact transformational leadership behaviors are "authentic" because their values and behaviors are aligned. We removed the citation to Fu in the last sentence of that paragraph, where we say that leaders with a larger purpose "inspire trust, increase others' sense of urgency, and help them find greater meaning in their work," since what Fu found had to do with affective commitment and intention to leave (which are likely related to having found the work meaningful, but meaning was not directly assessed).

RESPONSE: We agree. We removed the reference to the organization's purpose and added "being seen as a leader." The sentence now reads: "Hence, a central part of constructing a leader identity and of being seen as a leader is developing an elevated sense of purpose and conveying that sense to others."

RESPONSE: We have clarified what we mean when we say that encouraging women leaders to connect to their larger leadership purpose helps them to see a way out of the double

bind. First, we removed the quotation about "fertile ground," which seemed a bit tangential to the point we are making there. We then added a few sentences (see middle of p. 17) to explain how contradictory feedback can lead women to become preoccupied with how they are coming across to others, and how this preoccupation in turn can draw women's energies away from the work at hand. We go on to suggest that reminding "women of their larger leadership purposes can shift their focus outward, away from themselves, and toward shared goals and the work necessary to accomplish them (Morriss, Ely, & Frei, 2011; Quinn, 2004)." This point comes up again in Principle 3 ("anchor participants on their leadership purpose"), which we have also rewritten to make these connections clearer.

4) Multiple reviewers had trouble with the arguments on p. 17. Your thesis here is that people fail to recognize women's leadership potential even as they acknowledge women's leadership competencies. Your evidence is that, in a study, supervisors who rated women subordinates somewhat higher than men in competence rated those same women lower in long-term leadership potential. Do you mean leadership competence here or general competence? If leadership competence, the review team was unclear why this would be the case. If general competence, then this pattern seems totally reasonable. A woman might be competent at a job but not be rated highly in terms of leadership potential (as might a man). Further down on that page you state that the findings you report suggests that "observers may need to recalibrate their assessment of women's fit for leadership roles in light of women's competencies." But if envisioning is an important dimension (the most closely associated with effective leadership), and women aren't good at that dimension, then perhaps the observers are calibrated correctly. There are aspects of your argument here that still need to be clarified.

RESPONSE: Your comments here led us to revisit the literature we cited here regarding perceptions of women's leadership potential. In fact, the study in question does show that supervisors rated women higher than men on *leadership* competencies while rating those same women lower on leadership potential. We agree that the Ibarra and Obodaru study does not necessarily support this idea. It and a number of other studies (all cited), however, do show that women are consistently rated higher than men on most of the leadership competencies they assessed, and one study shows that ratings on many of those leadership dimensions are associated with leadership effectiveness for men but not for women. We now make this nature of these apparent biases clearer (see p. 18).

5) Two observations re: references: (a) the DeRue and Ashford (2010) reference should point to the AMR paper on leadership identity construction [it is a different 2010 paper in the reference list]; (b) the order of authors on the Morriss et al. (forthcoming/2011) paper is different in Table 1 than it is in the reference section.

RESPONSE: Sorry about that–a proof-reading oversight! We actually mean to cite both of the DeRue and Ashforth (2010) studies and now do so properly (as DeRue & Ashforth, 2010a and 2010b, both listed in the references). The Morriss et al. paper is now published and the order of authorship is Morriss, Ely, and Frei, now correctly cited throughout the paper.

ADDITIONALLY, we incorporated the relevant research regarding women of color to note whether and how the dynamics we describe as characterizing "women" apply to women of color.

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