A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTION OF THE IMPACT OF MINDFULNESS ON LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

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This qualitative research study examined detailed reports by senior organizational leaders linking mindfulness to improved leadership effectiveness. Extensive research supports the existence of a relationship between mindfulness and cognitive, physiological, and psychological benefits that may also have a positive impact on leadership effectiveness. Currently, however, little is known about the processes potentially enabling mindfulness to directly influence leadership effectiveness, and as a result this study was designed to explore this gap in the literature. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with forty-two organizational leaders in North and South America and Europe, many with a history of leadership roles at multiple global organizations. Participants credited mindfulness for contributing to enduring improvements to leadership capabilities, and data analysis revealed new findings clarifying the perceived relationship between mindfulness and tangible results for organizational leaders. Specifically, the results indicate that mindfulness is perceived to contribute to the development of behaviors and changes to awareness associated with improved leadership effectiveness. A potential relationship between mindfulness and the development of emotional intelligence competencies linked to increased leadership
performance was revealed as well. The contribution of this study to current literature is also discussed, as are recommendations for future research.

*Keywords*: mindfulness, organizational leadership, emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness, leadership development, mindful leadership, leader empathy, leader emotional self-awareness, leader emotional self-management, leader social awareness, leader relationship management
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CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction

This study examines the perception of improved workplace effectiveness attributed to mindfulness by organizational leaders. The subject of mindfulness has seen a dramatic increase in interest from practitioners and researchers in academic, business, military, and healthcare fields in recent years (Good et al., 2015; Knapton, 2014; Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013; Gelles, 2012; Wolever et al., 2012; Stanley, Schaldach, Kiyonaga, & Jha, 2011; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Carroll, 2007). As mindfulness is used in a growing number of applications ranging from enhancement of athletic performance to emotional regulation on the battlefield, the study of mindfulness also continues to grow and mature. For example, a Master of Arts degree in Mindfulness Studies is now available at Lesley University (Greenfield, 2014), and a subfield of study known as “mindfulness psychology” has recently emerged in the U.S. (Felver, Doerner, Jones, Kaye, & Merrell, 2013). In addition, in October 2007 Brown, Ryan, and Creswell reported that there were over six hundred studies focused on mindfulness, and the American Mindfulness Research Association currently reports over 4,000 references to mindfulness research in articles published in academic journals.

The increasing level of interest in mindfulness can be attributed to growing research linking it to a broad range of benefits. For example, mindfulness has been shown to influence positive changes in the immune system (Davidson et al., 2003) and improve cognitive function and mood (Lutz, et al., 2008). Research also indicates that mindfulness training and/or practice, also referred to as intervention, may be linked to positive increases in grey matter density, which is an indicator of increased function in brain
regions relating to emotional regulation, memory, and learning (Hölzel et al., 2011; Chambers, Gullone, & Allen, 2009; Koole, 2009). Other studies report beneficial effects on mental focus, academic performance, and emotional intelligence (Jha, Amishi, Krompinger, & Baime, 2007; Mrazek, Franklin, Phillips, Baird, & Schooler, 2013; Tang, Tang, Jiang, & Posner, 2014; Schutte & Malouff, 2011), in addition to indications of a positive relationship to employee work engagement (Leroy et al., 2013) and aspects of job performance (Dane & Brummel, 2014; Glomb, Duffy, Bono & Yang, 2011; Dane, 2011).

Recent years have seen a rapid increase in mindfulness programs focused on improvements to workplace performance, and training is currently available in organizations including Google, Apple, Medtronic, Adobe, Cisco, eBay, Facebook, Genentech, Intel, Juniper Networks, LinkedIn, and Twitter (Gelles, 2015). Both the website for the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine and Carroll’s (2007) book The Mindful Leader list an impressive number of companies that have participated in mindfulness training programs in the past. These include companies such as Raytheon, Procter & Gamble, Comcast, BASF Bioresearch, Bose, New Balance, Unilever, and Nortel Networks (Carroll, 2007).

While much of the current mindfulness training activity is oriented towards employee health issues such as stress reduction (Gelles, 2012; Wolever et al., 2012), a significant portion is also aimed at developing leadership effectiveness. For example, General Mills began an extensive leadership development mindfulness program in 1995, and the Institute for Mindful Leadership reports having trained leaders from more than sixty organizations (Marturano, 2014). Furthermore, the potentially positive influence of
mindfulness practice on leadership effectiveness has been discussed by a number of researchers and authors, including Scouller (2011), Carroll (2007), Goleman (2004), and Boyatzis and McKee (2005). Literature on emotional intelligence reports that mindfulness is related to the development of emotional intelligence leadership competencies, which are characteristic-based definitions used to identify, evaluate, and develop employee, or in this case leadership, behaviors (Goleman, 1996; Goleman, 1998). Finally, recent neuroscience research indicates that mindfulness practice influences regions of the brain that have also been linked to emotional intelligence leadership competencies (Goleman, 1995; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Davidson, 2012; Hülsheger, et al., 2013; Johnson, Thom, Stanley, Haase, & Simmons, 2014).

Figure 1 below provides a graphic representation of the potential relationship between the previously mentioned areas of research, in addition to illustrating the main topics that are addressed in the remainder of this section. These same topics, and their possible interrelationships, are thoroughly explored in Chapter 2. Figure 1 also illustrates the manner in which mindfulness is believed to influence improved workplace leadership effectiveness. Specifically, mindfulness has been linked to neurological changes that have also been linked to the development of emotional intelligence competencies associated with positive changes in leadership behavior.
Figure 1: Theoretical framework for the study. Illustration of possible relationships among and between mindfulness practice, emotional intelligence competencies, and perceptions of leadership effectiveness.

This figure provides a visual illustration clarifying why the literature explored in Chapter 2 appears to indicate the existence of a relationship between mindfulness practice and improved leadership effectiveness. This potential relationship is initiated by the influence of mindfulness on neurological changes linked to improvements to emotional intelligence competencies and subsequently the development, and/or strengthening of more effective leadership behaviors. The process by which mindfulness influences leadership effectiveness may also be viewed from the perspective of the initiation of changes in awareness relating to more effective leadership behaviors contributing to an increase in an individual’s capacity for improved leadership performance. This increased capacity elevates the potential and/or motivation for the development of or improvement to emotional intelligence competencies including behaviors that demonstrate improved leadership effectiveness. These relationships are described in greater detail in the following section, as is the context and justification for this study.
Relationship of Competencies, Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness to Effective Leadership

The development of sustainable, effective leadership is an ongoing struggle for many organizations (McKee, 2012), and U.S. companies alone invest as much as $14 billion annually in programs developing leadership effectiveness (Loew & O’Leonard, 2012). Hundreds of accredited leadership degree programs are available, and some organizations invest as much as $150,000 per individual for leadership development training (Gurdjian & Halbeisen, 2014).

In addition, a survey of nearly 500 executives revealed that leadership development was one of their top three human capital priorities, and almost two-thirds of the respondents identified leadership development as their top concern (Gurdjian & Halbeisen, 2014). Despite the importance of leadership development to many organizations, nearly 30% of U.S. companies report that they fail to exploit international business opportunities as a direct result of absent leadership capabilities (Ghemawat, 2012). Furthermore, a poll of senior managers at global companies also revealed that only 7% felt that their organizations were adequately developing global leadership skills (Gitsham & Lenssen, 2009). Finally, McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) link leadership success to emotional self-control, which mindfulness is believed to influence via the emotional intelligence competency emotional self-management.

Emotional Intelligence. The use of emotional intelligence in organizational leadership development activity has been embraced by many organizations and researchers (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 2004; Gilkey & Kilts, 2007; Bechara, Damasio, & Bar-On, 2007). While multiple definitions for emotional intelligence exist
(Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000), it can be thought of as a framework that links elements of personality with a theory of action and job performance (Goleman, 1995). Emotional intelligence can also be understood as “…the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 5).

Greater detail concerning the organizational utilization of emotional intelligence, in addition to the definition used in this study, is explored in Chapter 2, along with a discussion indicating that improved leadership effectiveness has been associated with emotional intelligence competencies such as empathy (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, 1998), emotional self-regulation, emotional self-awareness, and social skills (Lam & Kirby, 2002; Freshman & Rubino, 2002; Strickland, 2000; Gardner, 1993; Sadri, 2012). In addition, research by Harrison and Clough (2006) also names high levels of emotional intelligence as a characteristic of effective leaders, and a study of senior executives by Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005) showed that emotional intelligence is associated with increased leadership performance. Furthermore, Sadri, Weber, and Gentry (2011) also point out that emotional intelligence has been described as being linked to leadership performance by Bar-On and Parker (2000), George (2000), and Salovey and Mayer (1990).

**Competencies.** The development of leadership effectiveness may also be viewed in the context of capabilities and/or competencies, which are demonstrated through specific leadership behaviors. McClelland and Boyatzis (1980) state that competencies are comprised of a generic body of knowledge, also referred to as competence or capacity, possessed by the individual, in addition to specifying traits, motives, skills, self-
image, and social roles as also being part of the definition. A competency is defined by Boyatzis (1982) as a capability or ability, and Woodruffe (1992) further defines it as a set of specific behavior patterns required of an individual in order to perform the tasks and functions required of their position with *competence*. In this context, a *competency* is considered a dimension of behavior, while *competence* refers to an individual’s *overall capacity* to potentially demonstrate competencies (Woodruffe, 1992; Eraut, 1994; Gonzi et al., 1993; Campion et al., 2011; Yusoff & Armstrong, 2012).

It should also be noted that in the context of this study, the term *performance* refers specifically to measurable and/or observable behaviors demonstrating, via results, the presence of leadership competencies required for effectiveness in a position. This is not to be confused with the term *effectiveness*, which specifically refers to the perception of a causal relationship between mindfulness and improved leadership performance, rather than an empirically supported example of increased performance. Detailed exploration of competencies in the context of organizational, behavioral leadership development are presented in Chapter 2.

**Mindfulness, Emotional Intelligence, and Effective Leadership.** Defined as both a mental state and as a trait comprised of “a receptive attention to and awareness of present events and experience” (Brown et al., 2007, p. 212), mindfulness is receiving increased interest in the context of leadership development (Good et al., 2016). From a broad perspective, a significant body of research indicates that mindfulness has a positive effect on attention, cognition, emotions, behavior, and the physiology of the practitioner (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011). Specific to the topic of organizational leadership, mindfulness has been shown to have a positive impact on many of the same emotional
intelligence competencies associated with improved leadership effectiveness, specifically emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and social awareness, and research has also established a link between mindfulness and higher overall levels of emotional intelligence (Kabat-Zinn et al., 1998; Davidson, 2012; Lazar et al., 2005; Kerr, Sacchet, Lazar, Moore, & Jones, 2013; Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney, 2006; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Schutte & Malouff, 2011; Sinclair & Feigenbaum, 2012; Snowden et al., 2015). For example, Gregoire (2014) quotes Coleman in an interview stating that “mindfulness is the foundation of emotional intelligence” (p. 1), and Goleman (2015) states that “the neural circuitry for each [i.e. mindfulness and emotional intelligence] are shared to some degree, and so developing mindfulness would boost aspects of emotional intelligence” (Goleman, personal communication, February 12, 2015). Goleman (2016) further clarifies the potential role of mindfulness in the development of emotional intelligence competencies with his statement “the specific competencies of emotional intelligence require learning beyond what mindfulness provides – it’s a fertile basis, but not sufficient in itself.” (Goleman, personal communication, October 28, 2016).

Mindfulness and emotional intelligence are also associated with one another via activity in many of the same regions of the brain (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Farb, Anderson, & Segal, 2012), which may account for the effect mindfulness is reported to have on emotional intelligence competencies linked to increased leadership performance. A comparison of separate neuroscience studies of emotional intelligence and mindfulness reveals that mindfulness practice affects areas of the brain that are also related to emotional intelligence, specifically three common areas of the limbic system
and at least half of the same areas of the cerebral cortex (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Stein & Book, 2011; Pessoa, 2008). These regions of the brain control or influence emotion, arousal, reasoning, inhibition, and decision-making (Goleman, 2011), which all influence leadership effectiveness via their influence on emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On et al., 2000; Stein & Book, 2011; Pessoa, 2008; Goleman, 2011). A more detailed description of the neurological relationship shared between mindfulness, emotional intelligence competencies, and improved leadership effectiveness is presented in Chapter 2.

A complementary relationship between mindfulness and leadership effectiveness has also been suggested by leadership researchers including Boyatzis and McKee (2005) and Carroll (2007), and a recent study addressing the relationship between mindfulness and leadership effectiveness has associated increased leader mindfulness with higher overall employee job performance and other employee performance measures (Reb, Narayanan, & Chaturvedi, 2014). Despite these findings, the researchers point out that evidence proving a relationship between mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness is limited (Good et al., 2015; Dane & Brummel, 2014; Reb et al., 2014; Lam & Kirby, 2002), and the study of the interpersonal benefits of mindfulness has also received minimal attention from researchers (Condon, Desbordes, Miller, & DeSteno, 2013). For example, additional research indicates the presence of a relationship between dispositional/trait mindfulness, which is a pre-existing tendency towards a mindful state, and an increased ability for supervisors to reduce hostility towards poorly performing subordinates (Liang et al., 2015). As in the previous example, however, this research does not identify how or why study participants believe mindfulness contributes to these
results, nor does it provide data indicating a clear relationship between mindfulness and increased leadership effectiveness.

This gap in the literature is intriguing, especially as mindfulness training programs focused on improved leadership effectiveness continue to grow despite a lack of empirical findings indicating that investments in these programs will yield results (Gelles, 2012; Carroll, 2007; Lazenby, 2002). Furthermore, my interest in this topic is also based on nearly 34 years of positive personal experience utilizing mindfulness techniques to improve academic and athletic performance, in addition to leadership effectiveness as an employee, business owner, and/or consultant to numerous global corporations. Therefore, I designed this study to collect new information from organizational leaders who are engaged in daily mindfulness activity, asking them to detail the positive impact mindfulness has specifically had on their leadership effectiveness, in addition to their reasoning for continuing to invest in mindfulness training.

This dissertation explores the points summarized above in greater detail, specifically the perceived reasons why a direct, yet unproven, relationship is likely to exist between mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness. The premise for such a relationship is based upon the previously mentioned findings in the existing literature, which are thoroughly explored in Chapter 2. Specifically, these findings include the effect that mindfulness has on regions of the brain and development of emotional intelligence competencies that are empirically linked to increased leadership performance. The existence of these indirect relationships is likely to contribute to the perceptions of a causal relationship between mindfulness and improved leadership
effectiveness. Therefore, this study investigates the perceptions of organizational leaders concerning the impact of mindfulness on their leadership effectiveness.

**Research Question**

In light of the lack of empirical evidence clearly demonstrating the direct influence of mindfulness on improved leadership effectiveness, I designed a study to obtain new information from organizational leaders practicing mindfulness for the purpose of improved leadership effectiveness. Specifically, I explore study participants’ perceptions and reports of the positive influence of mindfulness on their own leadership effectiveness. Information used in this exploratory study was obtained through qualitative interviews designed to gather information addressing the following research question: "What do organizational leaders perceive to be the impact of mindfulness on their leadership effectiveness?" I sought to answer this question through in-depth interviews with mindfulness practitioners who are currently in, and/or who previously held, senior leadership positions. It is also important to clarify the point that my research design was created to test perception of cause, rather than attempting to prove a causal relationship. Therefore, the exploration of perception of influence focused on participants’ beliefs about how mindfulness influences them internally, and how those internal effects influence behaviors they link to observed improvements to leadership effectiveness. Finally, I complemented my qualitative research on the perceived efficacy of mindfulness in organizational leadership settings with a thorough review of the existing literature on this topic.
**Purpose and Relevance of This Study**

The research question I explore in this dissertation is significant to the study of the influence of mindfulness on emotional intelligence competencies linked to leadership effectiveness, because it focuses on the aforementioned relationship between mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness that has not been fully addressed by the existing literature. Specifically, detailed exploration of improved leadership effectiveness that leaders attribute to mindfulness has received little attention from researchers (Shonin, Gordon, Dunn, Singh, & Griffiths, 2014), and few studies have explored the processes involved in mindfulness influencing beneficial outcomes (Baer et al., 2008). However, the emergence of new, mindful leadership research (Liang et al., 2015; Reb et al., 2014; Reb, Sim, Chintakananda, Bhave, & Prakash, 2015), combined with the previously mentioned increase in mindfulness-based leadership training activity (Carroll, 2007; Gelles, 2015; Marturano, 2014), implies that more leadership benefits are likely to be experienced by mindful leaders than are reported in the existing literature. Furthermore, comparing the growing use of mindfulness for the purpose of improved leadership effectiveness to the absence of evidence identifying a correlation between these variables indicates a need for a greater understanding of the reasons behind leaders’ decisions to initiate or continue training in mindfulness.

Much of the existing research discussed in the literature review of this dissertation focuses on changes to emotional states and awareness, and evidence of other potential correlations with mindfulness that are also known to influence leadership effectiveness, such as reductions in anxiety and stress levels and positive changes in mood, emotional self-regulation, and cognitive function (Bao, 2015; Johnson et al., 2014; Rosenkranz et
A significant amount of research also implies a link between mindfulness and positive changes in emotional intelligence (Lykins & Baer, 2009; Arch & Craske, 2006; Brown & Ryan, 2003), which has in turn been linked to increased leadership performance (Bar-On, 1997; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Northouse, 2007; Cherniss & Goleman, 2003). In addition, a positive relationship between mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness is strongly implied by a number of researchers (Goleman, 1998; Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Langer, 2009). Furthermore, many of the previously mentioned points also indicate a likelihood that mindful leaders believe, regardless of a lack of supporting evidence, that mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness are correlated. Finally, at the time of this writing, only one in-depth qualitative study of leader mindfulness is known to have been initiated (Boyatzis, personal communication, September 18, 2015; Good, personal communication, June 9, 2015; Hunter, personal communication, October 10, 2015). This study was conducted by Dr. Jeremy Hunter, who has not yet been able to complete his final analysis of the results (Hunter, personal communication, October 10, 2015), which implies that this may be the first such study to be completed. Therefore, I believe there is value in collecting rich, in-depth, qualitative interview data in order to shed light on the influence leaders feel mindfulness has on their effectiveness.

In the following chapter (Chapter 2), I review the main theories of leadership and leadership development, emotional intelligence, and mindfulness. I also cover current neuroscience studies that contribute to a greater understanding of the relationship
between mindfulness and emotional intelligence. This review focuses on existing literature supporting the implication of a relationship between mindfulness and leadership effectiveness. In Chapter 3, I describe the research methods utilized in the study, followed by Chapter 4, which reports the results from inductive thematic and deductive (ESCI) data analysis. In Chapter 5, I report the findings of the study, and in Chapter 6, I discuss both the contribution of the findings to the current literature and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 2:

Literature Review on Leadership Theories, Emotional Intelligence, Mindfulness, and the Neuroscience Behind Them

Overview of Literature Review

This chapter is a review of the literature on leadership theories, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, and recent neuroscience findings that explain the neural mechanisms underlying certain emotional intelligence competencies and the effects of mindfulness. First, I present an overview of leadership theories, along with a more detailed explanation of the theories I use in this study. Second, I provide an introduction to emotional intelligence and a discussion of its relationship to leadership effectiveness. Next is an in-depth description of mindfulness, including its use in organizations as a part of leadership development activities, its relationship to emotional intelligence, and its relationship to leadership effectiveness. Finally, I present a discussion of neuroscience research that supports a relationship among mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and leadership effectiveness.

Leadership and Leadership Development Theories

This section summarizes the existing leadership literature within the context of developing leadership behaviors, including an overview of the history of the study of leadership and subsequent discussion of the main theories to emerge since formal study began. I also provide a detailed description of the leadership theory used in this dissertation and discuss leadership competencies. The section concludes with discussion
of the leadership theory I selected for use in my data analysis, and an explanation of why I chose that theory.

**Overview of the history of the study of leadership.** Early writings on the subject of leadership can be attributed to Plato, Sun Tzu, and many other writers and philosophers; however, the study of leadership in contemporary academic studies has developed primarily during the last 60 years, with increasing attention occurring during the last two decades (Yukl, 2002). Many definitions of leadership have been put forth by researchers, sixteen of which are listed by Shaver (2012) as a supporting example of Stogdill’s (1974) statement: “There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (p. 7).

While there is not a single, fully accepted definition for leadership, enough generally agreed upon components of the leadership role exist to develop a functional definition. For example, it is agreed that leadership relationships are set apart from other types of relationships since one party assumes a role of authority (Chemers, 2000). In addition, Kotter (1990) points out that management and leadership roles share many similarities such as decision making, relationship building, creativity, and influencing others. Leadership activity occurs at multiple levels of an organization, and even supervisory activity focused on the translation of plans into actions is still a form of leadership that significantly influences employees (Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

The central theme emerging from the leadership literature is that, regardless of formal title or designated role, individuals hoping to effectively influence the performance of others in an organization should develop strong managerial and
leadership competencies, which focus not only on the implementation of more effective procedures, but also on the ability to articulate vision, create organizational support, and inspire others (Duttweiler & Hord, 1987). This theme includes those in roles without a direct reporting structure, such as board members and consultants. Thus, for the purposes of this paper, I use Yukl’s (2002) definition of leadership, which I believe best reflects these generalized elements of leadership: “Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives” (p. 8).

**Discussion of leadership theories.** As is the case with definitions of leadership, scholars and researchers have also put forth multiple leadership theories. The leading theories of leadership recognized by subject matter experts include trait, contingency, transactional, transformational, and behavioral. In the following subsections, I present each of these theories, ending with discussion and justification of the theory that I use in my data analysis.

**Trait theories.** Trait theories of leadership focus on characteristics of leaders such as charisma, extraversion, self-confidence, and courage, and they may also include intelligence, a sense of responsibility, and creativity, among others (Northouse, 2012). Early trait theorists such as historian Thomas Carlyle (1841) and scholar Frederick Woods (1913) did not examine whether or not leadership traits could be developed, and instead based their studies on the belief that these traits were naturally occurring (Kouzes & Posner, 2008). Later trait theory research is attributed to Ralph Stogdill (1948), who created a list of leadership traits, such as being adaptable to situations, cooperative, and self-confident, as well as a list of skills, including being clever, diplomatic, tactful, and
persuasive. McCall and Lombardo (1983) added to Stogdill’s work with findings related to leaders’ interpersonal skills, intellectual strength, and emotional stability.

Trait theory was challenged as early as 1860; however, sociologist Herbert Spencer is recognized as being the first to propose that the actions of the great men upon which trait theory studies of the time were based were influenced by external factors such as upbringing, social conditions, and situational demands (Spencer, 1896). Over time, leadership researchers have found traits to be context-specific and difficult to measure precisely, and therefore, the findings of trait studies are often considered inconclusive (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano, & Dennison, 2003). In addition, Wright (1996) reports that the traits identified by Stogdill (1948) could be found equally in both leaders and followers, which added additional questions to the applicability of trait theories in leadership development research (Doyle & Smith, 2001).

**Contingency theories.** Emerging in the 1960s, the contingency approach to leadership proposed that individual leaders possess different skill sets and/or employ different leadership strategies, and that the selection of strategies or leaders must be based upon the requirements of each situation in order to be optimally effective (Scott, 1981). In other words, contingency theories of leadership suggest that the individual occupying a leadership role may change his/her strategy or even change roles with peers or subordinates, based on the alignment of situational demands with the individual most capable of addressing them (Demers, 2007). Contingency leadership theories also suggest that no universally superior leadership strategy exists, and that the effectiveness of a leader is always partially dependent upon variables external to the leader, such as the
qualities of the followers and the degree of power assigned by their organization (Demers, 2007).

The major contingency theories include Hersey-Blanchard’s Situational Leadership Theory developed in the mid-1970s and early 1980s, and Decision Participation theory developed by Vroom and Yetton (1973). The Hersey-Blanchard theory includes a framework for classifying leadership strategies and the maturity level of subordinates for the purpose of creating formulas to identify the appropriate leadership strategy for a given environment (Scott, 1981). The Decision Participation model identifies leadership strategies such as autocratic, consultative, and group-based that are suited for specific types of situations (Scott, 1981).

One of the more commonly referenced contingency theories is Fiedler’s contingency theory, which later developed into cognitive resource theory (Fiedler & Garcia, 1987). As is the case with the other contingency theories, Fiedler’s (1967) theory may also be described as situational, in that leaders switch the leadership strategy that they use based upon the requirements of each leadership scenario. For example, if a leader possesses a significantly higher level of expertise than anyone else in his/her group, then he/she may employ an authoritarian strategy; however, when others in the group possess greater skill or experience in a relevant area than the leader, then the leader may adopt a democratic strategy and even allow someone else to assume the leadership role. Contingency theories challenge the belief that there is an ideal leader able to perform effectively in all situations, and they also recognize the negative effects of stress on leaders’ decision-making processes and cognitive function (Bolden et al., 2003).
Bolman and Deal (1997) have challenged the contingency approach for being overly general and not focusing enough on factors such as organizational structure, internal politics, and culture. For example, in the context of organizational structure or internal politics, leader effectiveness can be constrained by what is referred to as position power, which is the authority granted to the leader by his/her organization. The contingency approach is not thought to adequately address the needs of the leader in an actionable way in this context, specifically because it does not focus on how a leader may increase his/her position power versus how he/she may adapt his/her strategy to work effectively within existing constraints (Bolden et al., 2003). In other words, the contingency approach emphasizes the alignment of existing leadership competencies or strategies with situational variables, rather than specifically focusing on the measurable and consistent development of new capabilities in the leader.

**Transactional theories.** Emerging in the 1970s, these theories are based on a two-way system of rewards and punishments included in the workplace transactions between leader and follower, sometimes referred to as dyadic relationships (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). These relationships are mutually beneficial and emphasize the value of alignment with organizational goals and an understanding of what motivates each employee involved in the transaction. Transactional theories are sometimes referred to as exchange theories of leadership. An example is Dansereau et al.’s (1975) *Leader-Member Exchange Theory* (LMX). This theory focuses on the quality of exchanges between leader and follower and how this interaction influences the follower’s access to resources, acceptance of responsibility, level of decision influence, and workplace performance (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) state that transactional leaders
tend to apply teleological ethics, focused on the consequences of actions. This focus differs from that of transformational leaders, who tend to focus on deontological ethics, which emphasize universal values or principles such as keeping promises and leadership by example. Bass (1985) also indicates that elements of transactional leadership theories may be combined with, or are even an existing component of, transformational leadership theories, and Hay (2006) describes a similar, emerging blend of transactional and transformational leadership theories in his work.

**Transformational theories.** Also emerging in the 1970s, these theories are more relationship-oriented and focus on leadership motivation and inspiration of followers through a combination of demonstrated moral and ethical standards, creating a sense of trust in followers, and showing commitment to the fulfillment of followers’ individual needs and potentials. Burns developed the original transformational leadership theory in 1978 that was later built upon by Bass in his theory by the same name (Bass, 1985). In 1987, Kouzes and Posner published the *Leadership Participation Inventory*, which included a survey instrument oriented towards leader characteristics that would inspire followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Transformational theories also focus on how leaders influence followers through the articulation of vision and emotional appeal, in addition to intellectual stimulation in the form of creative problem solving, innovation, and a democratic approach/consensus (Fisher, 2009). Transformational theories may also be referred to as models of indirect leadership, focusing on the influencing of processes and activity, often through establishing vision-related goals and creation of mental models relating to organizational-level goal attainment (Boyatzis, Good, & Massa, 2012).
Northouse (2007) states that the elements of transformational leadership are not specific enough to separate that theory from the theoretical arguments of other leadership theories, and Tichy and Devanna (1986) indicate that because transformational leadership can be described as a behavioral process that can be learned, it is not clear how to distinguish it from behavioral theories of leadership. Transformational leadership has also been reported by researchers to be positively influenced by emotional intelligence (Collins, 2001; Sosik & Megerian, 1999; Wang & Huang, 2009), which includes references to the competencies emotional self-awareness, empathy, emotional self-control, organizational awareness, conflict management, and influence (Gardner & Stough, 2002). As a result, transformational leadership may include aspects of behavioral leadership via the presence of competencies shown to indicate the presence and development of specific leadership behaviors.

Behavioral theories. Behavioral theories of leadership emerged in the 1940s and 1950s as researchers became able to measure the effects of leadership behaviors on others. These theories rest on the belief that a person can become a more effective leader by learning new behaviors through teaching and observation. In this regard, behavioral theories are focused on what leaders do, instead of an assessment of their traits, a cataloging of their characteristics, or their ability to follow prescribed leadership strategies (Bolden et al., 2003).

Two studies are commonly referenced as having been particularly important in the development of behavioral leadership theories. The first is an Ohio State University study that measured nine behavioral leadership dimensions, leading to the development of the influential Leaders Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), which is
comprised of 150 quantified behavioral descriptors (Nohira & Khurana, 2010). The study defined two groups of strongly correlated behaviors relating to effective leadership, the first being consideration (i.e. people-oriented behavioral leaders) and the second being initiating structure (i.e. task-oriented leaders) (Nohira & Khurana, 2010). The second study is a University of Michigan study that was led by organizational psychologist Dr. Rensis Likert (Nohira & Khurana, 2010). This study reaffirmed what the Ohio State University study demonstrated, and it also showed that effective leaders involved their teams in the decision-making process—known as participatory leadership—rather than making decisions independently and simply giving orders (Nohira & Khurana, 2010).

As stated earlier, a fundamental component of behavioral leadership theories is the focus on clearly defined and measurable actions that can be learned. Because these actions are often measured with the use of competencies, specific workplace behaviors can be accurately and consistently measured using competency models, which have become a thoroughly researched aspect of behavioral leadership theory. Competencies are defined as “an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance in a job situation” (Spencer & Spencer, 1993, p. 9).

Competencies and competency models. Competencies are a comprehensive set of behavioral definitions, developed to enable the identification and evaluation of employee characteristics. This information is used to develop abilities, skills, knowledge, or behaviors, in addition to attitudes, values, and self-beliefs. The competency approach creates a common language to describe competencies and to develop competency models, which are identification systems designed for the alignment of group and individual
Competencies needed for effective job performance (Boyatzis, 1982, 2008; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Competency models and the competency approach are believed to be important aspects of the development of effective leadership behaviors. As summarized by Boyatzis (1982), “it is the competency of managers that determines, in large part, the return that organizations realize from their human capital, or human resources” (p. 1). Competency models provide a framework that helps organizations and individuals meet their objectives by identifying specific capability (competency) requirements and employee attributes, rather than knowledge or skills that may only be generally associated with what is needed for individual employee performance (Ulrich, Zenger, & Smallwood, 1999).

Unique classifications of competencies also exist. Examples include generic competencies, which are generalized across a job type or organization (Le Deist & Delmare, 2005; Spencer & Spencer, 1993); threshold competencies, which include essential functions or characteristics necessary for acceptable levels of performance; and differentiating competencies, which distinguish superior from average performers (Boyatzis, 2008; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Finally, competencies can be organized into clusters, described as behavioral groups of the desired competencies, which are created for purposes of analysis. For example, a cluster for social awareness includes the competencies of empathy, organizational awareness, conscientiousness, and service orientation, with each having additional descriptive detail.

Clusters may also be used as a reference for performance appraisals, competency assessments, training, and organizational design, among other purposes (Boyatzis, 1982;
Green, 1999; Le Deist & Winterton, 2005; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In addition to being an important aspect of the behavioral theory of leadership development, the competency approach is also used in a similar manner in the study of emotional intelligence for the measurement, classification, and reporting of behaviors. Researchers have identified a number of emotional intelligence competencies as being directly related to leadership effectiveness; I address these in greater detail in the following two sections of this literature review. First, however, I provide a final reflection on leadership theories and their relevance to this study of the positive influence of mindfulness practice on leadership effectiveness.

Theoretical framework of leadership. This dissertation uses behavioral theories of leadership as a basis for identifying behavioral changes influenced by mindfulness because these theories have been extensively researched and represent a mature field of study with empirically supported development and measurement strategies that have been linked to leadership performance (Boyatzis, 1982, 2008; McClelland, 1998; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Prior to an in-depth explanation of my decision to use behavioral theories, however, I briefly discuss my reasoning for not selecting the other previously mentioned theories. It should also be noted that some researchers indicate that there is not clear separation between behavioral and other leadership theories, stating that there are, or may be, aspects of behavioral development present in leadership theories that are not classified as behavioral (Northouse, 2007; Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

Trait theories are not used in this study primarily due to the premise upon which trait theories are built: that leadership traits are preexisting rather than developed. This premise lacks a theoretical framework within which the development of new leadership
behaviors may be influenced by the practice of mindfulness or other mechanisms, which is a fundamental assumption of this study. Furthermore, the trait approach lacks an empirically supported, development-oriented framework necessary for identifying a link between mindfulness practice and changes in behaviors contributing to improved leadership effectiveness.

Specifically, a framework for measuring if and/or how leaders have changed their behaviors is needed to examine whether these changes are related to improved effectiveness. Therefore, contingency theories, which also lack a development measurement or successful implementation validation system, are also inadequate for use in this study. This lack of a measurement framework creates a problem since the development of new behaviors may be required in order for a leader to effectively identify and implement the strategies dictated by the contingency model, and a thoroughly tested framework does not appear to be in place for assessing the readiness or ongoing effectiveness of a leader in carrying out these activities.

For these same reasons, the transactional and transformative leadership theories are also not suitable for use in this study, because existing research relating to their implementation does not include robust frameworks for uniform, empirical measurement of leadership development progress. In the case of transactional theories, new behavior development may also be required in order for a leader to become capable of adequately assessing the motivational requirements of subordinates, as well as being able to determine whether the terms of the transactional relationship have been fully understood.

In the case of transformational theories, successful implementation requires that leaders have the ability to demonstrate moral and ethical standards, develop trust, and
carry out other requirements, such as creating emotional appeal and intellectual stimulation. In order for the theory to be implemented, a mechanism must be in place for identifying whether these capabilities are possessed by leaders, and if they are not, a method for developing them and measuring the progress of development is required.

Thus, my decision to use behavioral theories of leadership as a basis for identifying changes influenced by mindfulness rests on the fact that behavioral theories present identifiable behaviors that have been shown to produce specific, empirically supported results in the context of increased leadership effectiveness across a wide range of organizations and in multi-year studies (Boyatzis, 1982). In addition, certain behavioral leadership theories employ proven measurement frameworks comprised of competency models, which have also been used extensively in emotional intelligence research focused on leadership development.

Furthermore, because this study focuses on the effect of mindfulness on leadership effectiveness, the orientation of behavioral leadership theories toward the improvement and/or creation of behaviors and development of competencies make this an ideal model for examining changes reported by leaders. Behavioral leadership theory is also supported by extensive empirical study on management competencies, characteristics, traits, and skills (Boyatzis, 1982), which includes McBer and Company’s work with over 2,000 practicing managers, and Thach and Thompson’s (2007) research on 300 leaders.

The competency approach utilized in behavioral leadership theories has also been used extensively in emotional intelligence research (Hay Group, 2015), and it is described as a proven and mature strategy for reliably linking human resource
development with organizational strategies (Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). In addition, Thach and Thompson (2007) and Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee (2013) indicate that Goleman’s four emotional intelligence competency clusters—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management—each include emotional intelligence competencies known to improve leadership effectiveness (Hartman, Conklin, & Smith, 2007; Cherniss & Goleman, 2003; Sadri, Weber, & Gentry, 2011). Furthermore, in his study of experienced partners at a large consulting firm, Boyatzis (1999) demonstrated that superior performance was related to competencies within the social awareness and self-management competency clusters. His analysis also revealed that individuals who demonstrated a certain level of competencies from each cluster were creating the highest differential profit per year.

Finally, increased leadership performance has been linked to emotional intelligence competencies through the study of more than three hundred global executives (Spencer, 1997) and a comparative performance analysis of division presidents with a large beverage firm over a period of several years (McClelland, 1998). I define emotional intelligence and further explore its relationship to leadership effectiveness in the next section.

**Emotional Intelligence and Its Relationship to Leadership Effectiveness**

This section includes a brief overview and history of emotional intelligence, primarily focusing on the factual basis for my decision to use emotional intelligence as a tool for measurement and analysis in this dissertation. I also explore the evidence supporting the relationship between emotional intelligence and improved leadership effectiveness.
Overview of emotional intelligence. The construct of the intelligent use of emotions can be traced to early scholars such as Aristotle, who stated that fear, anger, confidence, pain, desire, and other experiences could be “either too much or too little…But to experience all of this at the right time, toward the right objects, toward the right people, for the right reason, and in the right manner - that is the median and the best course, the course that is a mark of virtue” (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E./1962, p.43).

Thorndike (1920) suggested the construct of multiple intelligences, defining them as “the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community” (Gardner, 1993, p.15). Gardner (1983) described seven intelligences, including interpersonal and intrapersonal, which relate to emotional intelligence. Gardner (1993) defined interpersonal intelligence as “the ability to understand other people: what motivates them, how they work, how to work cooperatively with them”, and he defined intrapersonal intelligence as “a capacity to form an accurate, veridical model of oneself and to be able to use that model to operate effectively in life” (1993, p.9).

As this section will explore in greater detail, emotional intelligence is viewed by modern scholars as a multidimensional construct, and while there is not full agreement between researchers concerning a detailed definition, there is agreement that emotional intelligence includes empathy, emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and interpersonal adaptability (Bar-on, 2006; Bechara, Tranel, & Damasio, 2000; Lam, & Kirby, 2002; McCallum & Piper, 2000; Rozell, Pettijohn, & Parker, 2002). Salovey and Mayer (1990) are credited with first using the term emotional intelligence in their work to develop a model focused on individual ability to process and utilize emotional
information (Salovey, Mayer & Caruso, 2004); however, Payne (1985) is recognized for introducing the construct and the term emotional intelligence. Payne proposed that emotional intelligence could be learned and/or developed, which other researchers also later supported (Caruso & Salovey, 2004; Goleman, 1998; Slacki & Cartwright, 2003). In research referring to emotional intelligences as emotional quotient (EQ), Bar-on (1988) added to the construct, describing emotional and social intelligence as a mix of personality traits or abilities enabling a person to “effectively manage personal, social and environmental change by realistically and flexibly coping with the immediate situation, solving problems and making decisions” (p.14).

The trait model of emotional intelligence was developed by Petrides and Furnham (2001), which, as the name implies, focuses on behavioral dispositions and self-perceived abilities while minimizing the role of ability-based models. Goleman (1995) developed a mixed model combining both ability and traits that provides a model of emotional intelligence with competencies arrayed in clusters, allowing for the view that emotional intelligence can be learned over time, rather than being solely trait-based (Goleman, 2000).

Goleman (1995) describes emotional intelligence as referring to an integrated concept of emotional intelligence and a framework for describing human dispositions via a theoretical structure that also links elements of personality with a theory of action and job performance. Goleman’s (1995) definition for emotional intelligence is “abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope” (p. 34).
The terms emotional intelligence and social intelligence (SI) are sometimes used interchangeably, or in combination (e.g., social and emotional intelligence or emotional and social intelligence). However, emotional intelligence is not to be confused with social intelligence, which is focused specifically on interpersonal interactions (Ganaie & Mudasir, 2015). Social intelligence is, however, encompassed by Goleman’s definition for emotional intelligence. As a result, the term emotional intelligence is in some cases used to also refer to social intelligence, while in other cases the two terms are combined into emotional and social intelligence (ESI) for specific studies. For example, a study by Boyatzis et al. (2012) of emotional, social, and cognitive intelligence and personality as predictors of sales leadership performance, reports on emotional and social intelligence as ESI in the summary of findings. Therefore, in this dissertation I will use the term emotional intelligence to also refer to SI and ESI.

I will use Goleman’s (1995) mixed model definition and accompanying competency framework in this dissertation because competency-based emotional intelligence theories have been thoroughly tested in the context of organizational leadership (Thach & Thompson, 2007; Spencer, 1997; Boyatzis, 1999; McClelland, 1998), and Goleman’s model is oriented towards the development of new and/or more effective leadership behaviors.

In addition, substantial evidence exists indicating that emotional intelligence and emotional intelligence competencies focused on improved leadership can be developed, and that these are not necessarily inherent traits. This evidence is in line with behavioral leadership theories and the objectives of this study. For example, Emmerling and Goleman (2003) indicate that findings from psychotherapy research, employee training
program research, and executive education research (Boyatzis, Cowen, & Kolb, 1995) provide evidence that individuals can increase their emotional intelligence. Emmerling and Goleman (2003) also point out that research from the field of affective neuroscience, conducted by Davidson, Jackson, and Kalin (2000), shows that adults have the capacity to improve existing and/or develop new emotional intelligence competencies via the mechanism of brain plasticity.

An example of this capacity can be found in Boyatzis et al.’s (1995) longitudinal studies conducted at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University. These studies not only demonstrated that adults are capable of increasing emotional intelligence, but also that individuals are able to consciously target specific emotional intelligence competencies for development. The studies also showed that it is possible for individuals to experience significant increases in their levels of emotional intelligence, and that these increases are sustainable.

Additional studies have also indicated that targeted training results in the development of emotional intelligence competencies. For example, Groves, McEnrue, & Shen (2008) report significant post-training emotional intelligence level increases among employed business students when compared to a control group of employed business students. In addition, Smith (1994) describes emotional competence training for American Express managers, which resulted in sustained, increased performance among the financial advisors who reported to them. Furthermore, Goleman (1998) reported findings from competency research in more than 200 organizations worldwide indicating that over four-fifths of the superior employee performance reported was attributed to emotional intelligence competencies.
Goleman et al.’s (2002) study of Fortune 500 companies, academic and health care institutions, and government agencies also found that emotional intelligence competencies were 85% stronger for top performers than they were for average performing managers. Furthermore, Goleman’s research over time indicates that emotional intelligence is what distinguishes outstanding performers from average and poor performers (Goleman, 1998; Goleman et al., 2002), and this same relationship has been thoroughly established in Boyatzis’ (1982; 2008), McClelland’s (1998), and Spencer & Spencer’s (1993) works.

Work by other researchers also lends support to specific competencies from Goleman’s (1995) mixed model being linked to increased leadership performance. For example, Sadri (2012) describes in detail how Goleman’s emotional intelligence competencies of emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and social awareness (which includes empathy) overlap with and appear to be supported by the themes and definitions used in other leadership training and development activities identified by Conger (1992) and Hartman et al. (2007). Specifically, Goleman’s self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness competencies integrate with Conger’s leadership development approaches, and the practice-based definitions of leadership behaviors and leadership development identified in Hartman et al.’s (2007) research integrate with Goleman’s emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and social awareness competencies (Sadri, 2012). Furthermore, Akbari & Safarnia (2012) specify the emotional intelligence competencies of emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and social awareness as being significant leadership competencies in the context of business success.
The capacity for empathy and the ability to perceive emotions has also been linked to leadership success (Rosete & Ciarrochi, 2005; Douglas, Frink, & Ferris, 2004; Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002; Abraham, 1999), and Goffee and Jones (2000) reference empathy and emotional self-awareness in their inspirational leadership research. Furthermore, Drucker (2005) and Livingston (2003) also mention emotional self-awareness in their work on effective leadership, and Ruderman, Hannum, Leslie, and Steed (2001) report links between emotional intelligence and increased leadership effectiveness, which they also attribute in part to emotional self-awareness. Finally, Dearborn (2002) also describes a relationship between emotional self-awareness and increased team leadership performance (Druskat & Wolff, 2001; Jordan & Troth, 2004). The studies on emotional intelligence just described provide evidence not only that measured increases in emotional intelligence can be developed through training, but also of a link between emotional intelligence competencies and improved leadership effectiveness, which is discussed in greater detail in the following subsection.

Based on the work of these researchers, I have chosen to use not only Goleman’s mixed model for emotional intelligence, but also the Emotional Social Competency Inventory (ESCI) measurement tool that is derived directly from decades of empirical research (Hay Group, 2015) for this study. In addition to having a sound and robust scientific basis arising from some of the previously referenced work of Boyatzis, Goleman, and McClelland, the ESCI tool was specifically designed to measure and/or identify emotional intelligence and behaviors linked to increased performance in organizational leaders. Furthermore, the ESCI tool has been tested, refined, and updated over many years of field use, including in a number of the studies referenced earlier in
this section (Hay Group, 2015). The ESCI tool measures levels of emotional intelligence in individuals relative to the same previously mentioned emotional intelligence competency clusters—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management—each representing a cluster of one to five competencies that are comprised of five to six behavioral indicators (Hay Group, 2015). The use and efficacy of the ESCI tool is described in greater detail in Chapters 3 and 4, where study methodology and analysis are discussed respectively. I also provide additional justification for my decision to utilize Goleman’s mixed model and the ESCI tool in the following discussion of research indicating the relationship between emotional intelligence and improved leadership effectiveness.

**Relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.**

Strong evidence from researchers shows that emotional intelligence is related to improved leadership effectiveness. For example, a global study measuring 358 managers at Johnson & Johnson indicated that high performers had higher levels of emotional intelligence than did low performers (Cavallo & Brienza, 2001), and a study of 515 senior executives indicated that those strong in emotional intelligence were more likely to succeed than were other executives who had stronger or more relevant experience but lower levels of emotional intelligence (Cherniss & Goleman, 2003).

Furthermore, studies by Cavallo and Brienza (2001) and Bradberry and Greaves (2003) both report a relationship between higher emotional intelligence and higher rates of leader productivity and success. The relationship between emotional intelligence and increased leadership performance is also supported by Cavallo and Brienza’s (2001)
study with Johnson & Johnson’s Consumer and Personal Care Group, which involved more than 1,400 employees in 37 countries. The researchers state that a strong relationship was found between superior performing leaders and high levels of emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-management, and social skills, and the study also reaffirmed the point that emotional intelligence can be developed.

Research conducted with AT&T reported that leaders with high emotional intelligence were 20% more productive (Bradberry & Greaves, 2003), and the claim that emotional intelligence is essential to leadership effectiveness is supported by findings from many other researchers (Bar-On, 1997; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008; Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008; Northouse, 2007). The relationship between emotional intelligence and improved leadership effectiveness is attributed to emotional intelligence competencies relating to social interactions required by leadership responsibilities (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Bar-On, 1997), and, as a result, strength in these areas can help leaders develop strong capabilities such as complex decision making, problem solving, adaptive behavior, and crisis management (Yukl, 2010).

Goleman (2000) also states that leaders with strength in the competency of emotional self-awareness can adapt their leadership behaviors in response to changing situations while being mindful of their emotional intelligences. Finally, Goleman et al. (2002) state that standout leaders possess a high degree of emotional intelligence that enables them to understand and develop their own and others’ emotions. Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, and Buckley’s work (2003) illustrates this point and emphasizes the
importance of the relationship between a leader’s emotional intelligence and the effective functioning of his/her team.

A number of the previously mentioned emotional intelligence competencies influence the quality of the relationship between leader and follower, which is a vital aspect of leadership effectiveness. For example, Scandura & Schriesheim (1994) point out that, because it depends on employee performance, leadership effectiveness requires the ability to clearly communicate with and direct subordinates, develop trust, and provide performance-oriented feedback. Uhl-Bien (2006) and Bennis (2007) add to this point by emphasizing that leadership is relational and is comprised of more than individual attributes. Therefore, the quality of interpersonal relationships is believed to be a key element of team performance and is comprised of the previously mentioned capabilities, many of which are encompassed by empathy, defined as the ability to understand and share the feelings of others (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000; Gerstner & Day, 1997).

House and Podsakoff (1994) show that effective leaders display empathy more than ineffective leaders, and Ashkanasy, Hartel, and Daus (2002) further support the finding that this is done through visible displays of consideration for and sensitivity to their followers. Leaders capable of displaying empathy are thought to be better able to build stronger and more supportive relationships through a greater capacity for understanding others (Humphrey, 2002; Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2006; Wolff, Pescosolido, & Druskat, 2002), and, as a result, empathic capabilities and the emotional intelligence competency empathy have been shown to be positively related to leadership effectiveness (Sadri et al., 2011; Boyatzis and McKee, 2005; Chatman and Kennedy,
In addition to being an emotional intelligence competency linked to increased leadership performance, empathy has also been shown to be promoted by mindfulness, which I describe in detail in the following section.

Mindfulness

In the section that follows, I provide an overview of mindfulness, including an in-depth discussion of how mindfulness functions and/or is experienced by the practitioner. This discussion details the varying ways in which mindfulness is practiced and/or utilized by individuals in organizational settings, followed by information regarding some of the general results and benefits linked to mindfulness in recent research. A detailed discussion of the relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence then follows, and the section concludes with exploration of the relationship between the development of leadership effectiveness and mindfulness.

Overview of mindfulness. Many researchers and scholars have closely associated mindfulness that incorporates meditation with the 2,500-year-old Buddhist Abhidharma psychological system, stating that it provides the theoretical basis for what is today called mindfulness practice (Bush & Goleman, 2013). Within Buddhism, however, mindfulness has multiple meanings, which is to be expected from a tradition having evolved in multiple locations over a period of centuries (Brown, Creswell & Ryan, 2015). As a result, mindfulness in the context of Buddhist origin can refer to multiple forms, such as non-dual mindfulness, Zen mindfulness, and classical mindfulness (Brown et al., 2015).

Over the past three decades, extensive scientific examination of mindfulness, in addition to rigorous use in diverse organizational and clinical settings, has identified
mindfulness as not being uniquely spiritually or religiously affiliated. This shift towards a secular, and subsequently more widely accessible, approach to the study of mindfulness has also been supported by a number of leading Buddhist scholars and Western scientists (Bush & Goleman, 2013; Congleton, Hölzel, & Lazar, 2015; Kabat-Zinn, 2013), and is also the approach used for the exploration of mindfulness in this study.

Another type of mindfulness, attributed to Langer (1989), is regarded as being distinct from Buddhist concepts (Good et al., 2016). This distinction is due primarily to Langer’s study of a mindful state developed without the use of meditation for training and/or practice (Langer, personal communication, October 14, 2015). As a result, this study does not investigate the perceptions of practitioners of the type of mindfulness studied by Langer (sometimes referred to as Langarian mindfulness), and instead examines information provided by individuals who have utilized meditation as part of their mindfulness training. This decision enabled targeting practitioners of a more widely utilized type of mindfulness, and therefore provided a greater opportunity for recruiting study participants. In addition, this strategy provided access to a participant pool sharing common constructs, terms, and experiences relating to mindfulness, which aided in the design and execution of the data collection process.

In this dissertation, I utilize Brown et al.’s (2007) definition of mindfulness as “a receptive attention to and awareness of present events and experience” (p. 212). This decision is based upon Brown, Ryan, and Creswell’s scholarly efforts to develop a definition for mindfulness that accommodates the characteristics of mindfulness set forth by multiple schools of thought, including Buddhist scholars and western scientific researchers. While a single, fully accepted definition for mindfulness does not exist
(Good et al., 2016; Brown et al., 2007), scholars have reached general agreement concerning what mindfulness is and how it is described. Brown et al. (2007) describe mindfulness as a state of consciousness comprised of awareness and attention with four primary components: (1) clarity of awareness; (2) the ability to increase or decrease the level of attention while maintaining non-judgmental reasoning; (3) a present-moment orientation; and (4) the ability to detect shifting attention between a focus on the inner self and the outer world.

In their comparison of different definitions for mindfulness, Quaglia, Brown, Lindsay, Creswell, and Goodman (2015) point out that the terms attention and awareness are sometimes used interchangeably and explore why this may be an acceptable convention. Specifically, the authors explain the close interrelation between attention and awareness in daily life, and highlight the combined role of meta-awareness and attention in enabling practitioners to distinguish mindfulness from related states. Mindfulness is also considered meta-cognitive because it involves meta-level awareness in the monitoring of consciousness, while also reflecting back upon the process of consciousness (Dreyfus, 2011; Nelson, Stuart, Howard, & Crowley, 1999). Mindfulness practice can include focus on the sensation of breathing, walking, or aspects of the body’s internal state, such as movement or position (Craig, 2003; Brodal, 2004). External stimuli, such as a sound or image, may be a point of focus, and emotional state, thoughts, or even the quality of awareness may be observed (Lutz, et al., 2008).

In terms of internal, individual experience, mindfulness is a receptive state of mind that enables the practitioner to experience reality in a non-reactive manner, free of interpretations or emotional responses that are influenced by past experiences, beliefs, or
pre-conceived filters (Brown et al., 2007). In other words, the mindful state enables awareness of internal and external events while minimizing automatic reactions, mental classification, or formulation of judgment in response to those events (Brown et al., 2007). In addition, being in a mindful state brings the practitioner’s awareness to reactions and tendencies that, while not necessarily eliminated, may otherwise not be consciously observed, such as impulses to act, emotional responses, and negative thoughts (Brown et al., 2007; Shapiro, Carlson, Astin, & Freedman, 2006). This state is also sometimes referred to as non-conceptual awareness, which involves the reduction of evaluative mental processing activity, such as negative and/or inappropriate interpretation of information (Brown et al., 2007).

The previous changes are attributed to a mechanism whereby the attention is redirected in order to provide an alternative to certain types of responses, such as negative emotions and ruminations, before they are experienced. This redirection is accomplished by focusing the attention instead on present-moment sensory awareness, such as the act of breathing, which uses a different set of neural pathways and is believed to condition and change the brain over time to respond in the same way to similar stimuli (Farb et al., 2012). This redirection of attention to present-moment awareness appears to reduce automatic negative self-evaluation, increase tolerance for negative experiences and pain, and help to cultivate self-compassion and empathy (Farb et al., 2012). In the context of leadership behavior, this redirection of attention may also translate into a number of benefits, including lowered stress response to perceived and imagined threats, reduced time spent dwelling on past mistakes, and an improved awareness of the quality of interaction with others.
The literature on mindfulness reveals that some researchers refer to mindfulness as a state, others as a trait, and some as a state/trait. Research on emotion distinguishes between state and trait by specifying that emotional states are short-term, transient moods, while emotional traits are long-term, enduring patterns of feeling and reacting that influence both thinking and behavior (Ekman & Davidson, 1994; Gohm & Clore, 2002; Silvia & Warburton, 2006). Mindfulness practice, which is also viewed as being a proxy for being mindful, is believed to contribute to the development of both state and trait mindfulness, a process that may be mediated through neuroplasticity (Garland, Fredrickson, Kring, Johnson, Meyer & Penn, 2010; Garland & Howard, 2009). Because mindfulness can be an existing trait, experienced as a state, and also developed as a new trait (Froeliger, Garland, & McClemon, 2012), references to mindfulness in this dissertation refer to mindfulness as both a state and a trait, unless otherwise specified. This decision is also based on research focused specifically on the topic of state and trait indicating that traits may be comprised of large aggregations of states (Long & Christian, 2015; Fleeson, 2004; 2001). Therefore, making a distinction between state and trait in the context of an individual experiencing mindfulness may add little value beyond referring to the process by which practice influences state, which may lead to trait development.

Furthermore, the terms mindfulness and mindfulness meditation are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature, although some researchers and practitioners perceive each term to have distinct meanings (Israel, 2013). The goal of mindfulness training utilizing meditation is the experience of a mindful state by the practitioner, and therefore, some mindfulness training exercises result in the practitioner entering a mindful state. In these cases, the experience of the training exercises is also the
experience of mindfulness, which contributes to a lack of agreement on the terminology required to accurately describe a phenomenon that overlaps the definitions of process and outcome. Goleman, states that “mindfulness is a meditation” (Bush & Goleman, 2013, p. 531), and therefore, I refer to both mindfulness and mindfulness meditation as mindfulness in this dissertation.

The term mindfulness will also refer to post-training, ongoing mindfulness practice, which includes both utilization of mindfulness techniques, and the development and refinement of mindfulness techniques. Any references solely to mindfulness training and/or practice interventions, or specific mindfulness techniques will be specified as such, and organizational leaders who are mindfulness practitioners will be referred to as mindful leaders. Finally, it should be noted that participant quotations using the terms meditate or meditation are referring to mindfulness as defined in this section, since the quotations refer to interview dialog specifically focused on participant mindfulness practice, and many participants used the terms mindfulness and meditation interchangeably.

**Individual practice.** Ongoing mindfulness training, practice, and skill development activities vary from person to person, and the ultimate goal of training is to develop the ability to be more aware of and able to respond to both internal and external situations and experiences in a less reactive and more objective way as they arise. While many practitioners engage in regular, scheduled practice of specific techniques one or more times per day, others engage in less frequent recurring practice, and some practice techniques only when they become aware of stressful situations or potentially disruptive emotional reactions (Miller, Fletcher, & Kabat-Zinn, 1995; Johnson et al., 2014; Stanley
et al., 2011; Stanley & Jha, 2009). Therefore, training-oriented practice focused on the development and refinement of mindfulness techniques may overlap with ongoing, post-training, real-time utilization, which may also be referred to as practice.

This variation in the individual practice of mindfulness is well illustrated by the results of a University of Massachusetts Center for Mindfulness three-year follow up study (Miller et al., 1995). The study reported that 11 of the 18 subjects who completed a formal training program no longer practiced formal, daily techniques, but they did continue to use certain techniques, such as awareness breathing, in daily life as needed. A similar pattern of variation in individual use of mindfulness techniques has also been reported in Stanley and Jha’s (2009) findings, in which researchers studied the effect of mindfulness training on resilience mechanisms in U.S. Marines who were preparing for deployment. Post-training data indicates that while only 16% of the trainees practiced the formally designated exercises regularly during their deployment, more than a quarter used the practices as needed to reregulate themselves after stressful experiences. In addition, more than half of the trainees used some of the skills in what is described as a personalized manner during the deployment (Johnson et al., 2014; Stanley et al., 2011; Stanley & Jha, 2009).

In light of the wide variety of contexts in which mindfulness is used, in the following section, I explore some of the results and benefits that have been linked to mindfulness in recent research. Although many of these findings are not directly related to leadership effectiveness, a number are related to general improvements in workplace performance, and the review of these findings is intended to convey the point that mindfulness has been scientifically found to produce numerous positive effects in
organizational settings, a number of which may improve leadership effectiveness. For example, Good et al. (2016) report that “Mindfulness may benefit a spectrum of human functioning important to organizations” (p. 39) with a basis in a “root construct” influencing a mindful individual’s values, thoughts, and feelings in all social domains. Furthermore, as I explore in detail in a later section, ongoing neuroscience research has linked a variety of changes in the brain to mindfulness. Finally, many of the changes described in the following section are clearly beneficial to aspects of leadership effectiveness, such as increased learning ability and reduced levels of stress and anxiety.

**Effects of mindfulness in the workplace.** Substantial research reveals that mindfulness affects major domains of human functioning such as emotional regulation, cognitive function, quality of interpersonal behavior, and workgroup relationships (Good et al., 2016). For example, cognition function and flexibility, attention, problem solving, creativity, behavior, emotion, and physiology are reported to be influenced by mindfulness, (Baas, 2014; Ostafin & Kassman, 2012; Greenberg, Reiner & Meiran, 2012; Moore & Malinowski, 2009; Jha, Krompinger & Baime, 2007), and these domains have also been shown to mediate workplace outcomes (Good et al., 2016). Current research also indicates mindfulness may improve leadership effectiveness by contributing to a reduction in performance variability, influencing goal-directed behavior and helping leaders manage attention and emotion during disruptive and/or threatening situations (Good et al., 2016; Ortner et al., 2007). In addition, research indicates that mindfulness improves stability, control, and efficiency of attention. For example, studies report that mindfulness stabilizes attention in the present and contributes to greater vigilance relating to visual and listening tasks (Good et al., 2016). Finally, research also indicates that
Mindfulness reduces automatically activated mental associations (Lueke & Gibson, 2015), which has a positive effect on bias, decision-making, and other mental processes.

**Mindfulness and stress management.** One area of leadership effectiveness where mindfulness is particularly impactful is the regulation of stress. In the U.S., the annual workplace costs attributed to stress are estimated at more than $350 million (Thompson, 2007). The negative impact stress has on vital aspects of cognitive function, such as decision-making, has been described as playing a key role in what Thompson (2005) refers to as catastrophic leadership failure. Research indicates that mindfulness reduces these negative effects, instead having a positive impact on multiple aspects of human functioning otherwise impaired by stress, such as attention, cognition, emotions, behavior, and physiology (Good et al., 2016).

Research also shows that mindfulness-based clinical treatment programs have decreased depression, anxiety, anger, and stress in participants, while increasing their positive moods and improving cognitive function (Wolever et al., 2012; Speca et al., 2000; Kabat-Zinn, 2013). In addition, growing evidence suggests that mindfulness training improves emotional self-management skills (Baer et al., 2008; Carmody et al., 2009), and some studies show that changes are maintained as long as three years after a mindfulness-based (MBSR) treatment (Kabat-Zinn, 2013). In addition, a 2014 review of 47 mindfulness studies reported that mindfulness had moderate effects on anxiety and pain, in addition to having the same moderate effect on treating depression as did medication (Goyal et al., 2014).

A randomized trial with cancer outpatients showed that MBSR was effective in decreasing mood disturbance by 65%, including depression, anxiety, anger, and
confusion, in addition to decreasing physiological symptoms of stress, including cardiopulmonary and gastrointestinal symptoms, and these changes were sustained at follow-ups six months after the treatment program (Speca, 2000). In addition, studies have also linked mindfulness to improved attentional control and focus, working memory, academic performance, and other cognitive capabilities (Chiesa, Calati, & Serretti, 2011; Jha, Stanley, Kiyonaga, Wong, & Gelfand, 2010; Mrazek et al., 2013; Tang et al., 2014). Furthermore, a randomized study involving 239 participants showed a positive relationship between mindfulness and perceived stress and sleep quality (Wolever et al., 2012). Recent studies have also demonstrated that MBSR training is linked to a significantly smaller post-stress inflammatory response (Rosenkranz, et al., 2013), and one study reports that MBSR trainees had a 12% reduction in anxiety symptoms and 5% higher level of antibodies to a flu vaccine than a control group (Davidson, 2012). In addition, research by Ortner et al. (2007) showed that mindfulness practitioners showed less emotional interference in their ability to control their attention.

Recent research has also shown that U.S. military personnel receiving pre-deployment mindfulness training have reduced activity in the insula, which is associated with anxiety and mood disorders (Johnson et al., 2014). Researchers in this study also reported that soldiers receiving mindfulness training were able to return their heart and breathing rates to normal more quickly following stressful events than were those who had not been trained, and neuropeptide tests also suggested a relationship between improved immune function and mindfulness training. In addition, magnetic resonance imaging scans revealed reduced activity patterns in regions of the brain responsible for integrating emotional reactivity, cognition, and sensitivity to internal stimuli in the
soldiers receiving mindfulness training. These findings indicate that the soldiers trained in mindfulness were able to reduce the level of emotional effect associated with stressful experiences, thereby improving their stress recovery abilities (Johnson et al., 2014).

Finally, research also links mindfulness to the development of resilience, which involves the capacity to rebound and further develop from failure and adverse experiences (Good et al., 2016).

**Improved interpersonal function.** Research also suggests that mindfulness has a positive impact on both interpersonal and workgroup relationships (Good et al., 2016). For example, mindfulness has been linked to an increase in emotional self-awareness and engagement in empathy, and a decrease in social anxiety (Dekeyser, Raes, Leijssen, & Dewulf, 2008), as well as fostering more compassionate, prosocial behavior (Condon et al., 2013). In addition, Beckman, Wendland, Mooney, and Krasner (2012) report that mindfulness interventions led to a reduction in professional isolation, increased attentive listening, and more effective responses to others. Furthermore, Beach et al. (2013) indicate that their study of the positive effects of mindfulness on clinicians demonstrated an increase in patient-centered communication, including greater rapport, more positive emotional tone, and higher patient satisfaction ratings.

Good et al. (2016) also report that a mindful leader’s capacity for modulating the tone of a group may have a positive effect on team functioning. For example, mindful leaders are less reactive to negative stimuli and more adept at recovering in cases when a reaction does occur. This proposition is supported by reports that mindful individuals have higher relationship satisfaction and are more able to respond constructively to relationship stress, in addition to experiencing lower emotional stress responses and a
more positive perception of relationships pre- and post-conflict (Barnes, Brown, Krusemark, Campbell, & Rogge, 2007). In addition, research indicates that mindfulness reduces the negative effects of attachment anxiety on relationship stability (Saavedra, Chapman & Rogge, 2010).

Good et al. (2016) also suggest that the less self-referential way that mindful leaders process events assists them in being more attentive to the needs and interests of those around them, which is also supported by organizational and psychological literature that “suggests that mindfulness can have significant influence on employee well-being” (Good et al., 2016, p. 30). Additionally, this level of attentiveness may contribute to greater success in distributive negotiations, also supported by research (Reb & Narayanan, 2014). The positive effect of mindfulness on team performance is illustrated by a study of mindfulness training for multi-disciplinary health care teams. This research reports an increase in active listening, patient-focused collaboration, respect among team members, and meeting productivity (Singh, Sing, Sabaawi, Myers & Wahler, 2006).

Research also reports greater team cohesion and collective performance being influenced by mindfulness (Cleirigh & Greaney, 2014), and Good et al. (2016) suggest that the previous two benefits may be influenced by stable and controlled attention via mindfulness. Additional research indicates that stable and controlled attention is the basis for shared mental models and coordination of efforts between members (Metiu & Rothbard, 2012). Specifically, the researchers report that mutual focus of attention on a shared task both results from and is reinforced by shared emotions among group members. This relationship was found to contribute to collective, task-oriented progress and effective problem solving.
Relationship of mindfulness to emotional intelligence. As I discuss above, mindfulness has been linked to higher overall levels of emotional intelligence, and research indicating a supporting relationship between mindfulness and leadership effectiveness via specific emotional intelligence competencies can be found in both the leadership development and emotional intelligence literature. For example, research has shown a relationship between mindfulness and the emotional intelligence competencies emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and empathy (Lykins & Baer, 2009; Arch & Craske, 2006; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Teasdale, Segal, & Williams, 1995; Lam & Kirby, 2002; Freshman & Rubino, 2002). The development of these same emotional intelligence competencies is also described as contributing to effective leadership in the previously cited leadership development literature, in addition to the work of Boyatzis and McKee (2005), McKee (2012), Chatman and Kennedy (2010), Nohria and Khurana (2010), Goleman (1996), and McGarvey (2010).

The link between mindfulness and emotional intelligence competencies related to interpersonal relationships in particular, translates into an improved ability to emotionally identify with others and function in relationships (Wachs & Cordova, 2007; Barnes et al., 2007; Arch & Craske, 2006). As mentioned earlier, the combination of leaders possessing higher levels of emotional intelligence and improved relationship quality contributes to improved employee performance, in part attributed to a higher level of psychological need satisfaction experienced by employees who have a higher quality relationship with their managers (Deci & Ryan, 2001). The same type of quality relationship is believed to reduce emotional exhaustion in employees (Maslach, 1982; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).
Schutte and Malouff (2011) report research showing that higher levels of mindfulness were associated with increased levels of emotional intelligence, and they also describe how mindfulness may assist in improving the ability to perceive and regulate internal emotions, as well as recognize the emotions of others. In addition, Schutte and Malouff (2011) discuss the influence that mindfulness may have on an individual’s capacity for accurately understanding emotions, and they link improved self-management abilities produced by mindfulness to emotional intelligence specifically. The researchers indicate that mindfulness may be linked to desirable outcomes through the influence it has on the growth of emotional intelligence.

Koole (2009) describes the role of mindfulness in encouraging the development of emotional regulation, and Brown et al. (2007) also find a relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence when they discuss how mindfulness improves awareness of one’s environment, as well as an individual’s capacity for self-management. In their study of the relationship between pre-existing (trait and/or dispositional) mindfulness and perceived stress, Bao, Xue, and Kong (2015) report that individuals with high levels of mindfulness are also likely to report higher levels of emotional intelligence, a claim that is also supported by other researchers (e.g., Baer et al., 2006; Sinclair & Feigenbaum, 2012; Snowden et al., 2015).

While the construct of emotional intelligence has been identified as being distinct from that of mindfulness (Hülsheger et al., 2013), Chu (2009) states that emotional intelligence and mindfulness are both meta-cognitive and meta-mood constructs, each focusing on perception, understanding, and self-management of thoughts and emotions. There is also similarity in the way in which these two growing areas of study are
approached by researchers, specifically the practice/training/intervention, state, and trait framework.

As is also referenced elsewhere in this dissertation, multiple studies indicate that mindfulness practice has a positive influence on the development of emotional intelligence competencies such as emotional self-awareness (Ciarrochi, Blackledge, Bilich and Bayliss, 2007; Epstein, 1990). For example, Chu (2010) assessed 351 meditators by levels of meditation experience and reported a relationship between higher levels of measured emotional intelligence and greater meditation experience, implying that mindfulness practice may contribute to the development of emotional intelligence competencies. In addition, Snowden’s (2015) study of 938 nursing, midwifery, and computing students also reported that mindfulness intervention was associated with higher levels of measured emotional intelligence ability.

The experience of a mindful state is also potentially related to states of improved emotional intelligence. For example, research by Cahn & Polich (2006) links increased levels of the emotional intelligence competency emotional self-management to regular mindfulness practice, and Shapiro, Schwartz, and Bonner (1998) report that mindfulness training attendees reported higher measurements of the emotional intelligence competency empathy. Research by Brown et al. (2007) reports similar results, specifically linking mindfulness with improved levels of the emotional intelligence competency social awareness. In these examples, researchers describe a relationship between the practice of mindfulness leading to changes in practitioner mindfulness and emotional intelligence states; however, these changes are potentially transient and/or
dependent upon mindfulness practice, and therefore not evidence of changes at the trait level.

There is also similarity between the study of mindfulness and emotional intelligence relating to trait changes and development. For example, Schutte and Malouff (2011) report results indicating a relationship between characteristic (trait) mindfulness and higher measures of trait emotional intelligence, which has also been previously associated with similar results reported by Baer et al. (2004) and Brown & Ryan (2003). Additional research relating to trait emotional intelligence by Zeidan, Johnson, Diamond, David, & Goolkasian (2010) indicates that mindfulness improves meta-cognitive ability, which is defined as a trait by Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000), and meta-cognitive ability has been indicated as a requirement of effective emotional self-management (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Mindfulness is not only mentioned in emotional intelligence research, but it is also found to be integral to contemporary leadership effectiveness efforts in current literature on the subject, which is explored next.

**Relationship of mindfulness to leadership effectiveness.** As the previous section illustrates, mindfulness may influence leadership effectiveness via specific emotional intelligence competencies. However, this influence is not the extent of the complementary relationship reported to exist between mindfulness and the development of leadership effectiveness. For example, the existence of a direct relationship between mindfulness and the development of behaviours shown to influence effective leadership has been put forth by a number of researchers and authors, including Scouller (2011), Carroll (2007), and Boyatzis and McKee (2005). Additionally, programs assisting organizations with mindfulness training focus on improved leadership effectiveness, such
as those listed in Chapter 1, are abundant and growing (Good et al., 2016; Carroll, 2007; Gelles, 2012). While a growing body of literature supports the importance of incorporating mindfulness into organizational leadership development activity, researchers indicate that there is currently a shortage of studies that actually demonstrate a direct relationship between mindfulness and leadership effectiveness (Good et al., 2016; Dane & Brummel, 2014; Reb et al., 2014; Lam & Kirby, 2002).

One of the few reports that comes close to addressing this gap in the current literature includes two studies conducted by Reb et al. (2014) that demonstrate a significant correlation between leader mindfulness and employee performance measures. The authors’ first study showed a correlation between higher levels of preexisting supervisor mindfulness and lower employee emotional exhaustion and deviance rates. In addition, it showed that higher levels of leader mindfulness were associated with higher overall employee job performance ratings and employee work-life balance, in addition to lower employee deviance. The study matched self-reported supervisor workplace mindfulness data collected online with data collected from those supervisors’ employees at two points in time (Reb et al., 2014).

The second study also matched self-reported supervisor workplace mindfulness data collected online with data collected from those supervisors’ employees. This study demonstrated a positive correlation between higher levels of preexisting leader mindfulness and employee job satisfaction, job performance, and in-role performance. In addition, the study demonstrated a correlation with leader mindfulness and both employee job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior is defined as uncompensated employee activity, beyond the
employee’s basic job description, that contributes to the betterment of the organization (Lambert, 2006; Koys, 2001). The study also found that leader mindfulness predicted employee psychological need satisfaction, which in turn was found to be positively associated with job satisfaction, overall job performance, and in-role performance.

In addition to the previous examples, mindfulness has also been reported to produce positive results in a number of organizational settings. For example, data from the previously mentioned, internally developed, General Mills mindfulness program report that 89% of senior executives attribute having become better listeners to participation in the program, and 83% of participants report that the training has led to an improvement in their daily planning and personal productivity, up from 23% before the course (Gelles, 2012). In addition, 80% of senior executives report a positive change in their abilities to make better decisions as a result of the program (Gelles, 2012).

The neural level at which mindfulness appears to function in the previously described cases may be one reason why it has also been shown to be effective under a wide variety of circumstances, and it is therefore worthwhile to explore the underlying neural mechanisms of mindfulness in greater detail. For example, due to the lack of direct evidence linking mindfulness to changes in emotional intelligence and the development of leadership competencies, researchers do not yet understand exactly how mindfulness changes or produces these behaviors from a neurological standpoint. Since the neurological effects of mindfulness cannot be observed through the standard methods of social scientific research, I did not observe or attempt to collect any data related to these in my study. However, because recent research is providing increasing amounts of evidence connecting mindfulness to neurological changes in the brain, I include a review
of this literature in this dissertation in order to add an additional and compelling source of
evidence pointing to the relationship between mindfulness and the development of
emotional intelligence competencies related to leadership effectiveness.

The Neuroscience of Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence

The neural mechanisms linking mindfulness with changes in awareness and
behaviors are not yet fully understood (Creswell, 2017; Tang, Hölzel, & Posner, 2015;
Farb et al., 2012); however, ongoing neuroscience studies continue to produce new
evidence contributing to the argument that such a relationship exists. For example,
improved emotional self-management is said to be influenced by mindfulness via
strengthening of the cognitive control mechanisms associated with the prefrontal cortex,
which is involved in reasoning, inhibition, and decision-making (Barbey et al., 2012;
Lazar et al., 2005). These improvements are achieved by repeated activation of neural
networks through intervention-based development of self-observation capabilities, which
otherwise disengage the individual from automatic neurological pathways that have been
developed from past learning and experience (Cahn & Polich, 2009; Goldin & Gross,

Neuroscience studies indicate that mindfulness may reduce this type of often
negative emotional reactivity by changing the manner in which these neural networks
connect with each other, and researchers indicate that these changes may also contribute
to greater cognitive flexibility and an improved capacity for activation of regions of the
brain associated with more effective situational stress response and adaptability (Tang et
al., 2015; Moore & Malinowski, 2009; Siegel, 2007a, 2007b; Cahn & Polich, 2006;
Davidson et al., 2003). This alteration of the brain’s physical structure and functioning via mindfulness is believed by researchers to be enabled by neuroplasticity (Davidson et al., 2003; Lazar et al., 2005; Siegel, 2007a; Vestergaard-Poulsen et al., 2009).

The type of non-judgmental, objective, and accepting awareness produced by mindfulness interventions is believed to involve the insula, a region of the brain linked with emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2011; Pessoa, 2008), and which plays a role in awareness of internal stimuli (Farb et al., 2012). Studies conducted by Farb et al., (2007) and Siegel (2007a) also indicate that states induced by mindfulness interventions are likely to become traits over time, and these changes may also increase gray matter density in the hippocampus (Hölzel et al. 2011a). This region of the brain has been linked to emotional intelligence as well, as have the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, parietal cortex, the temporal lobe, and the anterior cingulate cortex (Goleman, 1995; Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Stein & Book, 2011; Posner et al., 2007), which are known to control emotional self-management and aspects of memory (Nataraja, 2012; Fox et al., 2014). Furthermore, activity in these regions of the brain has been linked to the state of mindfulness in studies of experienced mindfulness practitioners (Lazar et al., 2000; Farb et al., 2012).

Structural and functional neuroimaging has been used to investigate the effect of mindfulness interventions on neurobiological mechanisms, producing evidence indicating that mindfulness contributes to improved emotional self-management in the brain (Corcoran, Farb, Anderson, & Segal, 2010; Farb et al., 2010; Siegel, 2007b). For example, in one study functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) neural reactivity data from a randomly assigned group of MBSR trainees was compared with the same
data from a control group, in addition to self-reported measures of anxiety, depression, and psychopathology (Farb et al., 2010). The study showed that significantly less anxiety, depression, and somatic distress was displayed by the MBSR trainees. The trainees also demonstrated less neural activity than the control group when viewing films (Farb et al., 2010). While inconclusive, this study implies that mindfulness alters an individuals’ emotional self-management capacity, providing them with improved abilities for emotional self-management, and also changing the way that their brain processes emotional experiences (Farb et al., 2010; Williams, 2010).

Lazar et al. (2005) report that mindfulness practitioners have shown increased cortical thickness in the prefrontal cortex, in addition to the insula. The study compared the cortical thicknesses of 20 subjects with an average of nine years of meditation experience with that of participants with no meditation experience. The researchers interpreted the increase in grey matter to indicate improved function in areas such as attentional ability. However, the assessments of brain structure were only conducted at one point in time, which does not definitively prove the cause of the structural changes or indicate whether or not those changes remained, increased, or declined over time.

In the case of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) focused on the role of mindfulness interventions in producing neurological changes, well-controlled studies are lacking and definitive findings have yet to be produced demonstrating how and if mindfulness is linked to specific outcomes (Creswell, 2017). While new studies continue to imply promising results linking mindfulness interventions to beneficial neurological changes, they employ small sample sizes and have yet to produce empirical evidence of a causal relationship between mindfulness and specific outcomes (Creswell, 2017).
Conclusion

This literature review has explored the relationship between mindfulness and the development of behaviors that contribute to improved leadership effectiveness. An exploration of leadership theories identified the extensive research that shows that new leadership competencies can be developed in individuals, and that there is a functional commonality between competencies used to measure leadership behaviors and emotional intelligence. Specifically, the review of emotional intelligence literature provided extensive evidence supporting the capacity for individuals to develop higher levels of emotional intelligence, in addition to correlations between improved leadership effectiveness and specific emotional intelligence competencies.

The discussion of mindfulness explored current evidence proving that mindfulness is able to produce measurable changes in practitioners, many of which have a positive influence on cognitive function and emotional states that are also believed to be beneficial to leadership effectiveness. The section also thoroughly explored the relationships that are likely to exist between mindfulness and both emotional intelligence and effective leadership behaviors via commonly influenced competencies. Finally, I explored current neuroscience research, which indicates that emotional intelligence and specific types of emotions, levels of awareness, behaviors, and higher order mental functions are associated with regions of the brain that have been shown to be influenced by mindfulness.

The section focused on leadership described the main theories for leadership, and provided justification for the selection of behavioral theories in this dissertation. Trait theories were not selected due to the lack of a theoretical framework supporting
development of leadership traits and behaviors. Contingency, transactional, and transformational theories were found to be misaligned with the requirements of the study due to their lack of a competency development and implementation measurement framework. In addition, transformational and transactional theories were described by some scholars’ as overlapping, and the issue of certain behavioral development aspects potentially being present in contingency, transactional, and transformational theories makes it difficult to ascertain how the theories are unique from one another and distinctly separate from behavioral theories.

Thus, behavioral theories were identified as the theoretical framework best suited to the research question outlined in this study. The focus of behavioral theories on measurable, observable leader actions is one reason for this choice, as was the existence of evidence indicating that these theories allow for the measurement of behavioral changes leading to the development of new leader capabilities. The lengthy study, testing, use, and refinement of behavioral theories are additional reasons for their selection as the appropriate measurement theory for use in this study, as is the utilization of competencies. Finally, some of the leadership competencies discussed were also shown to overlap and/or align with emotional intelligence competencies.

My discussion of leadership theories was followed by exploration of key facts relating to emotional intelligence as well as my justification for the decision to utilize Goleman’s mixed model. This decision was based in part on the aforementioned alignment with the behavioral leadership competency framework, in addition to the fact that, as is also the case with leadership behaviors, the ability to acquire and/or further develop emotional intelligence has been proven. Furthermore, my decision was based on
the extensive references supporting a relationship between the development of emotional intelligence and the development of leadership effectiveness, which was also a reason for my selection of the ESCI measurement tool for use in my data analysis activity.

The section focused on mindfulness, provided information about the function, practice, and application of mindfulness, in addition to evidence demonstrating a variety of results beneficial to workplace settings. I also discussed research that links mindfulness to higher levels of emotional intelligence, particularly changes in emotional intelligence that are associated with improved leadership effectiveness. I concluded this discussion with a description of the most recent research focused on the relationship between preexisting leader mindfulness and improved aspects of employee performance and job satisfaction. The final section addressed neuroscience research indicating that regions of the brain proven to be influenced by mindfulness are also linked to the development of emotional intelligence, and via this mechanism, mindfulness is likely to have an influence on leadership effectiveness.

Despite the literature presented, and regardless of the growing use of mindfulness by organizations, no research currently exists that demonstrates a direct relationship between mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness. In addition, there is presently a shortage of research exploring the practice of mindfulness by organizational leaders specifically for purposes of improved effectiveness, and little is known about the value leaders may be receiving from mindfulness. Therefore, I designed this study to gather detailed examples illustrating the perceived improvements to effectiveness attributed to mindfulness by organizational leaders, in order to add greater understanding to this relationship.
The following chapter (Chapter 3) describes the data collection methodology I use to investigate my research question. That discussion includes my study design, my data collection processes, and my data analysis methods. In Chapter 4, I provide an in-depth report of the results of the study, focusing on presentation of the output of the data analysis process. In Chapter 5, I discuss the study’s findings, including my interpretation of the data I present in Chapter 4, and in Chapter 6 I discuss of the study’s contribution to the literature and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 3:

Research Methodology and Data Collection Methods

This chapter will discuss the research methodology used for this study and present the logic behind the selection of a qualitative research design and the use of the Emotional Social Competency Indicator (ESCI) measurement tool. Details relating to participant selection, data collection instruments and processes, and data analysis are also addressed. The final section of the chapter discusses the data collection limitations.

The objective of this exploratory study was to obtain detailed descriptions of mindfulness from organizational leaders, with the intention of collecting first-hand reports of the perceived relationship between mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness. Specifically, I wanted to add to the aforementioned gap in the existing literature through analysis of examples of positive leadership outcomes that participants attributed to mindfulness. My intention was to use interactive dialogue focused on mindfulness and leadership results as a way to obtain in-depth explanations indicating why and how participants attribute particular results to mindfulness. Furthermore, while the research question focuses on first-hand reports of a perceived link between mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness, I also intended to collect a sufficient amount of rich data through which new and unanticipated themes, patterns, and findings may be revealed.

The data collection method utilized for this study was qualitative, in-person interviews. I was the only interviewer and researcher involved in the data collection and analysis processes. The following sections provide greater detail concerning the methodology I used for the collection of the data needed to answer the research question I
investigated in my study: What do organizational leaders perceive to be the impact of mindfulness on their leadership effectiveness?

**Qualitative Research Design**

Because my research objective was dependent upon in-depth descriptions of improved leadership effectiveness attributed to mindfulness, the best way to capture data about my research question was through the use of semi-structured, personal interviews. A qualitative research approach is an ideal data collection strategy for detailed and potentially unique information relating to individual perception, because it has been shown to explore topics that are not easily understood through statistical analysis or other quantifiable means (Strauss, 1990). Ryan, Bernhard, and Spencer (2010) indicate that quantitative data collection instruments such as surveys tend to be limited because they can gather data relating only to specific items. These researchers also point out that data obtained through appropriately designed interviews is substantially richer in content than quantitative data.

Patton (2011) also notes that qualitative research uses a realistic approach to understanding occurrences in context-specific settings, and Maxwell (2012) states that qualitative research is an optimal strategy for a researcher to use when he/she is focusing on how informants make sense of the phenomenon of interest. Furthermore, the purpose of a qualitative approach is to develop an understanding of participants’ perceptions and beliefs to design a framework that can be used in identifying the underlying experiences that are evident in the raw data (Maxwell, 2012). More specifically, qualitative research is intended to obtain an in-depth understanding of a certain type of human behavior and
the beliefs and perceptions that influence it. To that end, the qualitative method focuses on investigation of the why and how of decision-making, versus the what, where, and when that is typically addressed by quantitative studies.

**Qualitative research methods.** Qualitative research literature touches on five primary types of research methods: grounded theory, narrative, ethnography, phenomenology, and case study research (Creswell & Clark, 2004). Grounded theory focuses on using interviews and existing documents to develop a theoretical basis for coding analysis, while narrative seeks to form a cohesive story through the exploration of a sequence of events via interviews and review of documents. Ethnography requires immersion in the same environment as study participants, in order to gain understanding of culture, motivations, and goals to interpret themes that emerge.

Phenomenology combines methods, including reading documents, interviewing, or visiting study sites, in order to gain an understanding of the meaning the research topic holds for participants. Case study is more event-focused, taking an exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive approach to describing a specific event. This approach also utilizes multiple types and sources of data to obtain a deep understanding of the subject being researched (Creswell & Clark, 2004).

Phenomenology aligns with the objectives of this study, due to its focus on examining structures of consciousness for the purpose of more fully understanding the nature of subjective experiences. Specifically, phenomenology is described as being oriented towards an understanding of how and why something is perceived in a particular manner by the human mind (Creswell, 2007).
I chose to approach qualitative data collection utilizing a modified behavioral event interview (BEI) design. The BEI was designed for the purpose of collecting accurate and vivid descriptions of real experiences through semi-structured interviews in which the participant is asked to recall specific events. During the interview the participant is also prompted to explain the context of events, roles played by other individuals, his/her own thoughts and feelings, and his/her interpretation of the outcome or result. In addition, special attention to behavioral details is a particular area of BEI focus, and it is also an established qualitative research method used in the assessment of leadership competencies (McClelland, 1973, 1998; Boyatzis, 1982; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

The BEI is a highly structured interview design adapted by McClelland from the critical-incident interview originally developed by Flanagan in 1954 (Hay Group, 2016). The objective of the BEI is to identify hidden characteristics of the person being interviewed, in order to gain an understanding of what drives his/her workplace performance. The BEI approach is designed to reveal the deep-rooted behavior patterns and thoughts of participants relating to specific aspects of their professional role. McClelland developed this approach as a means for understanding what his research revealed to be the true motivation for participants’ actions, which is found through in-depth, semi-structured conversations intended to explore thoughts and feelings (Hay Group, 2016).

The BEI is designed to obtain complete stories describing the participants’ feelings, thoughts, and actions relating to specific events, which lead to behaviors exhibited by interview participants during those events. BEI dialog is intended to focus
on high points, major successes, and low points in order to provide detailed content upon which the researcher can base his/her transcript coding and thematic content mapping/classification activity. Key content elements collected with the BEI include descriptions of a specific situation and the events leading up to it, in addition to the other parties involved (Shermon, 2004; Spencer, Signe, & Spencer, 1993). Participants are also asked to describe the motivation for their decisions relating to the situation, as well as their thought processes leading up to the outcome described. Finally, participants are asked to discuss their feelings associated with the situation being described, including the other individuals involved. This rich, in-depth content is then used to identify the presence of competencies via a formal coding and/or thematic content mapping/classification process (Ganesh, 2004; Spencer et al., 1993).

The BEI approach is ideal for this study because the results provide rich data concerning the relationship between participant competencies and context, including how the two function together (Hay Group, 2016). Specific to the topic examined in this study, Boyatzis (1982) reports that competency measures obtained from behavioral event interviews predict leader success, and the BEI approach is reported as producing 55% predictive accuracy versus 10% for traditional interviewing techniques (Boyatzis, 1982). The BEI has been used in studies at Mattel, Monsanto, and numerous U.S. government organizations, at times including as many as 2,000 interviews per study (Boyatzis, 1982). In addition, eight of the twelve competencies measured by BEI (McClelland, 1998) match the competencies measured by the ESCI tool that I used to code participant transcripts, further indicating that the BEI approach is well suited for the data collection requirements of this study.
Participants

**Participant selection.** Creswell (2007) and Patton (2011) both write about the importance of purposeful selection of participants who are likely to provide credible information relevant to the study. I employed a purposeful, characteristic-based approach to participant selection, which helped me identify participants with an adequate level of leadership experience who were mindfulness practitioners and who also expressed willingness to engage in detailed discussions concerning their perceptions of the way in which mindfulness has improved their leadership effectiveness. I targeted participants with mid-to-executive levels of organizational leadership experience in order to ensure that I gathered detailed data concerning the manner in which mindfulness had added value to their roles as leaders.

By targeting those with significant leadership experience, I also gained access to participants who had a higher likelihood of having achieved success as leaders due to a history of being promoted. In addition, I felt that participants with significant leadership experience would have a larger pool of in-depth examples from which to draw during interviews, and a higher likelihood of having reflected upon their professional development experiences. I purposely sought mindfulness practitioners in order to ensure that my sample was drawn from participants who had a formal knowledge of mindfulness and experience with mindfulness training and workplace utilization. Finally, my objective in seeking participants who expressed willingness to engage in detailed discussions about mindfulness was to help ensure an interest in completing lengthy personal conversations that might explore sensitive topics.
Through consultation with my dissertation committee members and several key informants, I developed a participant profile that met the previously described requirements. The only addition to this profile was that participants be engaged in ongoing mindfulness activity that they believed had an impact on their leadership effectiveness. Exploration of leadership literature led me to settle on the definition of leadership described in Chapter 2, which focuses on the ability of a leader to influence others in the workplace. The participant profile I utilized is further clarified by the following excerpts from content used in my email recruiting messages: “people in management and leadership roles who are engaging in intentional daily mindfulness activity,” and “participants who would like to share examples of how their mindfulness practice has influenced results in the workplace.” My committee members and I felt that using this profile would increase my chances of making initial contact with qualified prospective research participants, from which I could then identify appropriate interview candidates.

Recruitment and procedures. Prior to the commencement of the participant recruiting process, I developed a list of personal contacts to approach as potential participants or for participant referrals, in addition to online communities and organizations through which I could distribute recruiting messages. Once I had received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I began contacting my target participant list by email and telephone. During this process, all prospective participants received email messages summarizing the objectives of the study, identifying requirements for participation, and stating that anonymity would be protected. The content of the email
and online user group content used during the recruiting process is contained in Appendix 1, Study Participation Content.

I began interviews shortly afterwards; however, I initially restricted my recruiting activity in order to refine my interviewing techniques and determine the amount of time required for scheduling, setting-up, interviewing, and taking notes post-interview. After I was able to calculate the average duration of an interview, and the minimum amount of time needed between interviews for taking notes and processing the data, I commenced larger scale recruiting and scheduling.

The majority of my prospective participants contacted me through Dan Goleman’s LinkedIn group and the Working with Mindfulness LinkedIn group, where my recruiting message was posted and directly highlighted by Dr. Goleman on several occasions. Through email correspondence and review of LinkedIn professional profiles, I confirmed the eligibility of prospects. In total, I identified 76 interview candidates who indicated a willingness to participate in my study. I found 14 to be ineligible due to their misalignment with my participation criteria, and eight others were unable to commit to interview times within three months of my request. An additional 12 rescheduled multiple times or failed to respond at various points during the interview scheduling process. As I describe in detail in the next section, I successfully recruited 42 participants who not only fulfilled the requirements of the profile but also exceeded it in terms of significant, diverse, and extensive organizational leadership experience.

Sample characteristics. Data were collected from a diverse group of mindful leaders with equally diverse organizational leadership experience. Specifically, the data were obtained through 42 interviews with leaders working in the U.S., Brazil, India,
Australia, the U.K., Italy, Canada, Poland, and Germany. Even numbers of males and females participated, and the following tables provide specific detail relating to participants’ current and previous professional roles, in addition to summaries of their responsibilities, their countries of residence, and the industries in which they worked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Distribution of participants by nationality.*

Although the highest concentration of participants was U.S. citizens, it did not have undue influence on the data being sought for the study, because my research topic focused on obtaining examples of improved leadership effectiveness, which I did not observe to be significantly impacted by the nationality of the participants. For example, the participant group was consistent in terms of the key points that participants chose to focus on, in addition to the incidence of the types of examples they provided.

Furthermore, while the participant pool represented ten different nationalities and seven individuals for whom English was a second or third language, I observed no indications during the interviews or data analysis that these factors had a negative impact on the level of participation or quality of information shared.

It is also important to note that there were additional elements of diversity identified in the participant group beyond country of residence. For example, one
A participant was of Palestinian origin and had worked and been educated in Palestine and Canada, but later immigrated to the EU and continued her professional career in multiple European countries. In addition, some of the participants residing in the U.S. had emigrated from other countries, and a number of the participants had been educated in and/or had worked in multiple countries other than their country of residence. Many participants also indicated that they had previously and/or were currently employed by multinational organizations with headquarters in countries other than their country of residence. Many participants also revealed details about their ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds, which indicated an additional degree of diversity across the participant group. Finally, there was diversity in specialization and areas of professional focus represented in the sample group. See Table 2 for information summarizing the industries in which participants worked.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and organizational development (consulting)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global software/technology and/or IT services</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Healthcare</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global tax and finance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global equipment manufacturing and support</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National government</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. senior legal counsel</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. banking and investment</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. publishing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global commercial construction and development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global publishing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global HR, talent development and outsourcing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global video game production and development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global supply chain</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global biomedical testing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. non-profit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global shipping and logistics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. resort destinations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European investment and finance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Cyber security/CIO</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcasting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. Distribution of participants by industry.*

As Table 2 indicates, participants were not highly concentrated in any specific industry. One of the highest areas of concentration, *leadership and organizational development (consulting)*, was, with two exceptions, composed of former organizational leaders who discussed their experiences in leadership roles with previous organizations during the interviews. These four participants, who had transitioned to consulting roles, did so from careers including multiple upper, executive, and C-level leadership positions. Of the two who lacked this level of prior experience, one is a well-respected expert supporting major international organizations, and also a past adjunct faculty member at multiple universities. The other consultant interviewed is the founder and owner of a successful, industry leading, global consulting firm serving more than 100 organizations annually.
The other highest area of concentration, *Global software/technology and/or IT services*, actually represents participants working specifically in either enterprise software, Internet services development, or IT services. Therefore, none of these participants were actually working in identical industries. The next highest concentration is in *U.S. healthcare*; however, two of these participants worked in either program design and delivery, or clinical support services, thus different areas within this field. The remaining two led human resources functions in different departments at the same organization. It is also important to note that all but one of the participants mentioned prior places of employment during discussion of their workplace use of mindfulness. Therefore, in the context of mindfulness influencing leadership effectiveness, a total of 82 organizations were discussed during the interviews.

As discussed earlier, for the purposes of this study, the terms leader and leadership refer to workplace influence, rather than only direct oversight of employees, since those occupying advisory board and consulting roles also maintain a position of influence. This distinction is relevant to this study because participants described an extensive and broad range of leadership experience, and many also mentioned being board members, volunteers, and certified instructors/coaches in areas of specialization outside of their career roles.

The following tables provide summary detail of the participants’ backgrounds, while still affording the protection of anonymity that was promised to participants prior to the interview process. Table 3 summarizes leadership experience by role and size of organization, while Table 4 provides a related perspective that is focused on specific titles
held by participants. Finally, Table 5 summarizes the descriptions provided by participants of their employee direct management and oversight responsibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role and Size of Organization</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previously occupied 1-5 upper, senior, or executive leadership roles</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently in upper, senior, or executive leadership position</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously with leading global organizations or national governments</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently with leading global organizations or national governments</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently with small to mid-sized organization</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently in mid-level management role</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant with previous senior or executive leadership experience</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational leadership and program development consultant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3. Distribution by role and size of organization*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants’ Professional Roles and Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Founder/CLO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Recruiting and Talent Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Content &amp; Strategy Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Counsel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Group Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Accounts Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Learning Operations Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head/Senior Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Head of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President of Supply Chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, Business and Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Supply Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP/Corporate Controller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjunct faculty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75
Managing Partner and Board Advisor
Vice President of global procurement
Head of finance and accounting
Chief Information Officer
Director of Operations
President of HR
Managing Director
Engineering Manager
Vice President Corporate Communications

Table 4. Sample of professional roles and titles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headcount Management and Oversight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50 direct reports supporting over 100,000 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible for 4,500 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-100 reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support of 100 fulltime and up to 1000 seasonal employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-60 direct reports on project basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 reports supporting 7000 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 direct reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 employees with project support for 65 offices worldwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 direct reports, supporting an additional 50 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-25 direct reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 direct reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-30 direct reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 direct reports, 40 indirect reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 direct reports, supporting an additional 40-50 employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 direct reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 direct reports and 17 indirect reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 direct reports supporting 250 patients</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Sample of participant employee management responsibilities.

As the data in this section indicates, participant characteristics were both diverse and well aligned with the objectives of the study. Specifically, the countries of employment and cultural background of participants helped to make the sample less homogenous, as did the range of industries represented. Furthermore, the number of previous leadership roles held by participants added to the study via an increase in the number and type of
organizational contexts that were described in examples. Finally, the senior level of participants provided insight into when and how mindfulness provided a positive impact at multiple stages in their careers.

**Data Collection Methods**

The objective of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of how participants observe and interpret situations, actions, thoughts, and feelings, and how their perspectives influence their beliefs and future actions, regardless of whether an empirical or causal relationship can be established between these (Maxwell, 2012). Therefore, I utilized the semi-structured, modified BEI approach to qualitative data collection described earlier in this chapter. Participants were repeatedly encouraged to describe positive leadership outcomes that they attributed to mindfulness with detailed examples, which is a strategy that aligns with a number of the requirements included in the validity tests set forth by Maxwell (2012) for this type of research.

For example, I collected rich data in the form of verbatim transcripts for the purpose of obtaining a “full and revealing picture of what is going on” (Maxwell, 2012, p. 125). In addition, the interview-based research approach is also preferable for a study such as this due to the need to explore subjects such as individual beliefs, perceptions, and assignments of value (Kvale, 1996), all of which emerged from in-depth participant examples describing the positive influence they believe mindfulness had on their leadership effectiveness.

**Interview protocol.** I designed the interview protocol, which is included as Appendix 2, Participant Interview Protocol, under the advisement of two senior faculty members who have decades of experience in designing, testing, teaching, and carrying
out qualitative research studies. This process included three review and revision cycles and incorporated the input I received from my dissertation committee members during my proposal hearing. Protocol design was also informed by exploratory key informant interviews with advisors occupying senior and executive positions at Fortune 500 U.S. corporations. Additional key informant input was received from advisors working with or at Fortune 500 U.S. corporations in organizational leadership and development advisory capacities. Although I did not include these individuals in my study, their insight concerning the current literature on mindfulness, and how I might be able to potentially contribute to it, influenced my decisions concerning the interview protocol, as did their guidance concerning the best approach for obtaining certain types of data.

The process of developing the final interview protocol spanned more than six months and concluded with a pilot testing step, as recommended by Maxwell (2012), Patton (2011), and Kvale (2007). This step is considered vital to identifying limitations or weaknesses in the interview design, providing the researcher with the opportunity to implement potentially crucial modifications prior to the commencement of formal interviews. I made minor refinements to the protocol as a result of pilot testing and then began formal interviewing. Only formal interview data collected in the post-pilot phase were used in the study.

I designed the interview protocol to collect data through deep semi-structured individual interviews that I could then analyze through inductive thematic and deductive (ESCI) content and thematic analysis. I also designed the protocol to ensure a degree of consistency in the questions posed to all participants, while simultaneously creating a framework supporting the need to customize portions of the interviews and interactively

Utilization of this approach proved to be especially useful when dealing with a diverse group of professionals and nationalities because it allowed for a degree of improvisational interaction with participants. Specifically, because participants varied in their use of terminology and their English language skills, I was often required to ask clarifying questions that were unique to each interview and that were not specifically written into the interview protocol. The approach also required a high degree of adaptability on my part because participants did not offer uniform responses to my questions, and, as a result, many of my follow-up questions had to incorporate the same context and terminology used by the participant in his/her initial response.

The structured portion of the interview protocol helped to ensure the collection of consistent and comparable data from participants, while the unstructured portion enabled the pursuit of probing and exploratory questions that brought additional insights to the study. For example, questions relating to mindfulness were focused on the past and present tense, with the intention of gathering information on each participant’s description of his/her practice, in addition to surfacing detailed stories relating to any claims linking that practice to improved effectiveness. For example, question three asked “Do you believe your mindfulness practice influences your leadership effectiveness,” and the protocol contained six prompts used to ensure that consistent, detailed examples supporting the initial response to question three were provided by participants. The interview protocol was also designed to minimize the risk of misinterpretation or
miscommunication of the interview questions, while simultaneously minimizing the risk of influencing the informant’s responses.

For this reason, the design of the interview guide and questions included deliberate decisions concerning the choice of words and phrases, with the aim of helping each participant clearly understand what subjects were being explored, while also allowing the participant the freedom to use his/her own terminology and to clarify the examples he/she provided. I implemented this interview strategy through the use of numerous prompts associated with each interview question. This strategy provided me with an invaluable guide that helped me probe for consistent information while simultaneously maintaining open-ended and improvisational dialog with participants.

I also incorporated McNamara’s (1999) recommendations to pay attention to myself as the interviewer as a research instrument. This refers to the importance of remaining neutral during all interactions with informants, and sustaining an active understanding that the interviewer must be careful to avoid behaviors that may influence interviewee’s responses. Some examples include the use of consistent responses and prompts in all interviews and attention to background noise and unexpected interruptions that might have impaired data consistency. As part of this strategy, I also added scripted transitions between major topics and questions to the interview guide, and provided a uniform explanation of the purpose of the study at the same point in each interview in order to help maintain consistency across interviews. I elaborate on additional measures taken to reduce the negative effect of researcher bias in the Positionality subsection of the Data Collection Limitations section later in this chapter.
**Interview procedures.** The interviews were conducted by phone and WebEx, and were recorded for purposes of transcription and analysis. All interviews and all written communication with participants were conducted in English. At the beginning of interviews, participants were reminded of key points summarized in the recruiting messages that they responded to. Specifically, I reiterated that the interviews would be recorded and transcribed. Prior to beginning the actual interviews, however, participants were asked to confirm their understanding and acceptance of the recording, transcription, and anonymity aspects of the interview process. At this time, participants were also given an opportunity to ask questions or share concerns relating to the interview process.

Interviews did not begin until the participant had formally given permission to be recorded, and acknowledged both voluntary participation and an understanding of his/her option to decline to respond to specific questions or ask that the recording be stopped. In all cases, the data relating to participant identities was rendered anonymous prior to the recordings being submitted to a third party transcription service for transcription. This was accomplished through the use of an alphanumeric code key, which I used to create anonymous file names for each recording prior to submission to the transcription service.

Interviews ranged from 55-80 minutes in length and consisted of a brief introduction followed by eight questions, with three questions being the primary focus of discussion: (1) description of professional role and background; (2) description of mindfulness training and utilization; and (3) exploration of workplace results attributed to mindfulness. The interviews concluded with questions relating to the participant’s knowledge of both employer-sponsored and/or independent employee mindfulness training or activity in the workplace, which was intended to prompt further sharing of
examples, thoughts, and experiences relevant to the research topic. The final question, “What input or suggestions do you have for me about this interview? How was it for you?”, solicited the participant’s opinion of the interview process, in addition to any final comments he/she wished to add. As was the intention behind the design of this question, responses typically included additional and often lengthy sharing of examples and/or commentary relevant to the study.

**Summary.** This section discussed the participant recruitment process, in addition to the reasoning for using a qualitative data collection approach. The sample characteristics for the data used in the study were then described, after which the participant profile data points, such as country of residence, gender, professional background, and industry, were presented. These results were followed by exploration of sample diversity, focused on nationality, immigrant status, multi-national employment, and industry of specialization. Information concerning the previous employment history and roles held by participants currently occupying leadership roles, as well as those who have become consultants, was also discussed. Finally, I explored the design and use of the interview protocol. Detailed discussion of the data analysis processes utilized are explored in the following sections.

**Data Analysis Methods**

Data analysis relied primarily on inductive thematic analysis, hereafter referred to as thematic analysis. A secondary analysis was conducted deductively by coding for behaviors associated with emotional intelligence competencies utilizing the Emotional Social Competency Indicator (ESCI) measurement tool. I explain these data analysis methods in this chapter, and I discuss the results produced by these processes in Chapter
4. In total, I reviewed each of the forty-two transcripts nine times over a period of twelve months. The thematic (comprised of divergent and convergent data analysis steps) and ESCI analysis steps were completed using hard copy printouts of the transcripts and, later, electronic versions with Atlas.ti software. Atlas.ti has been specifically designed for use in qualitative research analysis, and allowed me to search the transcripts by code, keyword, or phrase to generate a number of configurable reports to use for my analysis.

Patton (2011) discusses the strength of combining qualitative interviews with a thematic data analysis approach. He indicates that open-ended observations can be used to identify general patterns and later create categories and/or dimensions of analysis as they emerge from the study of the phenomenon being investigated, which is a process I describe in detail in the sections of this chapter entitled Convergent Data Analysis and Divergent Data Analysis. Patton (2011) further emphasizes the value of in-depth and open-ended interviews in order to enhance the surfacing of embedded meanings and relationships. This strategy was particularly helpful in the identification and comparison of themes during the data analysis process, which examined perceptions, interpretations, and opinions of interviewees (Patton, 2011), many of which were not apparent during the interviews.

**Thematic and ESCI data analysis.** The extraction of findings from description-rich data is accomplished through thematic content analysis, which Patton (2011) defines as a qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort used to identify core consistencies and meanings. Boyatzis (1998) sees the detection of patterns in seemingly random information as an important part of this process, and Patton (2011) argues that these
patterns can then be recognized as themes and categories once the analyst reaches the data analysis stage.

This thematic data analysis process is also described by Valenzuela and Shrivastava (2013) as an ideal method for identifying and describing the perceived meanings, central themes, and beliefs held by interview participants concerning the subjects being investigated. I completed thematic data analysis using two distinct processes: divergent and convergent analysis. These analysis steps are described in detail in the sections titled Divergent Data Analysis and Convergent Data Analysis.

I next completed ESCI data analysis utilizing the previously mentioned ESCI measurement tool. The first step in this process included a third party inter-coder reliability check in order to validate accuracy of the coding process. Following this step, I completed an ESCI analytic coding of the transcripts, which was followed, 3.5 months later, by a second ESCI coding process completed in order to validate and review the original coding results. The thematic and ESCI data analysis processes concluded with the creation of categories, themes and sub-themes, and summarization of the empirical results of the ESCI coding activity, which is described in detail in a subsequent section.

**Divergent data analysis.** A part of the thematic data analysis process, divergent data analysis is described as a mirror analytical strategy to be conducted in association with convergent data analysis. The divergence strategy for data analysis is especially useful for examining data that does not fit dominant patterns, and this strategy is used for identifying connections between different data points in order to propose and potentially verify new information that seems likely to fit together (Patton, 2011).
Divergent analysis is also a process of breaking a topic down into component parts with the objective of obtaining insight into various aspects of the topic that may not be seen when observing it from a generally held perspective. This process examines how data elements may be related to one another in ways that are not initially obvious, which is a strategy I employed by reviewing the data multiple times through the lenses of explicit and implicit references to participant emotions, emergent themes and linguistics, for example. The divergent analysis process also includes free-flowing idea generation and can include efforts to develop conclusions informed by observations of missing information, such as what was not said during interviews or the use by participants of multiple terms to refer to the same concept or topic. Overall, this strategy is intended to facilitate a comprehensive examination of data from multiple, alternative perspectives, with the intention of identifying obscure relationships, hidden meanings, and information that is not explicitly stated in the data (Patton, 2011).

For example, when reviewing descriptions of positive behavioral changes reported by participants, I also detected a pattern of change to the participants’ levels of emotional self-awareness. Through divergent analysis, I determined that these changes to emotional self-awareness also contributed to the behavioral changes they reported, and could be reported on in a much broader, yet equally significant manner. Another example of divergent analysis occurred when I examined participant descriptions of workplace mindfulness activity, which was very situation-specific. Through divergent analysis of what participants did and did not chose to highlight, I recognized new patterns indicating the presence of both distinctly planned/structured mindfulness activity and situation dictated/as-needed mindfulness activity across the participant group.
I also assessed the results of my data analysis using Patton’s (2011, p. 467) approach for establishing substantive significance. The outcome of this process indicated that I had identified solid, coherent, and consistent data supporting my findings, and that the data adds to understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Specifically, through this process I determined that my findings were both confirmatory in relationship to existing literature, and groundbreaking in the sense that published researchers in the field of study have stated that my study is the first of its kind to be completed, and the findings therefore represent unique contributions. Finally, I determined that my findings are highly useful for the intended purpose of the study, as a result of the significant number of specific, detailed examples of improved leadership effectiveness attributed to mindfulness by participants.

During the divergent data analysis process, I generated a comprehensive list of sub-themes, themes, and thematic groups. I identified each sub-theme during a series of brainstorming sessions that also involved a review of the sub-themes and themes identified during the convergent analysis process. Additional information was drawn from notes taken during the data collection process, and review of the interview transcripts for indications of divergent patterns. These sessions took place over a period of five months, and included a two-day collaboration session led by one of my committee members who has extensive experience in this process.

I then conducted a thorough review of the output of this process and determined that several of the thematic groups required additional, more thorough analysis in order to fully understand the topics being examined. This analysis necessitated re-reading the transcripts multiple times with a focus on specific implicit and explicit content relating to
the themes and patterns I was investigating. A final list of sub-themes and themes was developed with two purposes in mind. First, I took into account the research topic being investigated and how to identify data elements that directly and indirectly contributed to a greater understanding of the research question. Secondly, I prioritized information informing the current emotional intelligence, organizational leadership, and mindfulness literature.

**Convergent data analysis.** Convergence is a process of identifying what content elements fit together, including specific data points and recurring regularities that may indicate the presence of patterns. The end result of the convergence process is the grouping of data points into sub-themes and themes, which in my case were later summarized into thematic groupings. As a part of this process, I reviewed the data multiple times, and with each iteration I converged on notable, recurrent themes and patterns.

During analysis, I used the results mapping system described by Patton (2011, p. 465) for identifying sub-themes. Specifically, once I had received the transcribed interviews, I began what I describe as an emergent content mapping process, rather than beginning with a predetermined code, sub-theme, and thematic framework for analysis. For example, during the first reading of the transcripts, I developed a list of keywords, single incidence and recurring topics, and patterns as they emerged. These lists enabled me to develop an original, content-based approach for the creation of sub-themes, themes, and thematic groupings used in both the divergent and convergent data analysis steps.
During the convergent data analysis process, for example, I created nine sub-themes representing specific types of positive leadership outcomes attributed to mindfulness by participants. I then grouped these sub-themes into one of four themes nested under a single thematic grouping. Part of the convergent data analysis process also entailed a review of thematic groupings to determine whether or not they were internally homogenous (the data in each category fit together in a meaningful way) or externally homogenous (the categories were sufficiently different to warrant being distinct categories) (Patton, 2011). This process was ongoing and was repeated each time I completed a review of the transcripts. During the convergence process, I also reviewed my thematic groupings from the standpoint of whether they represented a complete picture of the data collected, in addition to considering whether the classifications would be credible from the participants’ perspectives. Finally, I reviewed the entire sub-theme, theme, and thematic grouping process in order to ensure that a competent judge would produce a similar classification scheme from my data sample (Patton, 2011).

The convergent data analysis process also drew my attention to my own assumptions concerning the potential findings of the study by revealing factual data contradictory to what I believed to be patterns observed during the interview process. One example was an expectation on my part that the data would indicate an overall low amount of formal mindfulness training history among the interviewees. When I reviewed the sub-themes relating to this topic, I discovered that the incidence of formal training was substantially higher than I believed it to be prior to investigating this specific point through detailed analysis.
Once I had completed the convergent analysis process, I produced a series of spreadsheets with which I visualized the grouping of data by sub-themes and themes for two purposes. First, this type of visualization allowed me to identify additional potential patterns or relationships. Second, this approach enabled me to group sub-themes by topic into themes and thematic groupings, in addition to mapping out relationships between these groupings. Based on the outcome of this process, I identified several themes and sub-themes that required more thorough analysis in order to confirm that the data represented was accurately classified. As a result, I re-read the transcripts in order to confirm the accuracy of sub-themes, and to add an additional 16 sub-themes to specific thematic groups. In addition, I created seven additional thematic groupings, each representing collections of 21-72 sub-themes.

At the conclusion of the thematic analysis process, (divergent and convergent analysis) I presented a full-length draft of the results and findings produced by this activity to my dissertation committee chair. Following review and subsequent advisement, I reviewed the transcripts a final time in order to investigate an additional theme that I later added to a revised report of results and findings. Following the thematic data analysis process described in the previous section, I completed the ESCI data analysis process, which is explored in detail in the following section.

**ESCI data analysis.** Deductive (ESCI) data analysis is distinguished from inductive (thematic) data analysis by the manner in which textual data is coded. As previously described, the thematic approach, which includes divergent and convergent analysis processes, generates ideas from the data. Deductive methods, however, begin with a theoretical framework or idea, which the data is used to disprove or verify
(Holloway, 1997). The theoretical framework I used for deductive analysis in this dissertation is the Emotional Social Competency Indicator (hereinafter referred to as ESCI) measurement tool, which is supported by reliability and validity evidence via research conducted in a variety of global organizational settings (Boyatzis, 2006a & 2007; Hay Group, 2015). This tool is used to both identify the presence of specific emotional intelligence competencies (hereinafter referred to as ESCI competencies) that have been empirically linked to improved leadership performance, and to calculate measures of each ESCI competency in the individuals being assessed. The presence of ESCI competencies is determined through a coding process identifying behavioral indicators revealing the presence of specific ESCI competencies. Therefore, as a part of the ESCI data analysis process I read each transcript searching for and identifying the verbatim material to which I could assign codes indicating the presence of specific behaviors associated with each ESCI competency. The relationship between specific behavioral indicators and their respective ESCI competencies is explained in greater detail later in this section and in Section 2 of Chapter 4.

The efficacy of the ESCI tool is supported by detailed analysis of 5,700 self-assessments and 62,000 other assessments (Boyatzis, 2006a & 2007), which led to the development of the current 12 ESCI competency model. The ESCI tool I used for deductive data analysis utilizes the same behavioral indicators and competency clusters as the Goleman, Boyatzis, and Hay Group ESCI 360-degree assessment and development tool, which is described as the most validated and widely used behavioral measure of emotional and social intelligence (The Hay Group website, 2015). This tool is also described as being designed specifically for use with organizational leaders for the
purpose of identifying and measuring emotional intelligence competencies linked to increased leadership performance (The Hay Group, 2015).

The use of the ESCI tool enabled me to identify the presence of ESCI competencies in study participants by coding at the behavioral indicator level. It is important to note that, while the ESCI tool is designed for quantitative measurement of behavioral indicator levels in individuals, I only used it in this study to identify whether behavioral indicators representative of specific ESCI competencies were present in each participant. My original research design did not include use of the ESCI tool, which would have prompted me to include design elements allowing for true, 360-degree assessments required for the precise measurement of each level of ESCI behavioral indicator and ESCI competency in participants. Instead, the choice of examples shared and responses given during my study were participant-driven, and as a result, many behavioral indicators were revealed implicitly; that is, they were identified through analysis of transcript content that did not refer directly to ESCI behavioral indicators. For example, in some cases, the ESCI competency *inspirational leadership* was revealed through analysis and behavioral indicator coding of the content resulting from discussion of personal beliefs about effective leadership behavior or descriptions of related situations, rather than an interview question specifically addressing that topic.

My use of the ESCI tool for post-interview transcript coding is a strategy similar to one used in other studies aimed at obtaining in-depth understanding of participant experiences and perceptions. For example, the study by Amdurer, Boyatzis, Saatcioglu, Smith, and Taylor (2014) utilized a similar approach in assessing the long-term impact of social and cognitive intelligence competencies and GMAT scores on career and life
satisfaction and career success. In this study, one hour Critical Incident Interviews were recorded, the transcripts from which were then coded for ESCI competencies via the identification of behavioral indicators. This same process has been utilized as a part of other studies (Ryan, Emmerling & Spencer, 2009), such as Boyatzis and Ratti’s (2009) study of emotional, social, and cognitive intelligence competencies in Italian managers and leaders.

The decision to utilize the ESCI tool was based on initial review of the interview transcripts, which revealed that there was sufficient detail to enable the use of the tool. Following a training session with Dr. Annie McKee, who was involved in the original research with Goleman and colleagues leading to the development of the ESCI tool, I coded the transcripts using the ESCI behavioral indicators. A third party inter-rater reliability check of 42 randomly selected code samples was completed as a next step in order to confirm that I was coding the data correctly. The validity check reported only one case of incorrect behavioral indicator coding, and following a second training session with the aforementioned expert, I conducted another reading of all transcripts for the specific purpose of ESCI code validation.

There are four ESCI competency clusters identified by the ESCI tool: *emotional self-awareness*, *emotional self-management*, *social awareness*, and *relationship management*. Each of these ESCI competency clusters represents a collection of between one and five ESCI competencies, amounting to a total of 12 ESCI competencies being measured. The ESCI competencies are identified through the assignment of codes to transcript content, with codes representing between five and six behavioral indicators specific to each ESCI competency. There are a total of 68 behavioral indicators
functioning as the unit of analysis used by the tool. Table 6 summarizes the relationship between the ESCI competency clusters and their respective ESCI competencies, which are comprised of specific behavioral indicators, and also referred to as BI or BIs. The table also indicates the total number of behavioral indicators (BIs) used in the identification of each ESCI competency, in addition to the total number of behavioral indicators for each ESCI competency cluster (BI total), which is the total of all the behavioral indicators associated with the ESCI competencies making up each ESCI competency cluster. The specific behavioral indicators coded for each competency are described in detail in Section 2 of Chapter 4.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotinal Social Competency Indicators (ESCI) Clusters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competency Cluster: Self-awareness <strong>BI total: 6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1 of 1) Competency: Emotional self-awareness BIs: 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competency Cluster: Self-management <strong>BI total: 24</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 of 4) Competency: Achievement orientation BIs: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 of 4) Competency: Adaptability BIs: 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3 of 4) Competency: Emotional self-control BIs: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 of 4) Competency: Positive outlook BIs: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency Cluster: Social awareness <strong>BI total: 10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 of 2) Competency: Empathy BIs: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 of 2) Competency: Organizational awareness BIs: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency Cluster: Relationship management <strong>BI total: 28</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 of 5) Competency: Conflict management BIs: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 of 5) Competency: Coach and mentor BIs: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 of 5) Competency: Influence BIs: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 of 5) Competency: Inspirational leadership BIs: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 of 5) Competency: Teamwork BIs: 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6. ESCI Framework; competency clusters, competencies and behavioral indicators.*

Coding at the behavioral indicator level was completed by identifying transcript content meeting the behavioral indicator definitions set forth in the ESCI coding key, which is also detailed in Chapter 4. For example, six behavioral indicators are used to identify the ESCI competency emotional self-awareness. Identification of a section of transcript text
meeting one of those six descriptions resulted in the creation of a code associated with that specific behavioral indicator, the ESCI competency with which it is affiliated, and the ESCI competency cluster under which the ESCI competency is nested.

**Data Collection Limitations.** The limitations I anticipated prior to the study were related to purposeful sampling, researcher bias, and informants not presenting their actual views. While it is not possible to fully eliminate these risks, I took steps to minimize each of them so that they would not significantly limit the accuracy of the findings. For example, the use of a purposeful sampling strategy with a small number of participants created a risk that informants’ responses would not be representative of a majority view on the research topic. I was able to partially address this concern by recruiting a diverse participant pool, which I described previously in the Sample Characteristics section. In addition, this limitation is also minimized by the focus of this study, which is on exploratory research rather than the development of a new theory that can be generalized to a wider population. Specifically, the focus of this study is on aspects of an emerging phenomenon that requires further evidence in order to be better understood, meaning that there is value in data collected from smaller groups of early adopters of mindfulness for the purpose of improved leadership effectiveness.

Researcher bias relates directly to my role as a research instrument and how my interactions with participants and interpretations of their responses were influenced by my preexisting beliefs (Maxwell, 2012). Maxwell indicates that this bias represents two risks: the possibility of adopting a theory for making sense of data that does not apply to the research topic, and the tendency of the researcher to ignore data that does not fit his/her interpretation of how the data supports a specific hypothesis. One of the strategies
for minimizing the risk of researcher bias involves the researcher developing a higher level of awareness of their potential for bias. The development of a positionality statement, which is explored next, is one method for helping to bring the researcher’s awareness to preexisting beliefs that may influence the research process, in addition to the origin of other potential sources of bias.

**Positionality.** Gregory et al. (2009, p. 556) define positionality as “The fact that a researcher’s social, cultural and subject positions (and other psychological processes) affect: the questions they ask; how they frame them...their relations with those they research in the field or through interviews; interpretations they place on empirical evidence; access to data, institutions and outlets for research dissemination; and the likelihood that they will be listened to and heard.” Maxwell (2012) addresses positionality by emphasizing the importance of critical subjectivity, describing it as a quality of awareness where one maintains a balance between suppressing or being overwhelmed by our primary experience. The objective of developing this quality of awareness is to bring potential bias into our consciousness and incorporate it as an element of the inquiry process. Maxwell (2012) adds that, in this context personal experiences can aid in the research process, so long as one is actively aware of the way in which experiences may influence the researcher. Therefore, a part of understanding positionality involves the conscious exploration of how a researcher can “be open to recognizing how our own position both privileges and limits us” (Russell & Kelly, 2002, p. 10).

I have experienced the benefits of mindfulness in my personal and professional life, and as a result may be inclined to selectively attend to information supporting my
experiences more than I would contradictory information. During my review of the literature, I realized that the mindfulness techniques I had utilized previously may not match the techniques that have been adopted in more recent years, particularly those arising from MBSR. In addition, I discovered that I had little working knowledge of the neurological processes supporting the efficacy of mindfulness, and even less understanding of the neuroscience research summarized in Chapter 2. Therefore, prior to beginning the interview process I began a formal mindfulness training program developed from MBSR. As a result of this process, I developed new mindfulness techniques, and also discovered that I was in need of refreshing a number of the techniques I had learned decades earlier.

Through this process I also realized that I had inaccurate assumptions concerning mindfulness, which helped to bring my awareness to bias that would have negatively influenced my interpretation of, and responses to, participant comments. In addition, I developed a functional understanding of the neurological processes that occur when practicing mindfulness, which contributed to an improved awareness of what Brown et al. describe as “attention to and awareness of present events and experience” (p. 212) in their definition of mindfulness.

This new level of awareness assisted me in observing myself during interviews and data analysis, and also prompted me to engage in more detailed dialog with participants concerning their descriptions of mindfulness training and use of techniques, in addition to perceived links to leadership effectiveness. This attention to more detailed, exploratory dialog was influenced by my realization that I needed to watch for and minimize any assumptions that I might have concerning my understanding of what
participants were intending to communicate, and instead invest additional effort in providing them with the opportunity to more thoroughly express themselves and clarify their statements. This perspective was also a vital aspect of my data analysis activity, and it prompted me on multiple occasions to re-review the transcripts in order to validate and/or further analyze earlier results in an effort to confirm, challenge, and/or clarify my initial interpretations.

Prior education and professional work in the field of documentary production also assisted me in managing the risk of researcher bias in two key areas. First, during the research design stage I regularly reflected on what I had learned about the risk of personal bias influencing all aspects of documentary production, including pre-production research, field production, and post-production (editing) activities. Specifically, during my formal education I had been provided with in-depth examples of how a documentarian is in a position, for lack of a better description, to *tell the true story that they chose to*, regardless of this being a conscious decision. As a result, I had developed an understanding that a specific type of vigilance, which I employed throughout this study, on the part of the documentarian was an essential tool for minimizing this risk.

Secondly, my education in documentary production had brought me to an understanding of the four distinct, yet sometimes overlapping purposes of documentaries described by Renov (1993 p. 21), which are to record, reveal, or preserve; to persuade or promote; to analyze or interrogate; and to express. The approach that I developed for my past documentary production was to record, reveal, or preserve, and to analyze or interrogate, which is a useful strategy for identifying a story *after* all data has been
collected, and that also influenced my work on this study. Specifically, my research design was aimed at creating an environment where participants could freely tell their stories and/or share examples to completion, and in which we could engage in free-flowing follow up dialog following a course of discussion dictated by the participant.

I used a similar approach to data analysis, which was to identify sub-themes and themes that emerged from the transcripts rather than utilizing a pre-designed framework for analysis that would have a higher likelihood of being influenced by personal bias, or even potentially by ignorance of the subject matter. Finally, I allocated time for re-review of transcripts following complete write-ups of chapters three times, which was a step intended to both validate and test the results of analysis. This process also enabled me to approach the data with a fresh perspective, and it prompted me to conduct additional literature reviews on multiple occasions in order to more thoroughly understand some of the information provided by participants.

While conducting interviews I also made an effort to avoid any negative effects that may be caused by my position relative to the participants and research setting (McDowell, 1992). Specifically, I focused on the issue of the researcher occupying an insider/outsider cultural status, which is also explored in the work of Merriam et al., (2001) Rose, (1997), and England (1994). In my case, there was risk associated with a certain degree of insider status based on my past professional experience. This issue often appeared early during the interviews when participants would discuss their professional background and details of their current positions. In many cases, we would discover that I had similar types of experience from leadership positions held at large global organizations earlier in my career.
I observed that this level of discussion made it easier for the participants to provide detailed feedback, since they did not have to first explain much of the background and context supporting their examples that would have been required had I lacked an understanding of the terms, concepts, and experiences we had in common. While this insider relationship was likely helpful in creating a more open, detailed, and honest dialog, I was also careful to monitor myself for assumptions concerning my understanding of participant comments. For example, I made a point of verifying my understanding and/or interpretation of participant statements and terminology a part of my participation in interview dialog.

This activity helped to minimize the risk of misunderstanding on my part, and I also found that participants would often provide additional, and valuable information in response to my exploratory and clarifying follow up inquiries. As with other efforts to maintain critical subjectivity described in this section, it is unlikely that my attempts to minimize the potentially negative effects of insider status were completely effective. However, I believe that my awareness of this risk and my efforts to minimize it contributed to more accurate data being collected.

**Study Design and Researcher Bias.** Use of the BEI framework also provided a check against researcher bias, specifically due to the in-depth reporting by participants of their actions, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in an uninterrupted fashion. The subsequent identification of behaviors resulting from the analysis of these in-depth reports also provided a factual basis for identification of sub-themes, patterns, and evidence of emotional intelligence competencies. In addition, the volume of transcript data helped to guard against bias by providing an environment where potential patterns could be
validated or disproven based upon analysis of incidence across the transcript data.

Furthermore, as reported earlier in this section, I reviewed the transcripts multiple times for the purpose of validation of results, as well as more detailed exploration of specific sub-themes, which both added to, and disproved, patterns that I had initially identified. This activity also provided me with time to reflect on detailed participant examples in order to identify the varying contexts in which mindfulness was described as having contributed to improved leadership effectiveness, and whether or not the participant’s descriptions of this relationship were fully supported by their responses.

The question set utilized for the study also incorporated strategies for reducing this risk of researcher bias through the wording of the questions. Specifically, the questions were designed to initiate discussion that would reveal new and unexpected information, rather than to further explore and potentially validate my preexisting beliefs about the research topic and how data may support them. I also used an active listening and exploratory follow-up technique in the interviews in order to further understand unique or unexpected statements, and participants were not only allowed to talk as long as they felt was necessary, but also were encouraged to add to and clarify their comments. A number of participants commented on these aspects of the interview process, indicating an appreciation for being allowed and encouraged to freely tell their stories and explain their thoughts rather than responding to yes, no, or tightly scripted short answer questions.

I also addressed the risk of researcher bias through the rigorous coding and data analysis steps described earlier in this chapter. These steps helped to alleviate any negative impact created by this risk through third party validation and repeated testing of
themes and patterns for accuracy. I realize that this process is by no means a comprehensive solution to all issues of researcher bias; however, I also realize that maintaining an active awareness of this risk factor, as was the case while I conducted the data collection and analysis steps, can be a very useful strategy for minimizing its effects.

Finally, my strategy for minimizing the risk of issues related to informant honesty relied on elements of the question design that discreetly explored the same key topics through multiple questions. For example, probes for examples of improved leadership effectiveness attributed to mindfulness were incorporated into four of the eight questions, and two other questions often led participants back to that topic. In addition, exploration of the participants’ training and use of mindfulness was discreetly designed to be a secondary validation of their eligibility for participation in the study, specifically to confirm through examples that they were in fact trained mindfulness practitioners.

The final question used in the interview protocol created a safe opportunity for participants to comment on the interview process itself and to share any comments that they felt were applicable to the conversation. While these steps provide no guarantee of participant honesty, it is also worth noting that during the course of nine readings of the transcripts, I found no indications of participant discomfort or misrepresentation. On the contrary, five participants openly discussed issues relating to confidentiality and indicated a feeling of comfort prior to sharing highly sensitive personal and organizational information. Examples shared in this context included internal organizational problems, details concerning the personalities of senior executives, and in-depth descriptions of mental health issues.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided a detailed description of the research methods I utilized in the data collection and analysis steps of this research study. I first presented my reasoning behind the selection of a qualitative research design, followed by an in-depth description of my participant selection and recruitment procedures. I then discussed my data collection methods and detailed the development and use of my interview protocol.

Next, I provided a detailed discussion of the two methods of data analysis utilized—thematic and ESCI. This discussion included descriptions of the divergent and convergent data analysis steps that comprised the thematic data analysis step, and the use of the ESCI tool for deductive data analysis was described in detail. Exploration of the data analysis methods was followed by a discussion of the study’s limitations, specifically purposeful sampling, positionality, researcher bias, and the risk of informants not presenting their actual views. Each of these sections contributes to a comprehensive, complete description of the research methods utilized for data collection and analysis.

The results of the data analysis activity described in this chapter are discussed in detail in the following chapter (Chapter 4), which is followed by an interpretation of those results and a discussion of the findings from this research in Chapter 5. This dissertation is concluded with discussion of the study’s contribution to the literature and recommendations for future research in Chapter 6.
Chapter 4: Results

In the previous chapter, I described the steps used to gather data in this study, as well as the research methods I used for data analysis. This chapter presents a detailed review of the results of this study based on thematic and ESCI data analysis of participant perceptions of the influence of mindfulness on their effectiveness as leaders. In Chapter 5, I present my findings. These findings are based on the data analysis results that follow, and are informed by the literature referenced in Chapter 2. In Chapter 6, I discuss the contributions made by this study to the literature, in addition to my recommendations for future research.

The results of thematic data analysis are presented in Section 1 of this chapter, titled Results of Thematic Analysis. The ESCI data analysis results are reported in Section 2 of this chapter, titled ESCI Analysis, Results of Coding for ESCI Emotional Intelligence Competencies. Section 3, titled Alignment of Results from Thematic Analysis with Results of ESCI Analysis, highlights additional results of thematic analysis that align with and support the results of the ESCI analysis process, but are not presented in Section 1 due to a lower incidence in the transcripts than the three major themes explored there. It should also be noted that the thematic analysis results were identified prior to the ESCI coding of the transcripts, and as a result emerged from a transcript analysis process that was not influenced by the ESCI 360-degree assessment framework. Although thematic analysis was conducted without the influence of a specific theoretical framework, in order to create consistency in reporting the study results in each of the three sections that follow are presented using an emotional intelligence framework.
1. Themes and Sub-Themes Emerging from Thematic Analysis

This section presents results of the thematic data analysis process. Thematic analysis utilizes an approach to reasoning that is based on the patterns and themes emerging from raw data (Patton, 2011). The first step I followed in this process was the identification of individual content elements via the process that is described in Chapter 3. Sub-themes were later identified through repeated examination of transcripts and organized into sets of themes and thematic groupings. Thematic groupings were created based on the relationship of the data to the research question and the potential contributions of the data to the existing literature. As Table 1 presents in detail later in this section, I found that three major themes emerged from the data. These themes focused on participant reports of positive changes to awareness and behavior contributing to both the development of leadership competencies and specific emotional intelligence competencies also linked to improved leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, the examples of changes to awareness and behavior provided by participants included descriptions that may be evidence of mindfulness practice contributing to the development of both state and trait mindfulness, as well as emotional intelligence traits linked to improved leadership effectiveness.

**Results of Thematic Analysis**

The following Table (1) summarizes the major themes and sub-themes reported in this section. The columns on the right side of the table indicate the number of times a reference to each sub-theme was identified in the transcripts, the number of transcripts in which the respective sub-themes were identified, and the percentage of transcripts in which the same sub-themes were found. The total number of references to specific sub-themes associated with each of the themes being reported is displayed in the row.
containing the content *Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts*. It should be noted that this section does not report all of the sub-themes and themes identified during the thematic data analysis process. Rather, only themes and sub-themes found in 85% or more of the transcripts, and that relate directly to the research question, are presented.

Finally, in order to minimize redundancy, definitions of the emotional intelligence competency clusters referenced in this chapter are presented in this section (1), while individual emotional intelligence competencies are defined in the ESCI analysis section (2), since these sections also contain discussion of the ESCI emotional intelligence competency identification process used in this study.
### Results of Thematic Analysis

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| **Themes Related to Emotional Intelligence Competencies** |                                      |                                      |                                      |
| **Theme 2: Self-Awareness** | References                           | #                                    | %                                    |
| 2.1 Sub-theme: Emotional Self-Awareness | 244                                  | 42                                   | 100                                  |
| Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts: | 244                                  |                                      |                                      |

| **Theme 3: Self-Management** | References                           | #                                    | %                                    |
| 3.1 Sub-theme: Emotional Self-Control | 175                                  | 41                                   | 98                                    |
| Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts: | 175                                  |                                      |                                      |

| **Theme 4: Social Awareness** | References                           | #                                    | %                                    |
| 4.1 Sub-theme: Empathy | 378                                  | 42                                   | 100                                  |
| 4.2 Sub-theme: Organizational Awareness | 118                                  | 37                                   | 88                                    |
| Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts: | 496                                  |                                      |                                      |

| **Theme 5: Relationship Management** | References                           | #                                    | %                                    |
| 5.1 Sub-theme: Influence | 199                                  | 40                                   | 95                                    |
| 5.2 Sub-theme: Conflict Management | 159                                  | 38                                   | 90                                    |
| Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts: | 358                                  |                                      |                                      |

| **Themes Related to Improved Leadership Effectiveness** |                                      |                                      |                                      |
| **Theme 6: Development of New and Existing Leadership Capabilities** | References                           | #                                    | %                                    |
| 6.1 Sub-theme: Improved leadership effectiveness | 356                                  | 41                                   | 98                                    |
| 6.2 Sub-theme: Adoption of effective leadership behaviors | 340                                  | 41                                   | 98                                    |
| 6.3 Sub-theme: Improved cognitive function | 63                                   | 37                                   | 88                                    |
| Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts: | 759                                  |                                      |                                      |

| **Theme 7: Improved Interpersonal Competencies** | References                           | #                                    | %                                    |
| 7.1 Sub-theme: More effective relationships | 141                                  | 36                                   | 86                                    |
| 7.2 Sub-theme: More effective communication | 113                                  | 38                                   | 90                                    |
| Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts: | 254                                  |                                      |                                      |

*Table 1. Results of Thematic Data Analysis.*

The data summarized in Table 1 is discussed in greater detail in the remainder of this section. Each major theme is explored in subsections matching the structure of Table 1 via the respective themes and supporting sub-themes. A portion of Table 1 is reproduced
for the reader’s convenience at the beginning of each of these subsections. Finally, note that only sub-themes identified in 85% or more of the transcripts are presented in this section, and therefore quotations used for illustrative purposes are also representative of comments made by the majority of study participants in reference to the sub-theme.

**Fundamental Changes to Awareness and Behavior**

Theme 1: Descriptions of Personal Transformation

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<td>1.1 Sub-theme: Profound Change to Self</td>
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*Table 2. Theme 1, Descriptions of Personal Transformation, Sub-theme 1.1 Profound Change to Self.*

My review of the transcripts revealed extensive examples of fundamental change described by all participants, which I summarize with a theme titled *descriptions of personal transformation.* Participants described a variety of specific types of changes to awareness and behaviors throughout the transcripts; however, they also made 225 references to the broader theme of *descriptions of personal transformation.* Due to the preponderance of transcript content indicating a fundamental relationship between mindfulness and extensive changes contributing to leadership effectiveness, and the unifying relationship of theme 1 to each of the major themes and sub-themes presented later in this section, I felt that this theme should be presented as the first result described in the study.

1.1 Sub-theme: Profound Change to Self. Examples of this sub-theme include descriptions of changes to fundamental beliefs and perceptions, such as “I find that my
mindfulness actually lives and breathes in everything that I do… It really is my truth” (Participant #42, 2015), and “…my practice is very important to me. I hold it at the foundation of my being… Without it, I don't feel centered. And I don't feel much of a sense of self” (Participant #34, 2015). The following quotation further illustrates the types of fundamental and profound changes described by participants. In this case the participant is describing how mindfulness brought him to a new awareness of his internal emotional states, which then enabled him to manage the effects of those emotional states on his leadership behaviors. In addition, this quotation may also indicate the development of trait mindfulness and the emotional intelligence trait emotional self-awareness:

In the past, it was… just kind of like there's this maelstrom. And you're in it, and just it's chaos… but [now] I'm observing that, acknowledging it… I don't need to get sucked into that and have that actually define my experience... It's like I stepped out of one person with a whole set of fears and doubts and anger and stories, and into really an entirely different person, like my consciousness was transferred over… While those are [still] present, they're not dominating my experience. And before, not only were they dominating my experience, but I wasn't even aware that they were there… So I couldn't make any choices. Words like transformative and things like that seem insufficient. It really is just an entirely different person, and the experience of being an entirely different person. (Participant #35, 2015)

This participant then described how his transformative experience had improved his leadership capabilities. Some of the examples he provided included significant reductions in conflict and an improved ability to manage workload and work-related stress.

Varying degrees of these types of fundamental changes to personal experience were reported by all participants. As the following quotation indicates, participants were frequently able to not only articulate significant changes to self
but also put them in a comparative, before/after mindfulness intervention context:

“I think that I was more self-conscious before [mindfulness training and practice]. More worried about, will I do or say the right thing? And I'm now so much more comfortable with myself.” (Participant #33, 2015). This statement was accompanied by descriptions of a significant improvement in the participant’s ability to improvise effectively in response to project requirements, rather than being dependent upon scripted and structured responses as she previously had. In her discussion of the way in which mindfulness had changed her, the participant also described having become able to accept aspects of her organization’s culture that she had previously found to be negative and demoralizing.

When describing the effect of the changes produced by mindfulness on their leadership behaviors, participants also provided examples of how the changes to self added value within the context of improved leadership effectiveness, as the following quotation illustrates:

I think it's easier to lead. I think the more a person is comfortable with themselves, and comfortable with what they know, or in a lot of cases for me in this job, every day is what I don't know. And just being in a present, more calm place of mind I think that it's easier to see what's really important and what's not. And... see what the bigger picture is and what I'm driving to from a bigger picture perspective. So I definitely think it's [mindfulness] had a huge, positive impact on my success, there's no question about that. (Participant #27, 2015)

This participant accompanied the previous quotation with examples of mindfulness having improved her leadership behavior relating to employee engagement. Specifically, the participant mentioned improved team cohesion and engagement resulting from more attention on her part to the emotional needs of her staff. The participant also provided an
example of demonstrating an improved ability to manage personal bias and focus on the
critical facts of a politically charged issue, which resulted in more effective interaction
with senior management on her part.

References to improvements in leadership effectiveness were attributed by
participants to fundamental, positive changes to awareness of self and others, leading to
the conscious development of specific behaviors intended to improve their leadership
effectiveness. In all cases, descriptions of changes contributing to improved leadership
behavior were provided in the context of having been significantly influenced by
mindfulness. The presence of references to profound changes to self illustrated by the
previous quotations is also revealed throughout the remainder of this section via the
themes and sub-themes explored next, which explore descriptions of specific types of
changes and results.

**Themes Related to Emotional Intelligence Competencies**

Theme 2: Self-Awareness

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*Table 3. Themes Related to Emotional Intelligence Competencies, Theme 2, Self-Awareness, Sub-Theme 2.1 Emotional Self-Awareness.*

Theme 2 aligns with the emotional intelligence competency cluster Self-Awareness,
which focuses on the ability of individuals to recognize and understand their own
feelings, in addition to the impact of their feelings on others (Goleman et al., 2002). Self-
awareness also relates to self-confidence and accurate self-assessment (Goleman, 2000).
My review of the transcripts identified the sub-theme emotional self-awareness 244
times. My exploration of participant descriptions of the manner in which mindfulness influenced leadership effectiveness via the development of emotional self-awareness follows.

2.1. Sub-Theme: Emotional Self-Awareness. This topic was mentioned specifically by all participants and was also revealed implicitly through a significant number of in-depth descriptions of changes to awareness and behaviors that are explored in later sections. For example, when referring to the effect of mindfulness on the development of an improved level of emotional self-awareness, a participant described both a change in emotional self-awareness and an improved ability to observe how this change had a positive impact on his emotional self-management capabilities: “Now I can really compact the quality of awareness, and look at the emotions coming and going just in front of me. And not be swept away by them” (Participant #1, 2015).

Participants also provided detailed descriptions of mindfulness influencing a stronger level of emotional self-awareness that they linked to improved leadership capabilities: “…I'll say in the middle of a meeting; hold on for a second. I just noticed my fear of irrelevance took over. And I'll actually share that with people. And by doing that, it frees me up” (Participant #30, 2015). Although in the previous quotation the participant reports value arising from openly expressing his emotional reaction with others in the workplace, examples provided by other participants indicated that in many cases conscious awareness of internal emotional reactions and/or states was not shared. In such cases, however, participants also described the positive manner in which their improved level of emotional self-awareness contributed to more effective monitoring and regulation of their emotions, leading to more effective decisions and workplace behaviors. In
addition, participants credited mindfulness with helping them to consciously differentiate between specific types of previously indiscernible negative emotions such as fear, worry, and self-doubt. This new level of emotional self-awareness was also described as being helpful in gaining a better understanding of the triggers for these and other counterproductive emotional responses.

Participant descriptions of improved emotional self-awareness included references to the development of improved levels of physical awareness as well. This discussion included the awareness of a relationship between specific physical sensations and emotional states, as exemplified by the following quotation referring to how, through mindfulness, the participant became better able to identify when she was becoming anxious and stressed: “I found that I hold my breath a lot when I get anxious… My left trapezoid feels tense… The sensations in my stomach.” (Participant #9, 2015). It is also worth mentioning the reports from participants that, via improved levels of self-awareness, mindfulness improved their ability to manage depression, improved the quality of their sleep, reduced utilization of medication, and helped with the management of chronic illnesses.

Finally, participants shared reports of mindfulness contributing to an improved ability to observe, understand, and subsequently more effectively manage specific aspects of their own cognitive function, emotional state, and physical health. For example, reports revealed that mindfulness aided participants in being able to identify early signs of negative emotional and physical reactions such as stress and pain, thereby enabling them to take earlier corrective action. The following section addresses these results in greater detail.
The theme Self-Management aligns with the emotional intelligence competency cluster of the same name. This theme relates to an individual’s ability to control impulsive behavior and negative emotions in daily and stressful situations (Goleman et al., 2002). Self-management also encompasses mental focus, achievement orientation, adaptability, and transparency (Goleman, 2000). My review of the transcripts identified one sub-theme that is also included in the definition for the emotional intelligence competency Emotional Self-Management: 3.1 Emotional Self-Control, which is described next.

3.1. Sub-Theme: Emotional Self-Control. Participants referenced this sub-theme 175 times in the context of being able to better manage negative emotional reactions in themselves. The ability to reduce such reactions was described as having a profoundly positive effect on key aspects of leadership effectiveness, such as decision-making, reduction in the judgment of others, regulation of fear and worry, and an improved ability to assess situations free of emotionally influenced bias. Participants also mentioned that improvements to their emotional self-control capabilities had helped them to become more understanding of negative emotional reactions exhibited by others, which in turn helped them identify opportunities to be less reactive themselves, in addition to developing an improved ability to recognize the effect of their own behaviors on those around them. In addition, participants described an improved ability to detect and respond
to unexpected events and/or navigate workplace obstacles such as resource limitations, crises, and issues created by poor leadership. Specific examples shared by participants included an improved ability to accept previously anxiety-producing situations, and improved abilities to identify and manage stress.

Participants specifically mentioned a reduction in emotional reactivity as a result of mindfulness and also described improved interpersonal relationships resulting from their ability to be consciously aware of and able to manage emotional reactivity, as the following quotation illustrates when referring to the effect of mindfulness:

I would say it's made me less reactive to my judgments and more thoughtful and compassionate, both with myself and other people. It's made me more mindful not only of what I'm reacting to, but because I have that insight about myself, I'm also more able to notice when other people are being reactive. (Participant #30, 2015)

As exemplified by the following quotation, participants also reported developing an improved ability to regulate their judgmental thoughts, in addition to having a better understanding of how such thoughts were detrimental to their leadership effectiveness.

…if my director does something that I'm not happy about, instead of just becoming reactive to that, maybe being judgmental, I'm more inclined to say to myself, well, are you really sure if you understand what her motive is? What do you think might be going on with this person?... And being, being more aware of that enables me to respond in way that's more effective. (Participant #33, 2015)

The participant then described the way in which mindfulness had helped her to become consciously aware of her reactions to specific triggers in the workplace. Following this improvement in her emotional self-awareness capabilities, the participant began to recognize the counterproductive manner in which her co-workers responded to her when she exhibited certain behaviors. With the assistance of mindfulness, the participant
developed a series of emotional self-control techniques that enabled her to stop negative and potentially self-defeating reactions before they were expressed, in addition to developing a greater understanding of why she responded in such a way. During this description the participant also shared examples of improved effectiveness that she attributed to these changes, such as improved conflict management capabilities, and interpersonal competence in a training and supervisory context.

The study transcripts also contained examples of mindfulness having contributed to an improved ability to pause, listen, and “be present” in situations that would previously have triggered negative emotional reactions, as illustrated by the following participant quotation:

…the ability to be able to pause and not react in the heat of the moment. And instead, to be able to look underneath the feeling of anger, irritability… to see what is that really tapping into… that enables me to respond in way that's more effective. (Participant #33, 2015)

Reports such as the previous quotation linked this level of mindfulness-influenced emotional self-control to many of the improvements in leadership behavior presented in this section, such as improved empathy, communication, and the ability to more effectively influence others. As the previous quotation exemplifies, improved emotional self-control was reported to minimize the interference of subconscious and habitually negative emotional reactions, a positive development which created the opportunity for participants to engage with others in a more meaningful and effective way. Furthermore, participants indicated that this new level of emotional self-control helped them, through minimization of both positive and negative emotional reactions, to recognize internal and
external bias, and irrelevant political factors that distract from effective decision-making and other leadership activities.

Participants also credited mindfulness with contributing to an improved capacity for consciously managing emotional reactions to stressful situations. For instance, one participant noted, “…the outside conditions aren't something that we can control. That has to be accepted as given” (Participant #22, 2015), and another stated “…you don't want to cling to your values forever, if it's not gonna help the situation… If you want to move forward you have to let go to do that” (Participant #3, 2015). In these and other cases, participants indicated that their ability to rapidly recover from stressful experiences, accept sub-optimal circumstances, and adapt quickly had been positively influenced by mindfulness, which may also indicate trait level development of the ESCI competency adaptability.

Other examples of mindfulness improving emotional self-control during distracting and emotionally overwhelming experiences included successful departmental management during massive lay offs, preventing the loss of angry key clients, and maintaining production during highly volatile economic circumstances. Furthermore, participants also indicated that mindfulness helped them develop a more effective ability to manage negative emotions, which contributed to improved cognitive function and played a role in more effective decision-making. Finally, participant discussion of mindfulness contributing to improved emotional self-control also included reports of reductions in ineffective effort, which participants attributed to an improved ability to accurately choose between necessary versus politically or emotionally motivated activities. In addition, participants credited their increased capacity for emotional self-
control with having contributed to more effective interpersonal capabilities, which is explored in the following sub-theme.

Theme 4: Social Awareness

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Table 5. Themes Related to Emotional Intelligence Competencies, Theme 1, Social Awareness, Sub-Themes 4.1 Empathy and 4.2 Organizational Awareness.

Social Awareness aligns with the emotional intelligence competency cluster of the same name and relates to an individual’s capacity for recognizing and appropriately interpreting nonverbal cues and the emotions of others (Goleman, 2000). Social awareness is also described by Goleman (2000) as including an ability to build and manage relationships, leadership roles, and service orientation. My review of the transcripts identified two sub-themes that are also included in the social awareness competency cluster: 4.1 Empathy and 4.2 Organizational awareness, which are described next.

4.1 Sub-Theme: Empathy. Direct and indirect references to the development of feelings of empathy towards peers, superiors, and subordinates appeared 123 times in the interview transcripts, and descriptions of an improved awareness of the feelings of others as a result of mindfulness were referenced 255 times. Participants specifically reported observing these changes in themselves; however, they also shared rich descriptions of these realizations leading to positive changes in the way they perceived and interacted with others.
Discussion of empathy focused on how improved recognition and understanding of the feelings and needs of others contributed to improved team leadership effectiveness as well: “I think I just have a better capacity to empathize and to kind of lead by example” (Participant #27, 2015). The following quotation further exemplifies the relationship between empathy and leadership effectiveness shared by participants in the study:

…if you have a mind set where you really honestly care about other people, what they're feeling, what they're thinking, you will be much more attuned to that… feel the tension that somebody has maybe a little bit more. Just being a little bit more perceptive. (Participant #7, 2015)

Participant #7 elaborated on the positive effect that being more empathetic had on his leadership behavior, describing being better able to recognize both the triggers and signs of stress, anxiety, and confusion in his subordinates and peers. This positive change in awareness of others was then linked to improved effectiveness in anticipating and minimizing triggers during stressful events, in addition to being able to identify when he could help others calm themselves and focus on workplace requirements. Participants also discussed the way in which they believed improved empathy helped them to be more effective, as the following quotation illustrates:

You can understand through empathy what is the other person's concern and you can influence by helping. You know, in business you are supposed to create win-win scenarios… If you are able to focus your mind, and you are able to understand the needs and business requirements of the other person, you can create opportunities for them. (Participant #21, 2015)

The previous quotation illustrates a type of example provided by numerous participants focusing on the role played by improved empathy in helping them to connect interpersonally and understand the needs of others in an organizational context. In such
examples, participants revealed an improved ability to identify not only key business requirements, but also the individual needs of others relating to those requirements. For example, participant descriptions of improved levels of empathy included references to an improved ability to perceive and accept the perspectives of others, in addition to engaging in new and more collaborative behaviors.

Discussion of empathy also touched on an improved awareness and acceptance of what emotional factors may drive coworkers’ behaviors and decisions. This awareness and acceptance was, in turn, credited with reducing the incidence of participant’s negative reactions and judgments, thereby improving the quality of interactions with others. The following quotation provides an example of how the sub-theme appeared in transcripts: “…what mindfulness has showed me… is that being bullish outwardly and taking too aggressive of an approach will immediately shut people down” (Participant #18, 2015). This quotation effectively summarizes the type of realization described by participants concerning the value of becoming more aware of the emotional states and needs of others. Specifically, participants linked improved levels of empathy in this context to contributing to an improved ability to exhibit emotional self-control in order to more effectively respond to the interpersonal cues of those with whom they are interacting.

Participants also attributed a change in their beliefs concerning effective leadership behavior to improved empathy, specifically referencing the development of an appreciation of the importance of the way in which their subordinates perceived them as a leader. These descriptions also appeared during discussion of improved awareness of the
formal and informal agendas, power structures, and political issues at play in their workplace environments, which is explored next.

4.2 Sub-theme: Organizational awareness. Participants demonstrated an awareness of the complex relationships and cultural intricacies of their workplace environments through detailed descriptions. This level of awareness is also referred to as social awareness by emotional intelligence literature, and evidence relating specifically to that subject is presented in Section 2. Participant references to an improved capacity for organizational awareness linked to mindfulness referenced an improved understanding of the many, often discrete cultural factors at work in their places of employment. For instance, a participant said, “I think that there is an appetite in an environment like this where you've got a lot of different people grinding a lot of different agendas to find teams and individuals that can bring people together” (Participant #18, 2015). The participant shared this comment in his discussion of how mindfulness had helped him to consciously recognize the complexities of his organization when developing and executing more effective growth strategies for his team, activity which contributed significantly to the advancement of his career.

Participants also revealed recognition of the sometimes negative realities of their workplace environment, as illustrated by the following quotation, which accompanied the participant’s discussion of how mindfulness had helped her to recognize and accept such issues:

It's not a real warm and friendly work environment, overall. It's a very aggressive work environment. There's a lot of bullying that goes on in the workplace. There's a lot of pushing people very, very hard, asking them to do more and more and more all the time and that sort of thing, with not a lot of sympathy for the worker. (Participant #33, 2015)
Participant #33 shared this information in the context of how mindfulness contributed to her ability to first consciously identify, and subsequently more effectively manage her reactions to workplace factors that contributed to negative emotional responses on her part. She made these comments in the context of contributing to leadership effectiveness, specifically improvements in her ability to control judgmental thinking in order to more effectively minimize her own bias and better understand the true intentions of others. I identified a total of 118 incidents of this sub-theme in the transcripts, which also indicated an improved understanding of the participants’ comprehension of and strategies for managing relationships. This topic is explored in greater detail next.

Theme 5: Relationship Management

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<td>Total # References for this theme identified in transcripts: 358</td>
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Table 6. Themes Related to Emotional Intelligence Competencies, Theme 5, Relationship Management and Sub-Themes 5.1 Influence and 5.2 Conflict Management.

Relationship Management aligns with the emotional intelligence competency cluster of the same name and focuses on the ability to influence and develop others through activities such as organizational change, conflict management, team building, and inspirational leadership (Goleman, 2000). Relationship management also encompasses the ability to effectively interpret and respond to the emotions of others (Goleman et al., 2002). My review of the transcripts identified two sub-themes that are included in the Relationship Management competency cluster: 5.1 Influence, and 5.2, Conflict Management, each of which are explored next.
5.1. Sub-Theme: Influence. References to mindfulness helping participants become more effective at influencing others in the workplace appeared 199 times in the transcripts. Descriptions of improved capabilities in this area of leadership referenced a new understanding of the relationship between better quality interpersonal relationships and influence, such as “…you can connect with them on different levels. And therefore influence them better” (Participant #28, 2015), and highlighted participants’ realizations about the importance of an awareness of others’ needs and interests. Participants specifically linked mindfulness to their improved ability to identify and align with the needs of others, as the following quotation illustrates:

… I was more aware about the importance of really understanding the needs of the ones who… directly respond to me to know what they were feeling, their problems, their difficulties, and how could I help them in order to improve their performance. Then they can help me and together we could achieve even better results. (Participant #40, 2015)

As the previous quotation indicates, participant descriptions of influence focused on an improved capacity for identifying opportunities for mutually beneficial interactions, rather than providing examples of purely self serving or manipulative behavior. On the contrary, discussion of the way in which mindfulness contributed to improved influence capabilities also indicated participants’ realization that sincere interest in fulfilling others’ needs was an effective basis for becoming more influential. In addition to crediting mindfulness with an improved ability to recognize and effectively act on opportunities to influence others, participants also linked these improvements to the development of more effective abilities to manage interpersonal conflict, which is explored next.

5.2. Sub-Theme: Conflict Management. I identified 159 references to this sub-theme in the transcripts. Participants provided in-depth examples detailing specific situations
where mindfulness improved their ability to manage interpersonal conflict, enabling them to more effectively navigate and/or avoid such situations. Specifically, participants described how mindfulness helped them become more effective at detecting and suppressing conflict responses in themselves: “…so the ability to work with conflict, de-escalate to not be as afflicted by it myself” (Participant #35, 2015). They also reported improvements in their ability to collaborate with others that resulted from improvement in their capacity to manage conflict: “I would say dealing with conflict comes to mind. I think I’m much more collaborative with finding common ground than I used to be” (Participant #31, 2015).

In the previous example participant #31 reported that mindfulness had helped bring his awareness to the way that he interacted with multi-disciplinary healthcare teams when designing cancer treatment programs. Specifically, the participant indicated that he was able to recognize the risk of impairment to his own success created by focusing too heavily on a personal agenda versus one that would serve the needs of his department. As a result, the participant changed his strategy for interacting with others and began investing more time in developing his ability to identify the emotional needs of others, which he indicated led to not only a reduction in conflict, but also more supportive and collaborative behavior on the part of his subordinates, peers and superiors.

Participants also credited an improved capacity for conflict management for contributing to improved effectiveness in understanding and managing difficult employees. Discussion of this topic addressed both improved ability to inspire productivity from low performing or problematic employees (“…they [the participant’s superiors] trust me more, give me more responsibilities in handling people that
sometimes are difficult to handle...because I'm more at ease in handling emotions” (Participant #1, 2015)) and recognition for being more capable in leading such employees (“I've been assigned more difficult people because I'm just regarded as somebody who can handle difficult people, who can handle stress” (Participant #15, 2015)).

Participants’ descriptions of mindfulness improving their conflict management capabilities also linked these developments to improved patience and willingness to listen. For instance, a participant said, “I've seen there is a lot to be gained from the patience to work and be with all the dynamics that happen, day after day, week after week... working through conflict with a group as it happens, and sticking with it” (Participant #23, 2015). Finally, participants also described an improved ability to manage conflicts as they arise, as the following quotation illustrates:

...he's screaming at me. So, in the past I might have hung up the phone, or screamed back, or cried, depending on my mood. But today... I was able to say, ‘Why are you screaming at me? Please don't scream at me’ in a very calm voice... ‘Let's focus on what's really going on here’... Recognize and appreciate this person's perspective and apologize. (Participant #18, 2015)

In the case of the previous two quotations, both participants revealed an awareness of the importance of listening to others during conflict situations. Participant #23 described mindfulness having helped him develop a new appreciation for allowing co-workers time to fully express themselves, which also required him to listen attentively. Furthermore, participant #18 specifically mentioned that prior to mindfulness training she would have lost focus when being screamed at; however, as a result of mindfulness intervention, she developed emotional self-management capabilities that enabled her to focus attentively on what may have triggered a conflict response in the other party. These changes in
awareness were also linked to participants’ improved ability to recognize and understand the effect of their own behaviors on the quality of interpersonal interaction.

**Summary.** Following the exploration of sub-theme 1.1, Profound Change to Self, the remaining six sub-themes discussed up to this point have been presented using the emotional intelligence competency cluster and competency model selected for this study and defined in Chapter 2. As reported in my discussion of research methods in Chapter 3, I did not initially review the transcripts through the lens of emotional intelligence competencies. Rather, my original review of the data was intended to identify the key points and sub-themes provided by participants in an emergent, unstructured, and unbiased manner. As a result, I also identified five sub-themes that did not align with the emotional intelligence competency cluster and competency model utilized earlier in this section and in the remainder of this chapter. As Table 1 summarizes, I grouped these sub-themes under two major themes, each focusing on aspects of improved leadership effectiveness. I discuss these themes and sub-themes in the following section.

**Themes Related to Improved Leadership Effectiveness**

Theme 6: Development of New and Existing Leadership Competencies

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Sub-theme: Improved Leadership Effectiveness</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Sub-theme: Adoption of Effective Leadership Behaviors</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.3 Sub-theme: Improved Cognitive Function</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88</td>
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</tbody>
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Total # references for this theme identified in transcripts: 759

*Table 7. Themes Related to Improved Leadership Effectiveness, Theme 6, Development of New and Existing Leadership Competencies, Sub-themes 6.1 Improved Leadership Effectiveness, 6.2 Adoption of Effective Leadership Behaviors, and 6.3 Improved Cognitive Function.*

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Unlike the themes and sub-themes discussed in the previous section, the two themes and five sub-themes explored in this section focus on specific examples of improved leadership effectiveness supported by examples of positive workplace results and the development of new behaviors contributing to improved leadership effectiveness. These results include specific outcomes such as successful projects, and the development of leadership behaviors that participants also linked to both specific and general improvements in leadership effectiveness.

6.1. Sub-Theme: Improved Leadership Effectiveness. This sub-theme focuses on participant descriptions of positive leadership results, and/or workplace outcomes they attribute to mindfulness. These descriptions are distinct from specific examples of changes to awareness and behavior linked to improvements in overall leadership effectiveness, which is a topic explored specifically in sub-theme 6.2. I found 356 references to sub-theme 6.1, identifying reports and indications of both specific results, such as being better able to moderate an important series of pre-merger meetings, and examples of ongoing improvement, such as developing the competencies needed to transform the organizational culture of a failing multinational division.

When asked for examples supporting their attribution of improvements to leadership effectiveness to mindfulness, participants provided numerous in-depth descriptions; however, they also often initially responded with broader statements. For instance, Participant #32 (2015), after reporting that mindfulness had “a moderately profound effect” on his overall leadership effectiveness, stated that mindfulness “has provided me a tool or a set of tools to be more effective as a leader.” The participant then
provided supporting examples; however, his choice to first emphasize the fundamental improvement to his overall leadership competency was not uncommon.

For example, participant #37 provided specific details concerning the financial turn-around of two international divisions for which he was responsible as a senior executive. When asked if mindfulness had influenced his level of effectiveness in this role, he replied, “Absolutely… It has been incredibly significant… [On] the business side, I've found mindfulness to be incredibly powerful and incredibly useful” (2015). When specifically discussing how mindfulness influenced results, the participant described his ability to focus on the development of new perspectives and collaboration skills in his leadership team:

So, the majority of work that I did was actually with those management folks to help them to see other possibilities and other ways of working that they hadn't previously considered, thought of, or didn't have the skills to implement… (Participant #37, 2015)

This quotation refers to an in-depth description of how the participant had changed the culture of his management teams in order to create an environment of interdepartmental resource sharing, collaboration, and more effective peer relationships. As is the case with other examples provided by participants, the successful execution of these strategies was attributed in part to mindfulness. Specifically, the participant indicated that he engaged in group and individual mentoring activities designed to develop improved levels of empathy, emotional self-awareness, social skills, and emotional self-management in his subordinates, having already experienced the benefits of developing these competencies himself.
The following quotation illustrates another example of improved leadership effectiveness attributed to mindfulness. In this case, the example touches on both a specific outcome and the secondary benefit of an increase in the interest level of others within the organization in joining the participant’s team:

Our team did really well this year and all my people stacked really high in talent planning… and I'm glad I don't have any shortage of people trying to come over to my team. (Participant #25, 2015)

In her detailed description of the events leading to the results that she reported, the participant described her introduction to mindfulness and her incorporation of the techniques into her regular leadership behaviors. She then elaborated on how mindfulness had provided clarity in her decision-making processes and helped her improve her interpersonal interaction. Finally, the participant shared examples of being sought out for advisement by peers and superiors, an outcome which she also stated had resulted from changes to awareness and behaviors that she attributed to mindfulness.

Participant #32 provided a similar example, adding detail concerning funding for and positive internal perception of his team, in the context of successful outcomes:

I've got a continued opportunity and growth. My team is, I think for the most part, looked at as one that produces results and it performs… And so over the course of the last 12 months my team has been consistently provided budget and resources above and beyond what we started the year with to do more of what we do for the organization… I think that's a direct reflection of frankly how the team that I'm responsible for and the people on it run our shop, day in and day out. (Participant #32, 2015)

When describing the manner in which mindfulness contributed to the previously described results, participant #32 reported a positive impact on team synergy, employee engagement, interpersonal communication, and awareness of the needs of others. The participant also demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the political climate at his
place of employment. When reporting these outcomes, the participant specifically mentioned the importance of exhibiting sincere and honest behavior in all of his workplace interactions, which is a realization that he attributed to mindfulness.

Specific project and/or financial results were also attributed to mindfulness, such as improved interactions with clients, external business partners, and in the case of the following quotation, opposing legal counsel:

I've gotten better results for my clients… and to be honest with you, the government attorneys on the other side, even though in cases which I've won, or I thought we got a much better deal than we normally would've gotten… The government attorneys on the other side felt like they were respected, and I know that if I see them again and with another client that they'll trust me. (Participant #26, 2015)

In this case, participant #26 stated that mindfulness had helped him develop the ability to deescalate conflict and to engage with others more effectively. These benefits were attributed to having become more empathetic towards others and developing a higher degree of emotional self-awareness and emotional self-management. As a result, the participant had less stressful and more productive, often collaborative workplace experiences. Finally, he also reported that his effectiveness as a trial attorney, a leader, and a peer had improved as he became more aware of the counterproductive effect that adversarial relationships can have in workplace settings.

Participants also shared examples of positive workplace feedback and recognition from superiors, peers, and subordinates, as the following quotation from the controller at a well-known corporation illustrates: “… my boss is notorious, at his last company he fired three controllers. His feedback, because I pay attention to him and I listen to him and I communicate the way he communicates, he's been nothing but complimentary.”
In addition to descriptions of positive feedback from superiors, the following quotation provides an example of the type of mindfulness-influenced changes to leadership behaviors that participants also said resulted in positive feedback:

…Feedback from the team has been that I'm a lot less directive than I used to be. I take much more of a coaching approach to working with them, and letting them take much more ownership of what they need to do.

(Participant #13, 2015)

In the previous two quotations, participants linked an increase in positive results to the way in which mindfulness had made them more aware of their interactions with others. Specifically, the descriptions included examples of an improved ability for self-observation when interacting with others, which helped the participants more effectively recognize social and emotional cues revealing the reactions, needs and intent of others. In addition, the participants described how mindfulness had helped them identify areas of leadership and interpersonal development where they were in need of improvement.

Other reports of more successful outcomes provided by participants include successful management of board-level relationships, gaining the confidence of executive leaders, and setting positive examples for subordinates relating to managing stressful situations and difficult clients. Participants’ descriptions of improved leadership effectiveness also linked the examples to improvements in their ability to recognize and employ effective leadership behaviors appropriate for specific situations. These improvements were also attributed to mindfulness, and the following sub-theme explores the topic in greater detail.

6.2. Sub-Theme: Adoption of Effective Leadership Behaviors. Transcript analysis revealed that mindfulness played a significant role in helping participants understand the
positive impact of certain types of behaviors on their effectiveness as leaders, triggering
the incorporation of those behaviors into their overall leadership activity and thereby
improving their capacity for identifying and engaging in more effective leadership
behaviors. In addition, participants described mindfulness as being critical to realizations
about themselves that were instrumental in both creating a strong personal commitment
to ongoing leadership development and an improvement in leadership effectiveness. I
describe this as a separate sub-theme since it represents a transformative process
described by participants whereby changes in their awareness influenced effectiveness-
oriented, conscious decisions about their leadership beliefs, strategies and behaviors.

I identified 340 references to these types of realizations in the data, and they were
found in 98% of the transcripts. Participant descriptions of becoming better able to
recognize effective leadership behaviors included discussion of having learned to identify
the internal, emotionally driven reasons for their reactions rather than attributing them
solely to the actions of others, “understanding… when one thing happens there's
something else triggering down at the end” (Participant #8, 2015). For example,
participants described acquiring a fundamental understanding of the value of identifying
detrimental habits of thought and automatic responses as a core component of developing
more effective leader behaviors: “concentration on dealing with yourself, in fitting
yourself out in such way that you're able to properly manage the various things that will
come at you” (Participant #37, 2015).

This quotation exemplifies the type of comments made by participants concerning
the way in which mindfulness helped them to more accurately and honestly observe their
own thoughts, judgments, reactions and biases. These descriptions were shared in the
context of how participants began to understand the importance of consciously regulating their mental activity as a key component of developing more effective leadership behaviors. Participants also reported developing an ability to observe, at the moment of interaction, whether or not their behavior was creating an adequate level of interpersonal engagement.

Participants discussed these realizations in the context of the totality of their leadership development experiences, and indicated that mindfulness influenced a significant, positive change in their leadership development process. For example, one participant said, “Had I not opened up to this meditation practice, I would have kind of latched on to a leadership style, and it probably would have been a mix of former military, kind of litigator like” (Participant #26, 2015), and another described how mindfulness had become an essential component of her leadership behaviors: “I don't think I could do what I do without having some element of mindfulness” (Participant #29, 2015). Mindfulness was also described as having played a significant role in other types of realizations concerning leadership effectiveness, which contributed to participants being able to successfully navigate very difficult workplace situations. These experiences influenced participants decisions to incorporate mindfulness into their core leadership activities, summarized by Participant #11 in her statement that mindfulness had become “a magical toolbox that I can carry around with me in that office” (2015). Participant #25 also made similar comments, and provided more specific context for the way in which mindfulness first played a critical role in improvements to her leadership behaviors, as described in the following quotation:
So I came to mindfulness… during a very difficult time in my life... very stressful role here at the bank during the middle of a financial crisis working on a merger and you know, a lot of people were getting laid off and things that… At first, it was just a way for me to get through the day… and it really changed things quickly. (Participant #25, 2015)

In her discussion of the previous example, participant #25 described how mindfulness influenced her development of more effective leadership behaviors, which directly impacted her ability to manage the situation described. For example, the participant explained how mindfulness helped her recognize and understand her feelings of stress and anxiety in such a way that she was able to minimize the negative effects. In addition, the participant reported that mindfulness had helped her significantly improve her cognitive function and her ability both to identify solutions to problems and to effectively carry out the necessary activities. Finally, the participant indicated that she had incorporated mindfulness into her daily leadership activities, and added that mindfulness had improved her interpersonal behaviors, which was an area where she previously lacked confidence.

Participant #41 shared a similar example of mindfulness playing a significant role in her maturation into a more effective leader. Specifically, she described an improvement in confidence in decision-making and risk-taking requirements of her leadership role, arising from the development of the ability to recognize and manage worry and fear:

… I think there's just sort of a common ground that I began to experience [as a result of mindfulness] around some scenarios of worry, and fear, and risk aversion, and some stepping out as a leader, and just starting to make decisions. (Participant #41, 2015)

Participant #41 also reported that her improved level of comfort with risk-taking had a
significant impact on the leadership behaviors that she exhibited. As a result, the
participant reported improved leadership effectiveness, specifically in terms of higher
employee engagement and improved departmental/team performance. Mindfulness was
further credited by the participant for helping her to recognize her aversion to risk, as
well as being able to successfully overcome the negative emotions that had caused her to
avoid taking potentially beneficial risks in the past.

As the previous quotations illustrate, this sub-theme focuses on participant reports
linking mindfulness with significant, and even transformational, realizations concerning a
new understanding of both what is required to be a truly effective leader and how to act
accordingly. Some of these realizations involved the use of mindfulness to identify and
manage suppressed, negative reactions, and to manage stress, fear, anxiety, and worry
during major workplace crises. Participants also reported pivotal realizations, such as an
understanding that effective leadership requires more empathy for their subordinates,
versus managing solely by performance indicators, and the importance of focusing on
human value in their workplace interactions and leadership decisions. In all cases,
participants indicated that mindfulness had not only significantly altered their beliefs
about leadership, but that the changes to their beliefs had influenced deliberate,
comprehensive changes in their leadership behaviors.

Participants’ descriptions of mindfulness revealed many examples indicating that
mindfulness had been integrated into their core leadership behaviors, including
incorporating mindfulness techniques into what I refer to as real-time utilization. Real-
time utilization took a variety of forms and can be thought of as the use of mindfulness
techniques in response to unplanned events or unexpected internal reactions to events.
The following quotation illustrates some of the examples of real-time utilization provided by participants:

Sometimes if I find myself so stressed out, I just say, you know, take a break, shut the door, and do it [mindfulness], as a treatment. And the rest of the day I'm just doing it because I feel like I need to do it. Something has happened and I need to calm myself down. (Participant #15, 2015)

This example is illustrative of participants’ reports of using mindfulness for emotional self-management, which included references to emotional triggers occurring during interpersonal interactions and workplace events that were unexpectedly stressful. Participants also described specific mindfulness techniques used for minimizing the effect of negative emotional reactions that they detected in themselves, in addition to a sophisticated ability to understand and describe those reactions:

…I'll notice that I'm being triggered by a particular participant in the meeting… I'll just say to myself I noticed that Mr. such and such is triggering something in me… I notice I'm feeling a little bit adolescent in my reaction, probably a regression or something like that, so I'll just name things as they come up… I'll go to the bathroom and take a couple minutes… something to break the action, so that I can check in with myself. (Participant #30, 2015)

This example illustrates the type of reports shared by participants concerning their unplanned, yet regular, use of mindfulness in response to workplace demands. In this case, the participant was describing the role that mindfulness had played in his ability to observe his present moment internal emotional state in order to proactively identify thoughts and feelings that would potentially have a negative effect on his interactions with others. Additional examples included mindfulness techniques used in preparation for specific types of meetings, discussing performance issues with subordinates, and maintaining a highly attentive dialog with customers.
Participant #30 also made a statement representative of what other participants indicated about their daily use of mindfulness: “It's much more integrated all day long… For me the important part of the practice is sort of the daily integration that happens throughout the day, any number of times” (Participant #30, 2015). Discussion revealing that mindfulness had become integrated into daily leadership behaviors also appeared in participants’ reports of ongoing personal resource investments in mindfulness training and in combination with reports of improvements to specific leadership behaviors. For example, participants indicated that mindfulness had a significant, positive impact on cognitive function, which is explored in the following section.

6.3. Sub-Theme: Improved Cognitive Function. Study participants reported that mindfulness contributed significantly to improved cognitive function in leadership settings. Descriptions centered on improvements in concentration, decision-making, and more effective detection and interpretation of information conveyed through interpersonal and environmental cues. Although I only found 63 references to this sub-theme, it appeared in 88% of the transcripts, and was therefore one of the more significant results identified in the study.

Participants credited mindfulness for directly contributing to an improved ability to focus their attention and to develop the ability to proactively observe their own mental activity: “…I'm easily able to say to my own self… you're distracted, bring your attention back to the room… you're multitasking” (Participant #42, 2015). In addition to improvements in their ability to concentrate and make decisions, participants also credited mindfulness with improving cognitive function via more effective management of stress, anxiety, and other negative emotions: “Started practicing at times of high stress,
and a need for focus and found that it [mindfulness] was an important way for me to be able to grow those skills” (Participant #28, 2015).

In addition to a reduction in feelings of stress, participants also mentioned similar improvements in the context of anxiety, fear, worry, and other emotional reactions that impair cognitive function. Furthermore, participants indicated that mindfulness enabled them to observe their own mental activity in a way that helped them to more effectively focus their attention as a result of being better able to recognize and regulate distracting thoughts and feelings. Examples include descriptions of developing the ability to deliberately focus attention on the emotional needs of others during stressful situations, improved capacity for identifying situation-appropriate leadership strategies inclusive of the needs of others, and an improved ability to observe and assess the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships, which is explored in the next theme.

Theme 7: Improved Interpersonal Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme 7: Improved Interpersonal Competencies</th>
<th>Refs</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Sub-theme: More Effective Relationships</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Sub-theme: More Effective Communication</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total # references for this theme identified in transcripts: 254

Table 8. Theme 7, Improved Interpersonal Competencies, Sub-themes 7.1 More Effective Relationships, and 7.2 More Effective Communication.

As with the three sub-themes explored in Theme 6, this theme is also focused on workplace leadership results attributed by participants to mindfulness. This theme deals specifically with participant descriptions of how mindfulness helped them to improve multiple aspects of workplace interpersonal interaction. In this context, participants described an improved capacity for awareness of others, and development of behaviors contributing directly to improved effectiveness in collaboration, communication,
transparency, and other aspects of functional workplace relationships. As was also the case with Theme 6, these examples were identified in the context of participant descriptions linking mindfulness to incidences of improved leadership effectiveness resulting in positive workplace outcomes.

7.1. Sub-Theme: More Effective Relationships. This sub-theme focuses on more productive, higher quality relationships with coworkers, which I identified 141 times in the transcripts. There were reports of the development of this capability provided in the context of relationships with superiors, peers, subordinates, external clients, and partners. Reports included references to workplace value arising from improved relationships, as illustrated by the following: “The other thing I've noticed is that, because I've built better relationships with people, I can call any of those people and ask for something. And I can literally get a call right back or an email right back” (Participant #25, 2015).

Participants also demonstrated an understanding of how mindfulness had a positive influence on the development of their awareness relative to improved interpersonal relationships, which the following quotation illustrates: “And so I'm always very focused on how my actions can erode or bolster trust that people have in me” (Participant #32, 2015). The role played by mindfulness in cultivating an awareness of the importance of earning trust in the workplace was described by other participants as well:

And a lot of what I have to do daily, and I probably have four or five of these interactions a week, is that I have to quickly build trust with sister departments, with teams, and pull people together under one tactical or strategic issue. (Participant #32, 2015)
In these examples participants credited mindfulness with not only helping them realize
the importance of developing trusting relationships, but also understanding how and
when to exhibit the behaviors required to do so. Finally, review of the transcripts revealed
examples of how the participants were able to develop and maintain trusting relationships
with others in the workplace:

…their own issues or hesitations, right?... whether they're work-related or
personal issues. I think they sense… that I'm listening. I'm not threatening.
I'm really paying attention and I don't have my own agenda. (Participant
#39, 2015)

When sharing this quotation, the participant credited mindfulness with having positively
influenced not only his ability to perceive the feelings and needs of others, but also his
awareness of the fact that his subordinates were in need of more meaningful, better
quality relationships with him. Other participants also indicated that their ability to
develop improved relationships contributed to greater success in career advancement, and
linked the ability to develop trust to more effective communication, which is discussed in
detail in the following section.

7.2. Sub-Theme: More Effective Communication. I identified 113 references to this sub-
theme in the transcripts. Discussion of this topic focused on the positive impact that
improved attention to the quality of interpersonal communication had on leadership
effectiveness. Participants reported that mindfulness had a significant, positive effect on
their capacity for communication, and as the following quotation illustrates, participants
were also able to demonstrate an improved understanding of how self-observation during
the communication process contributes to an improved connection with others:

…it's my observations, my comments, my thoughts were almost getting lost,
because the emotion had taken over slightly… [if] you're talking to people
As the previous quotation illustrates, participants reported an improved ability to monitor their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors during the process of interpersonal communication. This improvement was linked to mindfulness by participants, and they also credited it with helping them to make more effective decisions relating to their interactions with others. Participant responses also revealed an improved ability to recognize the potentially negative reactions of others when working towards more effective communication: “People can feel like their whole self is at stake if they get beat at an argument or if their project goes badly or they get embarrassed in front of leadership” (Participant #10, 2015). As this quotation illustrates, improved awareness of the needs and emotional states of others during the process of communication was referenced by participants in the context of helping them become more cognizant of others and the value of making an effort to minimize interpersonal conflict. In addition, participants also reported that mindfulness helped them manage interpersonal communication behaviors by consciously making an effort to be open to input from others.

Finally, examples shared by participants included descriptions of how they had improved upon past counterproductive communication behaviors following mindfulness interventions. For example, participants were able to make post-intervention comparisons and describe behaviors that they had modified. Specifically, participants indicated that they had stopped engaging in interpersonal behaviors that had previously delivered short-
term results and had instead adopted communication strategies that contributed to improved, more enduring, and productive relationships.

**Summary of Thematic Analysis**

As examples provided in this section illustrate, participants linked their development of an improved awareness of others, their environment, and the quality of their interaction with others to positive behavioral changes leading to improved leadership effectiveness. In addition, these changes in awareness, which participants attributed to mindfulness, were also described as contributing to improved interpersonal behaviors, including attentiveness, sincerity, and honesty. The results reported on in this section were categorized by specific examples of improved leadership behaviors contributing to positive workplace results, positive development of leadership capabilities, and improvements to participant’s capacity for effective leadership. A number of the results were also identified as being potential indicators of trait level changes occurring in participants.

Some of these reports of changes also indicate that participants did not always explicitly link mindfulness to improved leadership effectiveness. For example, in some cases participants described the relationship as implicit, indicating that mindfulness had a positive effect on awareness and behaviors, which in turn contributed to improved leadership effectiveness. Therefore, while I described the themes and sub-themes in this section separately, the results also indicate that they are intertwined when viewed in the context of the fundamental, multifaceted way in which mindfulness was reported to have contributed to improved leadership effectiveness.
Improvements to self-awareness, empathy, interpersonal relationships, and organizational awareness accounted for some of the most frequently identified sub-themes in the transcripts. Additionally, ESCI data analysis, discussed in the following section, also identified ample evidence of the ESCI emotional intelligence competencies supporting these results.

2. ESCI Analysis, Results of Coding for ESCI Emotional Intelligence Competencies

Interview data provided enough detail for me to review them using the ESCI measurement tool referenced in Chapters 2 and 3. This process provided sufficient information for coding purposes and upon which I could base quantitative statements presented in this section and in Chapter 5. During this analysis, I identified 100% of the ESCI competencies in the participants, indicating valid evidence of behaviors empirically linked to increased levels of organizational leadership performance. It should also be noted that all behavioral indicators demonstrating the presence of ESCI competencies appeared in the context of being described by participants as having been either developed or improved through mindfulness.

The following section describes the results relating to each of the 12 ESCI competencies identified and provides participant quotations for the purpose of clarifying the ESCI competency identification process. Table 8 displays the ESCI competency code frequencies in the column titled Total # Codes, which are ranked from highest to lowest and indicate the total number of times each ESCI competency was identified (coded) in the transcripts. The columns titled # Transcripts Containing Code and % Transcripts Containing Code refer respectively to the number of transcripts in which individual ESCI
competencies were identified and percentage of total transcripts in which individual ESCI competencies were identified. The ESCI competency associated with each code total is displayed in the column titled *ESCI Competency*, and ESCI competency cluster under which the respective ESCI competencies are grouped is displayed in the column titled *ESCI Competency Cluster*. Note that, since this table displays ESCI competency codes in descending order, the ESCI competency clusters are not grouped together as elsewhere in this dissertation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency</th>
<th>Total # Codes</th>
<th>ESCI Competency Cluster</th>
<th># Transcripts Containing Code</th>
<th>% Transcripts Containing Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teamwork</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Relationship management</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Coach and mentor</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Relationship management</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Emotional self-awareness</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Empathy</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Social awareness</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Organizational awareness</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Social awareness</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Conflict management</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Relationship management</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Inspirational leadership</td>
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<td>Relationship management</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Influence</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Relationship management</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Positive outlook</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Emotional self-control</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Adaptability</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Achievement orientation</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 9. ESCI code incidence and associated ESCI competency clusters.*

The following figures summarize the ESCI behavioral indicator coding results by ESCI competency cluster and competency. The figures are followed by a table providing additional detail concerning the results of the transcript coding process.
Figure 1. ESCI behavioral indicator coding results grouped by ESCI competency cluster.

Figure 1 above illustrates the total number of behavioral indicators coded in the transcripts, grouped by the ESCI competency cluster with which they are associated. Figure 2 below illustrates the same total of behavioral indicator codes, alternatively grouped by each of the ESCI competencies found to be present in the transcripts by the presence of the behavioral indicators associated with them.
Figure 2. ESCI behavioral indicator coding results grouped by ESCI competency.

The following table presents the results of the ESCI coding process on a behavioral indicator level. Each set of behavioral indicators is grouped underneath the ESCI competency with which they are associated, which is preceded by the appropriate ESCI Competency Cluster. The total number of times each behavioral indicator was coded is displayed in the BI Totals column to the right, and a combined total for all behavioral indicators identified for each ESCI competency is contained in the row containing the content Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency. The final two rows of each ESCI competency-specific section identifies the number of transcripts in which the ESCI competency was identified, and the percentage of total
transcripts in which the ESCI competency was found. The order in which the ESCI competencies are presented follows the order set forth in the ESCI framework, and therefore the results of coding are not presented in descending order as in Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competencies</th>
<th>BI Totals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Awareness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency: (1 of 1) Emotional Self-Awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicators:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Able to describe how own feelings affect own actions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describes underlying reasons for own feelings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Aware of the connection between what is happening and own feelings</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shows awareness of own feelings</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does not describe own feelings</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Acknowledges own strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified:</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency presence in transcripts:</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management** | |
| ESCI Competency: (1 of 4) Adaptability | |
| Behavioral Indicators: | |
| 1. Has difficulty adapting to uncertain and challenging conditions | 0 |
| 2. Adapts by smoothly juggling multiple demands | 7 |
| 3. Adapts by applying standard procedures flexibly | 7 |
| 4. Adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to fit the situation | 15 |
| 5. Adapts to shifting priorities and rapid change | 9 |
| 6. Adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to cope with unexpected events | 9 |
| Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency: | 47 |
| Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified: | 42 |
| ESCI Competency presence in transcripts: | 100% |

| **ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management** | |
| ESCI Competency: (2 of 4) Achievement Orientation | |
| Behavioral Indicators: | |
| 1. Initiates actions to improve own performance | 14 |
| 2. Seeks to improve own self by setting measurable and challenging goals | 15 |
| 3. Does not strive to improve own performance | 0 |
| 4. Strives to improve own performance | 6 |
| 5. Does not try to improve | 0 |
| 6. Seeks ways to do things better | 9 |
| Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency: | 44 |
| Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified: | 42 |
| ESCI Competency presence in transcripts: | 100% |
### ESCI Competency: (3 of 4) Emotional Self-Control

**Behavioral Indicators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gets impatient or shows frustration inappropriately</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Acts appropriately even in emotionally charged situations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Remains calm in stressful situations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Remains composed, even in trying moments</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Controls impulses appropriately in situations</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Loses composure when under stress</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 56

Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified: 42

ESCI Competency presence in transcripts: 100%

---

### ESCI Competency: (4 of 4) Positive Outlook

**Behavioral Indicators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sees the positive in people, situations, and events more often than the negative</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Believes the future will be better than the past</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Views the future with hope</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sees possibilities more than problems</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sees opportunities more than threats</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sees the positive side of a difficult situation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 58

Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified: 42

ESCI Competency presence in transcripts: 100%

---

### ESCI Competency Cluster: Social Awareness

#### ESCI Competency: (1 of 2) Empathy

**Behavioral Indicators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understands another person’s motivation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understands others by listening attentively</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does not understand subtle feelings of others</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Understands others by putting self into others’ shoes</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Understands others’ perspectives when they are different from own perspective</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 65

Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified: 42

ESCI Competency presence in transcripts: 100%

---

#### ESCI Competency: (2 of 2) Organizational Awareness

**Behavioral Indicators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understands social networks</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understands the values and culture of the team or organization</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Understands the informal structure in the team or organization</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Understands the informal processes by which work gets done in the team or organization</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Understands the team’s or organization’s unspoken rules</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 64

Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified: 42

ESCI Competency presence in transcripts: 100%
### ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency: (1 of 5) Conflict Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicators:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tries to resolve conflict instead of allowing it to fester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Resolves conflict by de-escalating the emotions in a situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Allows conflict to fester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tries to resolve conflict by openly talking about disagreements with those involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Resolves conflict by bringing it into the open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency presence in transcripts:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency: (2 of 5) Coach and Mentor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicators:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Provides on-going mentoring or coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Provides feedback others find helpful for their development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Personally invests time and effort in developing others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Coaches and mentors others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does not spend time developing others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Cares about others and their development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency presence in transcripts:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency: (3 of 5) Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicators:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Convinces others by getting support from key people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Convinces others by using multiple approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Convinces others by appealing to their self-interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Anticipates how others will respond when trying to convince them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Convinces others by developing behind the scenes support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Convinces others through discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency presence in transcripts:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency: (4 of 5) Inspirational Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicators:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Leads by building pride in the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leads by inspiring others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does not inspire followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leads by bringing out the best in people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Leads by articulating a compelling vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number transcripts with ESCI competency identified:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency presence in transcripts:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10. ESCI Competencies Identified at the Behavioral Indicator Level

The following descriptions of results include detailed examples of each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified, in addition to discussion of what behaviors are exhibited by individuals possessing each ESCI competency. For the convenience of the reader, a summary table presenting the ESCI competency and behavioral indicators being discussed precedes each grouping of quotations that illustrates how individual behavioral indicators were identified in the transcripts.

Interpretation of the distribution of ESCI behavioral indicators is not considered to add value to the process of identifying the presence of ESCI Competencies and Competency Clusters, since ESCI behavioral indicators are described as alternate manifestations of their respective ESCI competencies (Boyatzis, personal communication, June 15, 2016). According to Boyatzis (personal communication, June 15, 2016), this level of interpretation is typically only utilized in coaching activity because interpretation of ESCI behavioral indicators for that purpose provides value in the context of individual strengths and weaknesses specific to individual ESCI competencies, and in creating individual professional development plans. In the context of a study such as this one, however, ESCI behavioral indicators are utilized to identify the presence of ESCI Competencies, which is the unit of analysis required for
determining the presence of specific ESCI competencies in participants. Furthermore, for this study I did not conduct a full ESCI 360-degree assessment, which would have also collected uniform data from participants’ co-workers used to develop a more in-depth behavioral indicator profile. As a result, in this section I do not discuss interpretations at the ESCI behavioral indicator level.

Detailed reporting of the results of ESCI competency cluster, competency, and behavioral indicator coding activity is provided in Appendix 3: Detailed Examples of ESCI Behavioral Indicators. An example of how the ESCI behavioral indicator coding process was completed, however, is included here in order to clarify the process by which behavioral indicators were identified in the transcripts. This example includes the following table (11) presenting the sample ESCI competency cluster, competency and behavioral indicators involved in the coding process. Table 11 is followed by a definition of the ESCI competency used in this example, in addition to details concerning the results of the coding process. Finally, the example includes quotations coded in the transcripts, which provide evidence of the behavioral indicators identified for this competency.

ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Awareness, Competency: Emotional Self-Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Indicators:</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Able to describe how own feelings affect own actions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describes underlying reasons for own feelings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Aware of the connection between what is happening and own feelings</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shows awareness of own feelings</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does not describe own feelings</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Acknowledges own strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 65

Table 11. Example of ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified
**Emotional Self-awareness.** I identified this ESCI competency by reviewing transcripts for ESCI behavioral indicators that demonstrated participants’ abilities to describe how their feelings affect their actions, whether or not they were able to explain the underlying reasons for their own feelings, and their awareness of the connection between events and their own feelings, including reactions to environmental cues and the role that emotions play in professional performance (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

Additional measures of this ESCI competency are oriented towards openness to feedback, willingness to develop new perspectives about oneself, and indicators of interest in self-development, such as the ability to acknowledge one’s own strengths and weaknesses (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). All participants demonstrated this ESCI competency, which tied with empathy (both having been coded for 65 times) as the third most frequently cited ESCI competency out of 12 total competencies. Participants’ responses indicated that the development of this ESCI competency played an important role in many areas of their leadership effectiveness.

Indicators of the ESCI competency *emotional self-awareness* appeared not only in the form of conscious awareness of emotions and its relationships to events, but also in descriptions indicating an ability to observe, understand, and effectively manage feelings. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “aware of the connection between what is happening and [one’s] own feelings”
Quotation taken from transcripts: “I’ll notice that I'm being triggered by a particular participant in the meeting, you know, somebody who I noticed I'm kind of reacting to more than other people” (Participant #30, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “shows awareness of own feelings”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…identifying my emotions as they happened, not in retrospect, but right as they were happening” (Participant #19, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “able to describe how own feelings affect own actions”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…then I said, ‘Oh my god, this is stupid, I am under the amygdala hijack condition.’ So I walked away from my desk” (Participant #22, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “describes underlying reasons for own feelings”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…and the rejections stem from my own feelings, of course” (Participant #1, 2015).

5. ESCI behavioral indicator: “acknowledges own strengths and weaknesses”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I don't know everything, and I'm not that smart… but I know how important [it is] to be agile...” (Participant #6, 2015).

This concludes the review of the behavioral indicator-specific ESCI results. In this section, I presented examples of the transcript data that was identified as being evidence of the presence of specific ESCI behavioral indicators. The ESCI behavioral indicators and their respective sample quotations were grouped underneath the ESCI competencies that they were used to identify. Additional examples of sample quotations identified in the transcripts as providing evidence of ESCI behavioral indicators are contained in Appendix 3, Additional Examples of ESCI Behavioral Indicators. The ESCI data analysis
explored in the previous sections is summarized in the following section, followed by
Section 3 and the conclusion for this chapter.

**Summary of ESCI Analysis**

This section detailed the use of, and results produced by, the ESCI tool for deductive data
analysis. The ESCI tool enabled me to take an empirically supported, structured approach
towards data analysis, which was instrumental in helping to add meaning to the content
of the transcripts. Specifically, the ESCI tool provided a critical, third party validated
framework for identifying ESCI competencies linked to increased leadership
performance.

As described in Chapter 2, the efficacy of the ESCI tool has been validated
through analysis of 5,700 self-assessments and 62,000 other assessments (Boyatzis,
2010). In addition, the ESCI tool utilizes the same behavioral indicators and competency
clusters as the Goleman, Boyatzis, and Hay Group ESCI 360-degree assessment and
development tool, which is described as the most widely used behavioral measure of
emotional and social intelligence (The Hay Group website, 2015). This tool is also
described as being designed specifically for use with organizational leaders for the
purpose of identifying and measuring ESCI competencies linked to increased leadership
performance (The Hay Group, 2015), which further aligns with the purpose of this study.

Use of the ESCI tool also added significant context to the results of the study,
since the ESCI competencies utilized in the ESCI framework match and/or overlap with
many of the emotional intelligence competencies used in the model for reporting results
of thematic analysis in Sections 1 and 3. The alignment of these results adds validity to
indications of the presence of emotional intelligence competencies linked to improved leadership effectiveness in the study participants. I explore these remaining results next.

3. Alignment of results from Thematic Analysis and ESCI Analysis

In addition to the identification of sub-themes and coding activity described in Sections 1 and 2, I also compared the frequency of ESCI codes and the results of my thematic data analysis for indications of commonalities or supporting patterns. Through this process, I identified a number of themes and sub-themes that related to and/or supported the ESCI competencies identified during ESCI analysis. The majority of these areas of alignment are presented in Section 1, Themes 1-5, which correspond with the ESCI Competency Clusters discussed in Section 2. In the following section, I discuss additional examples of the thematic and ESCI coding data analysis processes aligning, again presented using the emotional intelligence competency cluster and competency model used in Sections 1 and 2.

Table 12 summarizes these results, indicating the number of sub-themes that I identified in the transcripts during the thematic data analysis process that align with the ESCI competency clusters and competencies presented in Section 2. The column titled # of times Coded in Transcripts presents four data points, grouped by ESCI competency cluster: (a) the total number of ESCI behavioral indicators coded for the ESCI competency cluster, (b) total number of references to supporting sub-themes identified during thematic analysis that align the individual ESCI competencies associated with the ESCI competency cluster, (c) the total number of ESCI behavioral indicators coded for each of the individual ESCI competencies nested under the ESCI competency cluster and specified in the far left
column, and (d) the total number of references to the sub-theme identified in the transcripts that align with the individual ESCI competency listed directly above it. Note that the number of ESCI competencies nested under each ESCI competency cluster vary, and in the case of self-awareness there is only one ESCI competency, which is emotional self-awareness. In this case, there is also only one sub-theme being reported, also titled emotional self-awareness, and as a result the two rows beginning with the content *Total #* have the same values as the two rows reporting on the number of behavioral indicators and sub-themes identified.

The table is segmented by ESCI competency cluster, which is named in the first row of each segment, and each segment is separated by an empty row. Table rows with data referring to thematic analysis sub-themes, rather than the ESCI competencies or behavioral indicators with which they are associated, are shaded. Note that my thematic data analysis did not identify sub-themes relating directly to all of the ESCI competencies. These cases are represented with the content *NO IDENTICAL SUB-THEME IDENTIFIED* in the far left column. Finally, as the table indicates, comparison of transcript codes and thematic analysis sub-themes only revealed significant alignment with two ESCI competency clusters not reported in Section 1, which are discussed in greater detail following the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment of ESCI Competencies with Thematic Analysis Sub-themes</th>
<th># of Times Coded in Transcripts</th>
<th># of Transcripts Containing Code</th>
<th>% of Transcripts Containing Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Awareness</td>
<td>Codes</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # ESCI Behavioral Indicators Identified:</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # supporting sub-theme references:</strong></td>
<td>244</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Emotional Self-Awareness (1 of 1):</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (reported in Section 1):</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management</strong></td>
<td>Codes</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # ESCI Behavioral Indicators Identified:</strong></td>
<td>205</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Codes</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESCI Competency Cluster: Social Awareness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # ESCI Behavioral Indicators Identified:</strong></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # Supporting sub-theme references:</strong></td>
<td>496</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Empathy (1 of 2):</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (reported in Section 1):</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Organizational Awareness (2 of 2):</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (reported in Section 1):</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # ESCI Behavioral Indicators Identified:</strong></td>
<td>326</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total # Supporting sub-theme references:</strong></td>
<td>482</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Conflict Management (1 of 5):</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (reported in Section 1):</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs for Coach and Mentor (2 of 5):</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (sub-theme 8.1):</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Influence (3 of 5):</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (reported in Section 1):</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Inspirational Leadership (4 of 5):</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO IDENTICAL SUB-THEME IDENTIFIED:</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Teamwork (5 of 5):</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (sub-theme 8.2):</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12. Comparison of sub-theme references and ESCI codes identified in transcripts

It should also be re-stated that my thematic data analysis sub-themes were identified prior to my decision to use the ESCI tool to analyze the transcript data and were therefore not
influenced by the ESCI analysis framework. This accounts for the fact that I did not identify sub-themes directly aligning with all of the ESCI competencies. In addition, I created two files in Atlas.ti for transcript analysis activity for the purpose of keeping thematic and ESCI analysis processes completely separate. I chose to use this approach in order to minimize the likelihood of my initial identification of sub-themes influencing my ESCI coding activity. Finally, unlike the ESCI coding approach, my thematic analysis activity was based on the identification of both implicit and explicit indications of changes to awareness and behaviors revealed by participant statements.

As Table 12 indicates, there are two ESCI competencies that align with results of thematic analysis but were not explored in Section 1: Coach and Mentor, and Teamwork. I did not discuss these competencies in Section 1 because they did not account for a significant number of sub-themes. However, since these results further support an alignment between the results of thematic and ESCI data analysis, they are discussed in greater detail next.

| ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----|------|
| Codes \# \%                                  |
| ESCI BIs for Coach and Mentor (2 of 5):       | 70  | 42   |
| Supporting sub-theme references (sub-theme 8.1): | 8   | 7    |

Table 13. Alignment of ESCI analysis ESCI competency Coach and Mentor with thematic analysis sub-theme 8.1, Employee Development.

8.1. Sub-Theme: Employee Development. My thematic analysis process identified one sub-theme that aligns with the ESCI competency Coach and Mentor. A total of eight incidents of this sub-theme were found, focusing on both improved success with, and stronger interest in, employee development activities. Participants linked a new recognition of the value of employee development activity to their mindfulness: “I can
easily say that my mindfulness practice has had a significant influence on my desire and ability to both lead and develop, especially develop, really good talent” (Participant #8, 2015), which they described as having influenced their understanding of how employee engagement and loyalty could be strengthened by a leader demonstrating a sincere commitment to subordinate development. Participants also demonstrated an understanding of the positive emotional effect that leader attention to the needs of individual employees has on team performance: “…you have to be a mentor and provide some feedback to them, so they feel supported” (Participant #3, 2015). Examples of a stronger commitment to employee development were also linked to an improved understanding of the value of developing more effective teams, which is explored next.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESCI BIs Identified for Teamwork (5 of 5):</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting sub-theme references (sub-theme 8.2):</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Alignment of ESCI analysis ESCI competency Teamwork with thematic analysis sub-theme 8.2, Team Strength.

8.2. Sub-Theme: Team Strength. My thematic data analysis process identified one sub-theme that aligns with the ESCI competency Teamwork. Participants’ discussion of this sub-theme focused on their improved ability to positively influence the development of team capabilities. A total of seven incidents of this sub-theme were identified, emphasizing the ability of participants’ teams to function more effectively, often independently, and/or with limited leadership oversight, as the following quotation illustrates:

I think it’s those moments when the leader is not there when the team is working together, collaborating and being open with each other. I think the biggest result for us is along with all of our cultural initiatives is we’ve really created a special type of team that feel safe together,
comfortable together. That interacts, collaborates, talks about things openly. (Participant #34, 2015)

In addition to descriptions of mindfulness having contributed to an understanding of the importance of more effective relationships between teammates, the previous quotation also refers to participants’ indicating an understanding of the leader’s role in creating team synergy focused on performance. Specifically, participants credited mindfulness with contributing to an improved awareness of not only the importance of their relationships with employees in this context, but also engaging in activity focused on improving the relationships of subordinates with one another. One such example appears in the following quotation, which focuses on the participant’s description of his efforts to cultivate more respectful and cooperative relationships between the employees reporting to him:

    I felt like they could increase their positive regard and just human treatment of each other… And in that case, I had enough trust with them that they could work on it. (Participant #10, 2015)

In addition to the previous reports, when discussing improved team strength in the context of leadership results influenced by mindfulness, study participants also referenced their commitment to investing resources in team development. Examples provided included larger than average allocations of organizational resources, as well as their own personal time on an as-needed basis. Finally, framed in the context of improved leadership effectiveness, the development of team strength was identified as creating a significant, positive impact on participants’ departmental performance.
Conclusion

This chapter focused on the presentation of results produced during the data analysis processes described in Chapter 3. An overview of the thematic data analysis process was provided first, followed by an overview of the ESCI data analysis process. Following presentation of the results from the thematic and ESCI data analysis stages, I reviewed additional results of the thematic data analysis process that aligned with and supported the competencies described in the section on ESCI data analysis.

My exploration of the themes and sub-themes emerging from the thematic data analysis process presented three major themes. First, descriptions of personal transformation focused on participant reports of fundamental changes to their awareness that influenced development of a broad range of leadership behaviors. I then explored themes that aligned with emotional intelligence competencies that have been linked to improved leadership effectiveness. These competencies are emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. A total of six sub-themes indicating a significant presence of these emotional intelligence competencies were explored in detail, through quotations and examples of participant reports attributing improved effectiveness to mindfulness.

The third presentation of major themes focused on transcript data specifically related to reports of results linked to improved leadership effectiveness. Two themes were explored, development of new and existing leadership competencies, and improved interpersonal competencies. Five sub-themes were described during this exploration,
again providing quotations and examples of participant descriptions of improved leadership results they attributed to mindfulness.

Section 2 of the chapter presented in-depth results from the use of the ESCI tool in identifying evidence of ESCI competencies in the study participants. This section included comprehensive data tables reporting ESCI behavioral indicator coding results, in addition to distribution of ESCI competencies and ESCI competency clusters in the study group. Detailed discussion of each of the twelve ESCI competencies then followed, which included information relating to the ESCI competency clusters and behavioral indicator code counts associated with them.

Section 3 of this chapter presented the comparison of the thematic and ESCI data analysis results for the purposes of identifying alignment of the results produced from the two separate processes. The identification of thematic results supporting the ESCI competencies coach and mentor and teamwork were explored, with supporting quotations and descriptions of participant reports. The results presented in each of the 3 sections of Chapter 4 clearly indicate the presence of emotional intelligence competencies in the study participants that have been linked to increased leadership performance. Specifically, the emotional intelligence competencies have been shown in numerous studies to be indicators of leadership strength. In addition, the positive influence of these ESCI and emotional intelligence competencies on improved leadership effectiveness has been reported by a significant number of unaffiliated researchers.

This evidence, when combined with the descriptions provided by participants of mindfulness influencing changes in awareness and behaviors that contribute to improved leadership effectiveness, provides data directly applicable to the research question set
forth in Chapter 1. Furthermore, the results also contain indications that participants may have experienced state and trait level mindfulness changes. In Chapter 5 I discuss the findings from my interpretations of this data, and in Chapter 6 I discuss the contributions that they make to the literature presented in Chapter 2, the practice of mindfulness by organizational leaders, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5: Findings

This chapter presents the three findings from this study. In Chapter 3, I describe my methodologies for data collection and analysis, and in Chapter 4 I present the results of the data I collected. Herein, I interpret those data, discussing their relevance to my research question and demonstrating how this research relates to the broader literature on mindfulness and its influence on emotional intelligence competencies linked to improved leadership effectiveness.

My research attempts to understand what organizational leaders perceive to be the impact of mindfulness on their leadership effectiveness. In the course of interpreting the data, I find that organizational leaders credit mindfulness with contributing to positive, enduring changes to leadership behaviors that they link to a significant improvement in leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, the results of both the thematic and ESCI data analysis described in Chapter 4 indicate that the study participants possess ESCI and non-ESCI emotional intelligence competencies linked by researchers to increased leadership performance. This lends empirical support to the reports of positive outcomes attributed to mindfulness by participants. In addition, the results indicate that participants were able to consciously develop emotional intelligence competencies linked to more effective
leadership behaviors, and that mindfulness was credited for contributing to an improved awareness of the importance of investing in the development of these competencies.

Transcript analysis also revealed detailed descriptions of improved leadership effectiveness being significantly influenced by mindfulness, which may also provide evidence of trait level changes. For example, participants specifically linked mindfulness to improvements in emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, relationship management, and social awareness capabilities, which are linked to leadership effectiveness via emotional intelligence studies, and discussed in each of the three findings presented in this chapter. Participant reports indicating the presence and development of these ESCI and emotional intelligence competencies were provided in the context of having contributed to specific and general improvements to leadership capabilities, in addition to being linked to specific, positive workplace results.

Finally, the results presented in Chapter 4 also reference extensive descriptions of profound changes to awareness and behavior, which were described by participants as having contributed to fundamental improvements to leadership effectiveness. These reports were pervasive in the transcripts and as a result, the topic of positive changes to awareness and behavior contributing to improved leadership effectiveness is presented next, as Finding 1.

**Finding 1: Mindfulness is Perceived to have a Significant Impact on the Development of Behaviors Linked to Leadership Effectiveness.**

Participants described mindfulness as playing a significant role in producing positive changes to many aspects of their leadership behaviors. I explore participant descriptions of these changes as the first finding of the study, since they also represent
common themes relating to both of the remaining findings. Reports of improved leadership effectiveness linked to mindfulness included repeated successes in transforming organizational culture, positive changes to interpersonal capabilities, and career advancement. My review of the transcripts also identified examples including improved internal departmental performance metrics, team growth and increased funding, and better results for clients. Furthermore, participants attributed specific, positive project and/or financial outcomes to mindfulness, such as increased business unit profitability and increased sales revenue. Additional reports of improved leadership effectiveness provided by participants included successful management of board-level relationships, gaining the confidence of executive leaders, and setting positive examples for subordinates via effective management of stressful situations.

Descriptions of these types of results align with literature presented in Chapter 2, and explored in Finding 2, such as studies by Cavallo and Brienza (2003) and Bradberry and Greaves (2003), which report a relationship between higher emotional intelligence and higher rates of leader productivity and success. The behavioral changes linked to improved leadership effectiveness by participants also relate to the discussion of behavioral leadership and emotional intelligence research in Chapter 2, and provide examples aligning with research indicating that specific emotional intelligence competencies, and therefore more effective leadership behaviors, can be developed in adults (Emmerling & Goleman, 2003; Barlow, 1985; Marrow, Jarrett, & Rupinski, 1981; Boyatzis, Cowen, & Kolb, 1995). For example, in the transcripts participants report that positive leadership outcomes were influenced by development of new and/or improved levels of empathy and self-awareness (discussed in Finding 2). Furthermore, participants
described mindfulness as influencing critical cognitive functions relating to leadership effectiveness, such as decision-making (discussed in Finding 3), which is also supported by reports from researchers such as Luke and Gibson (2015), Quaglia et al. (2015), and Good et al. (2016). Finally, participants described an improved ability to develop subordinate engagement via their intentional exhibition of honest and more sincere interpersonal behavior (discussed in Finding 3), which aligns with Scandura and Schriesheim’s (1994) research linking leadership performance and trusting relationships.

Some of the other changes attributed to mindfulness in participants’ reports included descriptions of new levels of awareness concerning the behavioral requirements of effective leadership. These changes in awareness were revealed through participants’ in-depth descriptions of their roles as leaders in successes and failures, which often included comparing changes to their awareness and behavior before and after mindfulness interventions. The examples of behavioral changes provided by participants align with behavioral leadership literature cited in Chapter 2, such as exhibiting an understanding of how a leader is different than a manager (Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe et al., 1996) and what behaviors comprise true leadership (Bolden et al., 2003). In addition, analysis of transcripts revealed examples of participants having developed an effective understanding of how to apply other leadership concepts presented in Chapter 2, such as Leader-Member Exchange, and the demonstration of deontological ethics. Furthermore, descriptions illustrating these developments were provided in the context of new leadership behaviors that had been influenced by mindfulness and may represent evidence of the development of new traits.
Participants also provided examples of mindfulness influencing behavioral changes that indicated a conscious awareness of specific leadership competencies they had and/or were targeting for development, which aligns with the research of Boyatzis et al. (1995) indicating that adults are capable of both increasing emotional intelligence and consciously targeting specific competencies for development. In addition, participants revealed an ability to adapt their leadership behaviors in response to changing situations, which exemplifies the findings of Goleman (2000), indicating that leaders with strength in the competency of emotional self-awareness can adapt their leadership behaviors in response to changing situations.

For example, in-depth descriptions of participant changes in leadership behavior also revealed examples of deliberate engagement in participatory leadership strategies, similar to that referenced by Nohira & Khurana (2010). Finally, participants provided rich descriptions of improved leadership effectiveness being linked to an improved, conscious understanding of their own and others’ emotions, which is described in the research of Goleman et al. (2002).

When asked for examples supporting their attribution of improved leadership effectiveness to mindfulness, participants described a number of specific cases. For instance, one participant elaborated on the way mindfulness helped him to be a better listener, which he then linked to several cases of improved leadership effectiveness. One example the participant shared explored a specific situation and resulting dialog between himself and a stressed senior executive that reported to him. The participant detailed how he patiently talked at length with the executive and systematically guided him to reach the desired conclusion on his own. The participant was also able to elaborate on how this
strategy, which he indicated was influenced by mindfulness, resulted in a new level of awareness in the senior executive concerning his behavior and opportunities for more effective interaction with others.

Participants also reported that mindfulness influenced their decisions to change their leadership behavior in order to create team synergy. In one such example, involving the leadership of a group of senior executives and managers from multiple, global business units, the participant revealed an awareness and understanding of the shortcomings of his subordinates, which he was able to successfully address. In this case, the participant reported being able to unite the previously oppositional leadership teams of the business units and eventually build a new level of team synergy that resulted in a complete financial turn around for the organization.

When discussing how mindfulness influenced these results, the participant described his ability to focus on the development of new perspectives and interpersonal skills in his leadership team as having arisen from his own, mindfulness-influenced ability to accurately understand their individual shortcomings and the causes of their failures in a non-judgmental, results-oriented context. Having learned himself in the past that these issues could be addressed through the assistance of mindfulness, the participant was able to successfully influence the parties involved. As a result, the participant was able to create a leadership environment where members of his leadership team were willing to proactively address their own performance issues, work through past interpersonal and inter-departmental conflicts, and adopt a democratic and supportive approach to global management activity.
Participant examples of the positive influence of mindfulness presented in Chapter 4 also referenced the development of an ability to create a sense of trust in subordinates, peers, and superiors and to articulate vision and create emotional appeal. The development of new and/or improved abilities to stimulate innovation, intellectual engagement, and creative problem solving in subordinates, peers, and superiors was mentioned in the transcripts as well, and was described as having been improved by mindfulness. Finally, participant statements revealed their understanding of the importance of leaders demonstrating a commitment to the fulfillment of their subordinates’ individual needs, as well as to the cultivation of their individual potential. These realizations were also reported by participants as having been significantly influenced by mindfulness.

**Summary.** The study results explored in this finding represent the common themes of improvement to leadership effectiveness and the development and/or improvement of specific leadership behaviors. Described by participants as having been significantly influenced by mindfulness, these unifying themes are a fundamental component of the results reported in Chapter 4 and provide data aligning with much of the literature presented in Chapter 2. In addition, these themes are also common, fundamental elements of the remaining two findings described in this chapter. Finally, factual support of the existence of the behavioral changes explored in this finding was produced through the identification of specific emotional intelligence competencies, which is described in detail in the next finding.
Finding 2: Mindfulness May Influence the Development of Emotional Intelligence Competencies Empirically linked to Increased Leadership Performance.

The results of the ESCI data analysis described in Chapter 4 indicate that the study participants possess ESCI competencies linked to increased leadership performance. In addition, themes and sub-themes discussed in sections 1 and 3 of Chapter 4 further support the finding that study participants possess emotional intelligence competencies linked to leadership effectiveness by a number of non-ESCI affiliated researchers and scholars (Lam & Kirby, 2002; Freshman & Rubino, 2002; Strickland, 2000; Gardner, 1993; Sadri, 2012). This finding is significant because it provides empirical support of participant claims of improved leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, this finding represents the first known assessment of ESCI competencies performed on qualitative interviews focused on mindfulness and leadership effectiveness (Boyatzis, personal communication, September 18, 2015; Good, personal communication, June 9, 2015; Hunter, personal communication, October 10, 2015). The reports revealing the presence of these emotional intelligence competencies were provided by participants as examples of how mindfulness contributed to leadership effectiveness, which further links leader mindfulness with emotional intelligence competencies associated with increased leadership performance.

Interview transcripts also indicated that participants had a history of deliberately developing and changing their leadership behaviors in order to improve leadership effectiveness. These reports provide additional evidence of the presence of the emotional intelligence competency emotional self-awareness, which aligns with research indicating that certain emotional intelligence competencies underpin higher levels of leadership
performance (Havers, 2010). Specifically, Havers (2010) reports that 92% of leaders with high measures in the emotional intelligence competency emotional self-awareness created positive, high performance climates, such as the team environments described in Chapter 4, which participants credited with being key contributing factors to successful outcomes. In addition, research by Harrison and Clough (2006) names high levels of emotional intelligence, which were indicated by the results of ESCI analysis, as a characteristic of effective leaders. Finally, a study of senior executives by Rosete and Ciarrochi (2005) also showed that emotional intelligence is associated with increased leadership effectiveness, and Sadri et al. (2011) point out that emotional intelligence has been described as being linked to leadership performance by Bar-On & Parker (2000).

In order to illustrate the main elements of this finding, I have chosen to explore the emotional intelligence competencies most frequently described in the transcripts by participants as having influenced the development of improved leadership behaviors. Therefore, I discuss both emotional self-awareness and emotional self-management in the next section, followed by a section exploring participant examples of improved levels of empathy. The transcripts also indicated the presence of emotional intelligence and ESCI competencies relating to social awareness and relationship management; however, those competencies are addressed in the discussion of Finding 3, and therefore are not explored as a part of this finding.

**Emotional self-awareness and self-management.** Participants credited mindfulness with contributing to a significant improvement in their ability to consciously observe, interpret, and manage their internal emotional states, which they also reported as contributing to improved leadership effectiveness. Examples of beneficial results arising
from improved emotional self-awareness capabilities include identification of optimal leadership behaviors, improved communication and relationships, and better management of negative emotions. These types of reports align with emotional intelligence literature indicating that individuals who are strong in the competency of emotional self-awareness will exhibit behaviors including recognition of personal strengths and weaknesses, and the ability to observe and describe feelings and their internal and external effects (Hay Group, 2015). In addition, these results support statements from Brown et al. (2007) reporting a relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence in the context of mindfulness improving an individual’s capacity for self-management.

Study participants indicated that mindfulness had a significant effect on their conscious ability to identify both effective and ineffective leadership strategies for specific situations, which subsequently enabled them to become more adept at exhibiting situation-appropriate leadership behaviors. Participants also reported that the combination of an improved capacity for self-awareness and awareness of how others perceived and reacted to them coincided with this change. These realizations were described by participants as waking up to a new awareness of their susceptibility to emotional triggers, reactivity, and personal beliefs in the context of how those factors either improved or detracted from effective leadership behaviors. Participants indicated that mindfulness had played a significant role in their understanding of the causes for emotional reactivity, and more importantly, the realization that they could effectively manage these factors as part of a fundamental improvement to their leadership behaviors.

Participants also credited mindfulness with a significantly improved ability to be present and attentive to communication via more developed emotional self-awareness and
emotional self-management capabilities. These changes enabled them to observe and
better navigate interactions to which they previously would have had automatic and
negative reactions. This realization on the part of participants contributed to awareness
of, and improvements to, the manner in which they engaged with others. These reports
support research by Scandura and Schriesheim (1994) indicating a need for effective
leaders to clearly communicate with subordinates and to make conscious efforts to
develop trust. In addition, these reports are similar to those of senior executives with
General Mills having become better listeners as a result of mindfulness interventions
(Gelles, 2012). Finally, examples provided by participants of improved workplace
interaction align with research linking mindfulness with more prosocial behavior
(Condon et al., 2013), increased attentive listening, and more effective responses to
others (Beckman et al., 2012).

Some of the most frequently reported benefits of improved emotional self-
awareness and emotional self-management dealt with reductions in emotional reactivity
and improved emotional self-management relating to fear, worry, and stress. Participants
reported significant improvements in their ability to detect and manage these feelings and
were able to compare their improved post-intervention emotional self-management
capabilities to their more reactive and sometimes subconscious pre-intervention
responses to situations. Finally, participants also credited mindfulness for helping with
the recognition and management of depression and anxiety, including an improved
awareness of the triggers and strategies for alleviating the conditions.

These reports align with research explored in chapter 2, indicating that
mindfulness assists practitioners with reductions in anxiety and stress levels, in addition
to contributing to positive changes in mood, strengthening emotional self-management, and improving cognitive function (Johnson et al., 2014; Rosenkranz et al., 2013; Ortner et al., 2007; Carmody et al., 2009; Kabat-Zinn et al., 1998; Davidson, 2012; Lazar, 2005; Kerr et al., 2013). In addition, participants’ descriptions of becoming better able to manage negative emotions also revealed their ability to redirect attention to present-moment sensory awareness, thereby utilizing different sets of neural pathways as described by Farb et al. (2012).

Participants’ ability to describe how, through mindfulness, they became consciously aware of and better able to regulate the experiences of anxiety and stress responses also indicates that they developed the ability to shift their awareness toward a limbic pathway. This ability improves stress recovery and reduces amygdala activity that would otherwise contribute to additional stress and anxiety responses to external stimuli (Johnson et al., 2014, Posner et al., 2007; Taren et al., 2013). Furthermore, participants’ reports of mindfulness assisting with the management of depression, anxiety, anger, and stress are supported by research indicating that mindfulness-based clinical treatment programs produce similar results (Wolever et al., 2012; Speca, 2000; Kabat-Zinn, 1990). In addition, these reports indicate potential trait level changes in participants.

Participants also reported that their improved capacity for emotional self-awareness via mindfulness had a positive effect on other areas of their awareness. Specifically, discussion of improved emotional self-awareness also included references to these changes having contributed to awareness of, and appreciation for the feelings and thoughts of those with whom the participants interact. As the next section explores in
greater detail, the development of an improved level of awareness of others also led to significant growth in empathy for others.

**Improved Empathy for, and Awareness of Others.** Study participants reported that mindfulness helped them develop an improved awareness of and consideration for others’ thoughts and emotions, and as a result, they became better able to identify (empathize) with others’ feelings. These reports also involved development of an intellectual understanding of the needs and motives of others, which participants linked to improvements in leadership effectiveness as well.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the sub-theme of empathy was one of the most highly referenced topics in the transcripts, and participants provided extensive and richly detailed descriptions illustrating a new or improved ability to understand the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of others. This shift in awareness included not only an intellectual attempt to see things as others do but also efforts to understand what others may be feeling. This more empathetic approach to engaging with others was described as having been incorporated by participants into everyday interactions, and participants also mentioned a higher level of empathy as contributing to an improved ability to identify others’ intentions. Furthermore, participants associated improved interpersonal engagement with employees, peers, and superiors with improvements to an intellectual (cognitive empathy) awareness of the feelings of others, changes that were also attributed by participants to an improved ability on their part to understand the motives and needs of those they work with.

In addition to being an ESCI competency shown to indicate the presence of leadership strength, empathy is also an emotional intelligence competency that Goleman
et al. (2002) report is possessed by standout leaders via their ability to understand and develop their own and others’ emotions. Furthermore, empathy is also linked to increased leadership effectiveness by a number of other leadership development researchers (House & Podsakoff, 1994; Sadri et al., 2011). Uhl-Bien (2006) and Bennis (2007) clarify the role of empathy in leadership settings, reporting that leadership is relational, therefore requiring an effective leader to possess empathetic capabilities in order to relate to and identify the needs of others.

The quality of the relationship between leader and follower is believed to be a key element of team performance, and it is comprised of many behaviors encompassed by empathy (Brower et al., 2000; Gerstner & Day, 1997). In addition, House and Podsakoff (1994) show that effective leaders display empathy more than ineffective leaders, and Ashkanasy et al. (2002) indicate that empathy is exhibited by leaders through visible displays of consideration for and sensitivity to their followers. Leaders with the capacity for displaying empathy are also thought to be better able to build more supportive relationships through an improved ability to understand others (Humphrey, 2002; Kellett et al., 2006; Wolff et al., 2002), and, as a result, empathic capabilities have been shown to be positively related to improved leadership effectiveness (Sadri et al., 2011). Therefore, the presence of detailed descriptions of the development of empathy in the transcripts serves as additional and significant evidence that participants have developed and possess higher levels of leadership strength, in addition to having potentially experienced changes at the trait level.

Summary. This finding addresses the study results focused on identifying the presence of specific emotional intelligence competencies linked by researchers to increased
leadership performance. In addition to detailing the supporting relationship between the results and emotional intelligence competencies linked to improved leadership effectiveness presented in Chapter 2, this finding also focused on exploring participants’ reports of improved levels of emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and empathy. Discussion also touched on additional points addressed by the literature presented in Chapter 2, specifically that mindfulness has been linked to positive changes in awareness and cognitive function. Study participants provided examples of these changes in the context of having contributed to improved leadership effectiveness, the details of which are explored in the next finding.

**Finding 3: Mindful Leaders Perceive a Significant Relationship Between Mindfulness and Improved Cognitive Function.**

As discussed in Chapter 2, mindfulness affects areas of the brain that influence perception, emotional regulation, introspection, complex thinking, sense of self, and other internal functions that influence behavior (Congleton et al., 2015; Fox et al., 2014; Frewen et al., 2010). For example, greater emotional self-management enabled by mindfulness is said to function by strengthening the cognitive control mechanisms associated with the prefrontal cortex, which is involved in reasoning, inhibition, and decision-making (Barbey et al., 2012; Lazar et al., 2005). It should come as no surprise then, that study participants reported improved cognitive function in multiple areas, such as the ability to focus, make decisions, and consciously take steps to reduce interpersonal conflict. Participants also mentioned developing an improved tolerance to external distractions and a reduction in judgmental thinking, as well as other benefits presented in this finding.
In addition to being highlighted as sub-theme 6.3 in Chapter 4, improved cognitive function was referenced in other sub-themes when participants described changes in behavior and/or awareness contributing to improvements in leadership effectiveness. For example, improvements in cognitive function are referenced in sub-theme 3.1, Emotional Self-Control, and in discussion of the ESCI competency Influence. References to mindfulness contributing to improvements in cognitive function were also interwoven throughout the transcripts when changes to behavior and improved leadership results were reported.

Examples of mindfulness improving participants’ cognitive function included positive changes to environmental observation and information-gathering capabilities, and also referenced more effective responses and decision-making ability during times of crisis or great difficulty. Reports such as these indicate that mindfulness may help to alleviate one or more of the stress-induced catastrophic leadership failures described by Thompson (2005), and participants specifically mentioned that mindfulness helped them minimize cognitive impairment caused by stress, anxiety, fear, and worry. In this context, improved cognitive function was described as aiding participants in utilizing emotional self-management strategies as needed, such as taking time to consciously accept difficult situations as a proactive step towards producing the mental clarity required for the creation of factually based solutions.

Current literature aligns with these reports, indicating that mindfulness may contribute to a reduction in cognitive function variability, thereby influencing goal-directed behavior and helping leaders manage attention and emotion during disruptive and/or threatening situations (Good et al., 2016). In addition, participants credited
improved cognitive function, through reports of cognitive improvements to capabilities of observation and interpretation, for both contributing to and being further developed by improved levels of emotional self-awareness, empathy, social awareness, and emotional self-management. These reports support Yukl’s (2010) statement that strong levels of emotional intelligence in competencies relating to social interactions can help leaders develop strength in complex decision making, problem solving, adaptive behavior, and crisis management. These topics are explored in greater detail next.

**Conscious Regulation of Emotional Influences on Cognitive Function.** Participants reported improved cognitive function resulting from an improved capacity to observe and remain emotionally disconnected from disruptive workplace situations. For example, participants described a strengthened ability to focus on and assess emotionally charged situations that, prior to mindfulness, would have been subconsciously repressed, mismanaged, and/or avoided. This change included improved recognition of specific types of negative emotional reactions in others, in addition to contributing to an improved ability to avoid triggering them. Participants also indicated that improved cognitive function helped them identify and accurately interpret the effect of their own emotional state on those around them. This capability was revealed through participants’ descriptions of consciously remaining calm, focused, and emotionally nonreactive, leading to an improved ability to accurately identify critical information and make better decisions. These descriptions align with research indicating that mindfulness stabilizes attention in the present and contributes to greater vigilance relating to visual and listening tasks (Good et al., 2016).
Participants also reported that a combination of emotional self-management and improved cognitive function helped them to more effectively recognize internal and external bias, in addition to successfully navigating workplace political issues of which they were not previously aware. These descriptions support research indicating that mindfulness reduces automatically activated mental associations (Luke & Gibson, 2015), which has a positive effect on bias, decision-making, and other mental processes. These reports also seem to support research by Quaglia et al., (2015), which indicates that mindfulness has a positive influence on the ability to recognize and interpret socio-emotional stimuli.

Participants’ descriptions of improved cognitive function also appear to support mindfulness-related differences in brain function that have been observed in patterns of EEG activity. Specifically, these patterns indicate a relationship between mindfulness and more efficient attention and executive processes, particularly in the frontal and parietal brain regions (Lutz et al., 2004; Raz & Buhle, 2006). In studies of experienced practitioners, the state of active mindfulness has also been shown to relate to activity in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, parietal cortex, the temporal lobe, and the anterior cingulate cortex (Lazar et al., 2000; Farb et al., 2012), all of which are known to play an integral role in attention and executive function (Goleman, 2011; Pessoa, 2008).

From the standpoint of improved overall cognitive function, mindfulness practitioners are believed to be better at resisting distractions and answering questions correctly, and the region of the brain where this activity occurs is also associated with learning from past experience to support optimal decision-making (Van den Hurk et al., 2010; Congleton et al., 2015). Areas of the brain consistently affected by mindfulness are
also associated with the ability to purposefully direct attention and behavior, suppress inappropria\text{t}e emotional responses, and switch strategies flexibly (Congleton et al., 2015; Fox et al., 2014). The regions of the brain and corresponding areas of mental function that these neuroscience studies indicate are enhanced by mindfulness align with the improvements in cognitive function described by study participants.

\textbf{Deliberate Observation and Management of Personal Interaction.} Participants reported that mindfulness helped them develop an improved ability to monitor and regulate thoughts that were judgmental of others, in addition to having a better understanding of how such thoughts were triggered and potentially detrimental to their leadership effectiveness. For example, participants described an improved ability to recognize the true intentions of others they interacted with, when they previously would have jumped to conclusions or been prone to assumptions about what others were attempting to communicate. This level of awareness is relevant to research by Ortner et al. (2007), which showed that mindfulness practitioners demonstrated less emotional interference in their ability to control their attention. In this context, participants also reported that mindfulness helped them develop a more tolerant, inquisitive, and open-minded approach to workplace issues, which, in addition to other benefits, they linked to more effective management of anger and hostility in themselves and others. Descriptions such as these indicate the presence of results similar to those reported by Liang et al. (2015), linking mindfulness with reduced hostility towards poor performing subordinates.

Transcript analysis also revealed that participants linked mindfulness to the development of a conscious awareness of, and appreciation for, the importance of relationships with others. These reports focused primarily on subordinates and peers in
participants’ places of employment; however, advisory boards, nonprofit organizations, and community activity groups were also mentioned. Reports touched on the workplace value arising from improved relationships, and participants also detailed how they had become aware of the importance of changing their behaviors in order to develop more trusting relationships. This realization brought participants to a new level of conscious recognition of factors relating to interpersonal interaction, specifically their own role in actively developing mutually respectful and beneficial relationships.

Examples of how this realization translated into new participant behaviors include descriptions of consciously demonstrating honesty, sincerity, and vulnerability in their interactions with others. Participants also indicated an understanding of the importance of creating trusting relationships to their success as leaders and indicated that they had deliberately worked to become comfortable exhibiting the previously mentioned behaviors as a means to cultivate improved relationships with others. In addition, the participants reported that the new behaviors they developed as a result of realizations about more effective interpersonal relationships led not only to improved subordinate engagement, but also to being more trusted and sought for advice by employees, peers, and superiors. Finally, when discussing the performance of their teams, participants also described activity focused on helping develop the same realizations and resulting behavioral changes in their subordinates.

Participants indicated that efforts on their part to improve relationships had contributed to improved team performance, loyalty, and levels of respect among members. These reports support statements from Good et al. (2016) indicating that a mindful leader’s ability to modulate the tone of a group may have a positive effect on
team functioning, in addition to reports that mindful individuals have higher relationship satisfaction (Barnes et al., 2007). These reports may also align with research indicating that mindfulness has a positive influence on relationship stability via reduction of the negative effects of attachment anxiety (Saavedra et al., 2010), since such anxiety would be reduced by improved relationships with others in the workplace.

Participant reports also imply alignment with research by Good et al. (2016) suggesting that the less self-referential way that mindful leaders process events assists them in being more attentive to the needs and interests of those around them. These same reports also support research indicating that greater team cohesion and collective performance is influenced by mindfulness (Cleirigh & Greaney, 2014). For example, Good et al. (2016) suggest that these findings are influenced via stable and controlled attention being the basis for shared mental models and coordination of efforts between members (Metiu & Rothbard, 2012). Specifically, the researchers report that a mutual focus of attention on a shared task both results from, and is reinforced by, shared emotions among group members, contributing to collective, task-oriented progress and effective problem solving.

The link between mindfulness influencing emotional intelligence and ESCI competencies related to social awareness and empathy also implies an improved ability to emotionally identify with others and function in relationships (Wachs & Cordova, 2007; Barnes et al., 2007; Arch & Craske, 2006). As mentioned earlier, the combination of higher emotional intelligence and improved relationship quality has been shown to contribute to improved employee performance, in part attributed to a higher level of psychological need satisfaction experienced by employees via a higher quality
relationship with their managers (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Similar types of more functional relationships are believed to reduce emotional exhaustion in employees, which may also contribute to positive aspects of team performance and development (Maslach, 1982; Maslach et al., 2001). In the case of this study, participants were able to clearly describe examples of having cultivated more effective relationships that contributed to improved outcomes, in addition to being able to articulate why and how they believed their new behaviors produced these results.

Amid participant descriptions of improvements to leadership behaviors, I also identified examples of participants’ reporting that corresponding improvements to their emotional self-management capacity had positively influenced their cognitive function as well. In these cases, participants reported that the combination of improvements to emotional self-management and cognitive capabilities had enabled them to consciously identify strategic leadership requirements, as well as deliberately exhibit new behaviors that influenced improved employee performance. For example, participants described instances of consciously demonstrating moral and ethical standards, thereby knowingly creating a sense of trust in followers, and showing commitment to the fulfillment of followers’ individual needs and potentials. These reports align with behavioral leadership theories (Spencer, 1997; McClelland, 1998; Boyatzis, 1982), and demonstrate the manner in which improved cognitive function may improve a leader’s ability to consciously implement effective leadership strategies based on both emotional and intellectual understanding of the needs of their coworkers. Finally, these descriptions of changes to awareness and behavior may indicate the development of new emotional intelligence traits linked to increased leadership performance.
Summary. This finding explored study results specific to participants’ reports of mindfulness having improved their cognitive function, in addition to the relationship between this finding and the existing literature. The relationship between mindfulness and improved levels of emotional self-awareness and social awareness were also described in the context of their relationship to improved cognitive function. Specifically, the manner in which improved emotional self-awareness and social awareness contributed to the identification of more accurate information required for decision-making and situational interpretation was discussed, in addition to participant reports that mindfulness contributed to a more functional understanding of what triggered their negative emotional reactions. This understanding was reported as having led to an improved ability to detect and manage automatic emotional responses, which contributed to improved cognitive function. Furthermore, participants reported that mindfulness had helped them more effectively manage stressful leadership requirements such as risk-taking and negotiations by minimizing the cognitive interference caused by negative emotional responses. Finally, participants described having come to very clear conclusions concerning what effective leadership behaviors are, why they are effective, and how to go about developing them.

Conclusion

The findings presented in this chapter represent both the empirically supported and most frequently identified thematic patterns revealed during the data analysis process described in Chapter 4. I structured the reporting of these findings to address the research question set forth in Chapter 1, in addition to presenting how they align with the literature
covered in Chapter 2. This chapter reported three findings, each exploring specific types of improvements to leadership effectiveness that participants attributed to mindfulness.

Finding 1 explored participant descriptions of mindfulness contributing to improved leadership effectiveness via changes in awareness and development of leadership behaviors. The wide range of positive leadership outcomes shared by participants were discussed, as were more detailed examples illustrating the manner in which changes to awareness and behavior were attributed by participants to improved leadership effectiveness. Finally, the alignment of the study results with leadership, mindfulness and emotional intelligence literature was presented in order to show the relationship between the specific ESCI and emotional intelligence competencies identified and research linking those competencies to improved leadership effectiveness.

Finding 2 explored the empirical findings of the ESCI data analysis process and supporting, emotional intelligence competencies identified by the thematic data analysis process. Specifically, the ESCI behavioral indicators identified in the participant sample indicates that the participants possess ESCI emotional intelligence competencies linked to increased leadership performance. Furthermore, sub-themes identified during thematic analysis also supported this finding with additional examples indicating evidence of emotional intelligence competencies that have been linked to improved leadership effectiveness. The results discussed in this finding also offered a deeper understanding of the way in which mindfulness is believed by participants to influence improved leadership effectiveness through detailed participant descriptions of the development of emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, awareness of others, and empathy.
Finding 3 explored the positive influence that participants reported mindfulness having on their cognitive function. Specifically, this finding examined the benefits of active, conscious recognition and management of thoughts, feelings and behaviors influencing improved leadership effectiveness by participants. These areas of improvement included complex problem solving and decision-making, and referenced development of the emotional intelligence competencies emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, and conflict management. Participants also mentioned developing an improved tolerance to external distractions, stress, and anxiety, and a reduction in judgmental thinking relating to both reactivity and bias. Finally, participants described the role that mindfulness played in their improved leadership effectiveness by helping them to become more emotionally detached from certain aspects of interpersonal relationships and their own emotional reactions to leadership demands.

The three findings presented in this chapter represent a detailed reporting of the key results that emerged from the data analysis process. These findings were structured in order to accurately present specific aspects of participant responses that answer the research question. In addition, the ESCI data analysis results further address the research question by demonstrating that study participants possess emotional intelligence competencies that have been empirically linked to improved leadership performance. This evidence supports participant reports of mindfulness having a positive impact on their leadership effectiveness, and these findings represent contributions to the existing literature that are discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter 6: Contributions to Literature and Practice, and Recommendations for Future Research

This chapter explores the contributions of this study to the literature presented in Chapter 2, followed by discussion of contribution to practice and my recommendations for future research. The content of each section is intended to focus on further development of the study of mindfulness as it relates to organizational leadership; however, areas of general workplace and personal performance are also addressed in the process. Finally, the following three sections also relate to the study of emotional intelligence and neuroscience in the context of improved leadership effectiveness.

Contribution to the Literature

The results and findings presented in this study inform the existing literature by providing new information relating to a number of the areas of study discussed in Chapter 2. These areas include the study of mindfulness in leadership settings and the use of mindfulness specifically for the development of more effective leadership behaviors. In addition, the results presented in this study contribute to the understanding of how mindfulness is related to both the development of emotional intelligence and specific regions of the brain from the standpoint of positive changes to awareness and behaviors.

The findings contribute to the existing literature focused on the study of mindfulness in leadership settings primarily due to the level of detail provided by participants. This information adds to existing knowledge about leader mindfulness by providing greater organizational, leadership-specific and event-level context. For example, existing literature strongly implies that organizational leader mindfulness plays a role in improving leadership effectiveness; however, this study provides additional
insight into the actual process of changes to awareness and behavior that occur during the development of new and more effective leadership behaviors. In particular, the analysis of in-depth descriptions of this process offers an opportunity to gain further understanding of the role played by mindfulness in influencing these changes via the highly specific examples provided by participants.

As this study indicates, mindful leaders are conscious of, and able to provide details concerning the manner in which mindfulness has influenced improvements to their leadership effectiveness. However, the relationship between mindfulness and improvements to leadership effectiveness resulting from, for example, improved levels of empathy and emotional self-awareness has yet to be thoroughly explored by researchers. Therefore, this study provides additional data that may contribute to greater understanding of this relationship, specifically how a mindful leader experiences and chooses to describe the process of developing these and other emotional intelligence competencies.

In addition, this study provides a more comprehensive look at the holistic processes by which mindfulness influences leadership effectiveness. For example, detail is provided on the relationship between the leaders’ awareness of their own thoughts and feelings, the effect of those thoughts on feelings on their interactions with others, and how this awareness influences their decisions to change and adapt effectively within their organizational environment. Being one of the few qualitative studies to explore mindfulness from this holistic perspective, the findings also offer greater insight into the internal experiences of the participants concerning the way that new levels of awareness and personal realizations arising from mindfulness influence beliefs and behaviors.
The study further contributes to the literature on leadership development by adding to a greater understanding of the role mindfulness plays in the individual experience of developing specific behaviors linked to improved leadership effectiveness, and ultimately how mindfulness can be used to help consistently develop these competencies as a part of organizational leadership initiatives. In addition, the study adds to the understanding of how mindfulness may or may not influence leadership effectiveness within several of the theoretical leadership frameworks discussed in Chapter 2. For example, while participant descriptions indicating the presence and development of emotional intelligence competencies were analyzed from the perspective of behavioral leadership theory, research also links emotional intelligence with transformational leadership (Collins, 2001; Sosik & Megerian, 1999; Wang & Huang, 2009), via many of the competencies discussed in this study (Gardner & Stough, 2002). Furthermore, the role played by mindfulness in stress reduction may be complimentary to the implementation of contingency theories, since they incorporate recognition of the negative effects of stress on decision-making and other cognitive leadership functions (Bolden et al., 2003). Therefore, the findings may also help to further the understanding of how mindfulness may improve leadership effectiveness utilizing the transformational and/or contingency theoretical approaches.

The findings add to the current literature on emotional intelligence as a result of the ESCI analysis conducted in the study. By producing valid evidence of the presence of all 12 ESCI competencies in participants, the findings contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between mindfulness and the development and/or improvement of emotional intelligence competencies linked to increased leadership
performance. Specifically, the identification of ESCI competencies through descriptions of how leaders have become more effective via mindfulness is of potential significance because it specifically contributes to the understanding of how emotional intelligence competencies linked to increased leadership performance may be developed or improved through mindfulness interventions. In addition, the findings of this study may add to the understanding of the process of intentional, sustainable change on the part of the individual, as presented in Boyatzis’ (2006b) discussion of Intentional Change Theory (ICT). For example, not only did study participants provide detailed descriptions of deliberate efforts to initiate and maintain personal changes in behavior, they also described changes in their perspectives towards work, and their feelings concerning specific situations and coworkers. These changes were reported as having been influenced by mindfulness, and since they also align with the types of changes explored by ICT, the findings of this study may add additional understanding to the role that mindfulness plays in the process of intentional, personal change.

The current neuroscience literature focused on mindfulness may also benefit from what is revealed in the detailed descriptions of changes to awareness and behaviors provided by participants. For example, the in-depth descriptions may contribute to a better understanding of how the state of mindfulness influences beneficial changes in specific regions of the brain. Specifically, detailed descriptions of improvement to cognitive functions, and the way in which mindfulness influenced self-awareness and more effective interpersonal behaviors provides an opportunity for adding to an understanding of what regions of the brain are involved in the process of these changes. In addition, the findings may lead to a greater understanding of how mindfulness
influences leaders to become consciously aware of the emotional states of those around them, as well as developing the ability to accurately interpret the effect that their behavior has on others.

This study also sheds light onto broader areas of the study of leadership effectiveness that mindfulness may impact. Specifically, participants reported changes in awareness that may add new perspectives to the way in which organizational leadership and emotional intelligence development is traditionally viewed and carried out. For example, 98% of participants attributed mindfulness practice to one or more pivotal moments of realization concerning their fundamental understanding of what truly effective leadership is, and requires of them. These critical realizations were described as having led to significant, deliberate changes in behavior, which participants linked to their most impactful improvements in leadership effectiveness.

Detailed examples of many of these changes in awareness and subsequent realizations are discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, however, these changes can also be summarized as the development of a fundamental understanding that subordinates, peers and superiors can, on some level, sense whether or not the leader is sincere in their words and actions, and thereby worthy of a more trusting and supportive relationship. In this context 79% of participants specifically mentioned having realized the importance of demonstrating authenticity, honesty and vulnerability in the workplace in order to develop stronger interpersonal relationships. The importance of demonstrating compassion and a fundamental value for others was also described as contributing to aspects of improved relationships, including team cohesion and performance, and more meaningful interactions with peers and superiors.
Another pivotal moment of realization reported by 52% of participants focused on conscious acceptance of less than desirable circumstances and their personal role in controlling their emotional and behavioral reactions. In addition, the concept of acceptance was raised by participants in discussion relating to their realization that they could make deliberate efforts towards increased happiness and greater optimism in the workplace and in their personal lives.

Taken in the context of existing leadership and emotional intelligence development activities, the exploration of these points adds a new, potentially useful perspective concerning what may be the most effective processes for developing and/or improving leadership effectiveness via a more holistic impact on the mechanisms related to development of leadership behaviors. Specifically, participant descriptions of pivotal realizations about self, and changes to their perceptions and valuing of others may indicate that significant improvements to leadership effectiveness could be achieved more quickly and with a higher rate of success should resources be focused on the cultivation of these realizations and changes to perceptions via mindfulness interventions.

**Contribution to Practice**

Having arisen from in-depth analysis of specific examples of mindfulness having influenced improved leadership effectiveness, the results presented in this study make a potentially significant contribution to the understanding of the practice of mindfulness in organizational leadership settings. Areas of relevance include detailed examples illustrating the manner in which leaders utilize mindfulness for specific purposes, and the results attributed to those choices. In addition, this study provides new details concerning the role played by mindfulness in the deliberate development of specific emotional
intelligence competencies for the purpose of improved leadership effectiveness. Finally, the results and findings presented in the previous two chapters provide new, action-oriented insight into the relationship between mindfulness, increased emotional self-awareness and the development of increased capacity for the individual to consciously engage in behavioral changes contributing to improved effectiveness. These areas of relevance make a potentially significant contribution to the understanding of beneficial and repeatable mindfulness practices by individuals. Such insight may support more efficient third party and self-guided instructional design choices, in addition to organizational adoption of mindfulness programs with a higher likelihood of delivering positive results.

This study also makes a potentially significant contribution to understanding the practice of mindfulness in organizational settings via examples detailing how leaders utilize mindfulness in specific situations, and for the purpose of influencing specific types of outcomes. This information is especially valuable in the context of mindfulness training program design, both instructor led and self-guided, focused on improved leadership effectiveness. For instance, the examples explored in this study provide insight concerning not only how organizational leaders use mindfulness for specific areas of improved effectiveness, but also the personal experiences and processes that accompanied the results they attribute to mindfulness.

In the context of training, this study may contribute to greater efficiency in producing similar results due to information that may help associate certain mindfulness practices with specific paths for emotional intelligence competency development leading to specific types of outcomes. In addition, this outcome-specific data can be used in the
development of training aimed at improving the effectiveness of teams, departments and even organizational culture. Finally, the wealth of information shared by participants relating to leadership results and positive behavioral changes attributed to mindfulness provides valuable data that may be used for the justification of investment in mindfulness training, both organizationally sponsored and/or individually funded.

This study also represents new contributions to the practice of mindfulness in the form of results detailing how participants developed specific emotional intelligence competencies linked to improved leadership effectiveness. Although these results were in some cases identified as occurring without participant awareness, participants also described an ability to deliberately focus on further development of specific emotional intelligence competencies. In this context, participant reports revealed a link between mindfulness and the development of an awareness of the process of personal change, in addition to their role in that process. Therefore, data presented in this study contributes not only to a greater understanding of how mindfulness may influence the development of emotional intelligence competencies linked to leadership effectiveness, but also provides context-specific examples that add to the current knowledge concerning how these changes can more consistently be achieved. In addition, the in-depth descriptions shared by participants help to clarify the way in which improvements to emotional intelligence competencies, such as emotional self-awareness and emotional self-management, may directly influence leadership capabilities such as improved decision-making, interpersonal engagement, and more effective management of subordinates.

In addition to providing detailed, field practitioner-level examples of the process through which mindfulness influences the development of emotional intelligence
competencies, the results presented in this study also contribute to a greater understanding of the interrelationship of changes to emotional self-awareness, leadership behavior, and social awareness. Specifically, transcript analysis reveals that this interrelationship is not a linear process of development, but rather one that is sometimes cyclical in nature. For example, participants describe reaching levels of emotional self-awareness that bring an understanding of why and how they need to change their behavior. However, this same improvement in emotional self-awareness may also continue to evolve, providing the practitioner with additional capacity for identifying other areas where they need to change, which may include refinement or cessation of previously developed behaviors. This understanding is particularly valuable to both trainers and practitioners, since the end-to-end examples explored may help to shorten the learning process by providing a comprehensive view of the process of change.

Furthermore, in-depth understanding of the process of change described by participants will help to establish more realistic expectations for practitioners and instructors concerning the experiences and processes involved in mindfulness interventions focused on leadership effectiveness, in addition to appreciation for the degree of effort invested by others to produce improvements in this area. The contributions to practice discussed here also provide new insight that could be incorporated into future research design, which is explored in greater detail in the next section.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are addressed here, as this exploration helps to establish the context required for discussion of suggestions for future research. For example, this study relies heavily on participant perceptions of the role played by
mindfulness in influencing improved leadership effectiveness. In addition, participant reports are the only source of information indicating behavioral changes and improvements to leadership effectiveness. In each of these cases, empirical data enabling the identification and/or comparison of supporting performance metrics would add significant value to the study. Furthermore, data proving participant claims of behavioral changes would also add validity to the findings.

Issues of participant bias also limit the strength of the study, relating to both descriptions of improved leadership outcomes and the positive influence of mindfulness in that context. In these cases, 360-degree assessments would help to add validity to participant claims of changes influenced by mindfulness, and longitudinal studies implemented prior to mindfulness interventions would have been ideal for documenting reports of improved results influenced by mindfulness. Although this study makes new and useful contributions to the existing literature, the empirical shortcomings also make the need for more rigorous research utilizing different designs more apparent. This subject, along with suggestions for additional research, is explored in greater detail in the next section.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

Growing interest in the topics of mindfulness and improved leadership effectiveness, combined with an increase in potential senior-level support within large organizations, presents an opportunity for a variety of significant new or modified studies. For example, due to the shortage of qualitative data currently reported on in the existing literature, interview questions similar to those used in this study could be added to other types of mindful leadership research. This approach would help to collect
information from study participants that could add depth and context explaining the thoughts, feelings, and experiences behind answers provided to accompanying quantitative inquiries.

For instance, the studies conducted by Reb et al. (2014) and Stanley et al. (2009) reporting empirical measures of the influence of mindfulness on practitioners and/or their subordinates would have benefitted from structured, in-depth interviews and/or emotional intelligence assessments designed to gather qualitative information from participants and their coworkers augmenting the quantitative data collected. Full 360-degree assessments for each of the participants studied would create additional data that could be used to develop a more complete picture of the true effect of mindfulness on the individuals via analysis of co-worker reports. In these cases, detailed participant interviews would also add valuable insight concerning the development of new behaviors and levels of awareness of study participants, which could have also added greater understanding to the quantitative findings.

Another strategy for increasing the existing pool of knowledge relating to the topic of this dissertation would entail completion of additional interviews using the question set from this study in order to create a larger sample size. With a larger, more representative and diverse data sample, additional types of analysis may be possible. For example, analysis of a larger data sample may reveal new correlations with level of education, participant industry, country of residence, or other data classifications.

This information could add to an understanding of how specific types of mindfulness training correlate with specific types workplace leadership results and/or mindful leader profiles. In addition, a larger sample size would likely reveal new themes
and sub-themes that may result in new findings. Finally, a detailed, short-answer survey version of the question set used for this study could also be developed and used as a way to obtain a larger data sample, which could provide a new perspective on the distribution of specific results and also potentially contribute to new findings.

Due to increasing interest in the use of mindfulness in organizational and personal settings, a growing pool of study participants is likely to be available for participation in online data collection efforts. Therefore, while a large-scale, personal interview-based project may not be feasible, the use of Internet technology may provide an acceptable alternative to live interviews. Specifically, Internet-based data collection offers the opportunity to collect significantly larger and more diverse samples, which may contribute more overall value in exchange for not conducting live interviews. For example, a web-based, hybrid leader mindfulness and ESCI 360-degree survey could be distributed to a large voluntary global participant group. Such a study could segment participants into groups of current mindfulness practitioners, as well as those who are untrained but willing to participate in an online mindfulness-training program for pre- and post-intervention assessment.

In order to collect additional data relating to the effects of mindfulness, participants with existing mindfulness training could also be offered the opportunity to participate in advanced training in order to learn more about the impact of advanced versus introductory mindfulness training. As part of this study, participants and their co-workers would also participate in pre- and post-intervention ESCI 360-degree data collection and be required to provide their standardized organizational performance metrics for pre- and post-intervention comparison. While variability in secondary
performance measurement data would present an issue, qualified researchers would be able to convert and merge key metrics into a common data model that could support minimum analysis requirements. Such a study could also potentially identify dispositional mindfulness in participants initially reporting no history of mindfulness training, which would create the ability to compare Langarian and interventional mindfulness in the context of improved leadership effectiveness. Finally, any new study of the effect of mindfulness on leadership effectiveness would ideally include empirically supported data linking leader mindfulness with evidence of workplace results. This data would best be collected via longitudinal comparison of pre- and post-intervention performance measures. In addition, an adequate sample size would be required in order to ensure statistical validity and to produce a study that would add significant value to the existing literature.

Such a project was investigated as an option during the planning stages of this study; however, issues with the stability of executive sponsorship and a requirement of one to two years for the completion of the data collection process made the project infeasible for the purposes of this dissertation. In this specific case, a participant group totaling more than 900 employees occupying leadership positions was identified at a major US corporation. Each employee had a multi-year performance record in a standardized format, and internal data reporting capabilities were identified that could support analysis requirements. It was determined that performance measures would need to be compared pre- and post-intervention, as would the results of a customized survey designed to identify both perceived improvements to leadership effectiveness and levels of emotional intelligence competencies. Finally, the capability of the employer to
consistently deliver the appropriate type of mindfulness training was identified; however, a mechanism for monitoring the training for variability in delivery was not completed before the project was put on hold.

The previous examples illustrate some of the study designs that could be used in future research focusing on the efficacy of mindfulness in the context of organizational leadership. As interest in the positive influence of mindfulness on employee and leader effectiveness continues to increase, more opportunities for conducting this research in organizational settings will likely arise. Studies such as this one will contribute to both a greater understanding of, and interest in, the positive results that mindfulness can help produce; however, additional and more varied types of research must be conducted in order to more effectively understand both how mindfulness influences results and how to consistently replicate those results in a variety of workplace settings.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the contributions made by this study to a greater understanding of how mindfulness influences the development of emotional intelligence competencies linked to improved leadership effectiveness. Discussion focused first on contributions made to the existing literature on mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and leadership development. Contributions of the study to the practice of mindfulness in a leadership development context were then explored, followed by suggestions for future research.

Discussion of contributions to the literature explored in Chapter 2 focused on the way in which the study adds to a more detailed understanding of how mindfulness influences the development of emotional intelligence competencies. Specifically, the data informs a more in-depth view of the processes and experiences of personal change.
influenced by mindfulness in the context of improved leadership effectiveness. The detailed descriptions of these processes also provided first-hand, context specific descriptions of changes in awareness, in addition to data indicating that neurological changes relating to improved leadership effectiveness are also influenced by mindfulness.

Limitations of the study were explored next. The dependence upon first-hand participant reports was specifically addressed, since such reports were the sole source of data indicating changes to awareness and behavior. In addition, although participants referred to specific workplace outcomes when describing the influence of mindfulness on their leadership effectiveness, the lack of independent, supporting data was also addressed.

Exploration of study limitations was followed by discussion of the contributions made to practice. This section presented areas where the data adds potentially significant value to research focused on the role played by mindfulness in improvements to organizational leadership effectiveness. Specifically, the detailed descriptions of how mindfulness has been effectively incorporated into leadership activity by participants in order to help achieve specific goals was highlighted. This data also adds to a greater understanding of how, with the assistance of mindfulness, the development of emotional intelligence competencies linked to leadership effectiveness can be specifically targeted. Furthermore, the contribution of the study to self-guided, instructor led and organizational leadership development initiatives was addressed. The chapter concluded with a discussion of recommendations for future research. Based on the unique nature of this study and the results produced, additional qualitative research was recommended. In addition, mixed methods research design was also explored as a means for obtaining
significantly larger sample sizes. Finally, the value of longitudinal studies involving a large enough number of participants to create statistical validity was discussed.
APPENDIX 1

Email communication used during study participant recruiting process

Subject: UPenn Doctoral research on mindfulness practices of managers and leaders. Are you available to be interviewed?

I am scheduling interviews for my doctoral research focusing on individuals in management roles at US organizations who are engaging in intentional daily mindfulness activity. The findings will contribute to an area of the existing literature on mindfulness that has not been thoroughly researched, specifically first-hand descriptions of the professional value that practitioners attribute to their practice. As a result, I am specifically looking for people who would like to discuss some examples of how their mindfulness practice has influenced results in the workplace.

The Principle Investigator and Committee Chair for the study is Penn GSE faculty Dr. Annie McKee (http://scholar.gse.upenn.edu/mckee), and I am the co-investigator/ independent researcher who will be conducting the interviews. The telephone interviews will require around 60 minutes to complete, and I will be available to conduct interviews during the evenings or weekends if that is more convenient for your schedule. Your anonymity will be protected, and your name will not appear on any document related to the study.

If you are interested in being interviewed please let me know and I will follow up immediately to arrange for scheduling an interview date and time in the near future, in addition to providing you with the research participation consent document that you will need to review.

Finally, if you know of other mindfulness practitioners in management positions that you believe would be interested in participating in this study please consider forwarding this request to them. I am pasting in a version of the above content that you can use for that purpose.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matt

Email: mattlippincott@gmail.com

mobile: 903-905-0721
Subject: Take part in a mindfulness study on management and leadership effectiveness

I am in need of interview participants for my UPenn doctoral research, specifically people in management/leadership roles at US-based organizations who would like to share some examples of how their practice has influenced results in the workplace. The Principle Investigator and Committee Chair for the study is Penn GSE faculty Dr. Annie McKee (http://scholar.gse.upenn.edu/mckee), and the telephone interviews will require around 60 minutes to complete. I will be available to conduct interviews during the evenings or weekends if that is more convenient for your schedule, and your anonymity will be protected.

If you are interested in being interviewed please contact me right away at mattlippincott@gmail.com and I will follow up immediately to arrange for scheduling an interview date and time in the near future. Finally, if you know of other mindfulness practitioners in management positions that you believe would be interested in participating in this study please consider letting them know about this study.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Matt

Email: mattlippincott@gmail.com
mobile: 903-905-0721

Subject: Take part in a mindfulness study on management and leadership effectiveness. Please share your stories about this important topic!

This is the same study that Dan Goleman highlighted on the Working with Mindfulness and UCSD Mindfulness linked in groups. It focuses on the relationship between mindfulness practice and leadership/management effectiveness and the level of interest and participation has been quite good. I am specifically looking for participants that are mindfulness practitioners and working in leadership/management roles, or who are involved in mindfulness training or program delivery; both as employees or consultants. Participants will receive a complete copy of the findings and I hope to also distribute portions of the findings in association with Goleman since he has been very helpful in bringing attention to this research. Interviews typically last 60 minutes and participant anonymity is protected. This study is being conducted in accordance with the University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board and the committee chairperson is Dr. Annie McKee (http://scholar.gse.upenn.edu/mckee), who has an extensive history.
in research and authorship in the areas of leadership, emotional intelligence and management. Anyone interested in participating in the study or learning more should contact me at mattlippincott@gmail.com.

UPenn mindfulness study on management and leadership effectiveness. Please share your stories about this important topic!

This is the same study that Dan Goleman highlighted on the Working with Mindfulness and UCSD Mindfulness linked in groups. I am specifically looking for participants that are mindfulness practitioners and working in leadership/management roles, or who are involved in mindfulness training or program delivery; both as employees or consultants. The findings will contribute to an area of the existing literature on mindfulness that has not been thoroughly researched, specifically first-hand descriptions of the professional value that practitioners attribute to their practice. As a result, I am specifically looking for people who would like to discuss some examples of how their mindfulness practice has influenced results in the workplace. Participants will receive a complete copy of the findings and I hope to also distribute portions of the findings in association with Goleman since he has been very helpful in bringing attention to this research and recruiting participants. Interviews typically last 60 minutes and participant anonymity is protected. This study is being conducted in accordance with the University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board and the committee chairperson is Dr. Annie McKee (http://scholar.gse.upenn.edu/mckee), who has an extensive history in research and authorship in the areas of leadership, emotional intelligence and management. Anyone interested in participating in the study or learning more should contact me at mattlippincott@gmail.com.

Thanks for your help.
Matt

Email content provided for the purpose of forwarding on my behalf:

Subject: UPenn Doctoral research on mindfulness practices of managers and leaders:

University of Pennsylvania researcher Matt Lippincott is interviewing people in management and leadership roles who are engaging in intentional daily mindfulness activity. The findings will contribute to an area of the existing literature on mindfulness that has not been thoroughly researched, specifically first-hand descriptions of the workplace value that practitioners attribute to their practice. As a result, Matt is looking for participants who would like to share examples of how their mindfulness practice has influenced results in the workplace. The Principle Investigator and Committee Chair for the study is Penn
GSE faculty Dr. Annie McKee (http://scholar.gse.upenn.edu/mckee), and Matt is the co-investigator/ independent researcher who will be conducting the interviews.

The telephone interviews will require around 60 minutes to complete, and Matt will be available to conduct interviews during the evenings or weekends if that is more convenient for your schedule. Your participation will be kept confidential, and your name and the name of your employer will not appear on any document related to the study. If you are interested in being interviewed please let Matt know and he will follow up immediately to arrange for scheduling an interview date and time in the near future, in addition to providing you with the research participation consent document that you will need to review.

Finally, if you know of other mindfulness practitioners in leadership positions that you believe would be interested in participating in this study please consider forwarding this request to them.

You can reach Matt at mattlippincott@gmail.com

Forum recruiting content:

Your help is needed with new mindfulness research focused on management and leadership effectiveness

Needed: personal stories of how mindfulness has impacted leadership performance

Take part in a mindfulness study on management and leadership effectiveness

Your story about the impact of Mindfulness is important! I am still recruiting interview participants, and if you are a mindfulness practitioner with management or leadership experience in an organization of any size please consider sharing your stories with me. Simply email me at mattlippincott@gmail.com and I will provide you with additional details. Thanks for all of the interest in this important topic.

Please consider participating in this study. I am still recruiting interview participants, and if you are a mindfulness practitioner with management or leadership experience in an organization of any size please consider sharing your stories with me. Simply email me at mattlippincott@gmail.com and I will provide you with additional details. Thanks for all of the interest in this important topic!
I see that you liked my recent Linkedin post about my research into management and leadership mindfulness practices. Based on your profile I wanted to ask if you would consider being interviewed as part of this study. If you are a mindfulness practitioner then your stories will be a valuable contribution to this first-of-a-kind study, and your support would be greatly appreciated. The time requirement is approximately 1 hour and your anonymity will be protected. Please let me know if you are interested in learning more. Thank you for your time and interest!
Sincerely,
Matt
mattlippincott@gmail.com

Content of replies to prospective participants:

Thank you so much for responding. The only requirement for participation besides being a mindfulness practitioner is that you have some management/leadership responsibility either at your place of employment, and/or during consulting or project engagements, since I am specifically looking for stories relating to the impact that mindfulness has on those types of responsibilities. If you meet that description then please let me know and we can look at date/times for interviews.
Thank you again for your offer to help.
Matt

I apologize for the delay in replying to your message, which was caused by my need to confirm university policy relating to interviewing participants outside of the US.

Thank you for contacting me. I am assuming that you are a mindfulness practitioner, and also have some management/leadership responsibilities. If that is the case then I would be very interested in arranging an interview with you. Please let me know what your thoughts are and if you have any related questions. Above all, thank you for taking the time to follow up and offer to help. It is sincerely appreciated.
Matt

Thank you so much for responding. I would like to schedule a time in the near future to interview you if that is still possible. When you have a chance please let me know how your schedule looks for potential interview dates, and what related questions you may have.
Thank you again for your offer to help.
Matt

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APPENDIX 2

Participant Interview Protocol

Content sent to participants in advance:

Please also look over the following information concerning Informed Consent to Participate in the Research Study, which provides the information you will need to read and agree to in order to participate in the study. I will ask for your agreement prior to beginning the interview, and if you have any questions in the meantime please feel free to contact me:

Purpose and Description of the Study: The purpose of this study is to examine individual perceptions of how mindfulness practice influences workplace leadership effectiveness. The objective is to add new information to the body of existing literature by gathering detailed examples of the specific workplace benefits attributed to mindfulness practice by organizational leaders.

Procedures and Time Requirement: As part of this study, you are asked to participate in a 60 minute individual interview. The interviews will be recorded and will be transcribed by an outside service, and the interviewer will take notes during the interview. Research participants may also be asked to participate in a short follow up phone interview, which will also be recorded, if clarification of comments is required.

Anonymity: To assure participant anonymity, the study is conducted in accordance with the regulations of the Institutional Review Board at the University of Pennsylvania. Any data collected for the study can only be used for research purposes. Your anonymity will be protected, and your name will not appear on any document related to the study, and your participation will remain anonymous in perpetuity. The results of the study will be published as a dissertation, but your name will not be associated with any results. All data that are collected as part of the study are stored on secure computers by the co-investigator/independent researcher. Individuals will never be identified in oral or written reports produced from these data.

Voluntary Consent: Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from this study at any time. If you choose not to participate, information that may have been gathered will not be included in the study. If you have further questions or research-related concerns, you may contact the principal investigator, Dr. Annie McKee, at 215-573-0591.

Benefits & Risks: This research poses no foreseeable risk to any of the participants in the study.
Study participants will be asked to verbally acknowledge their consent to participate prior to the start of the interview.

Thank you for agreeing to help with this research.
Matt

Introductory dialog key point script:

1. Before we get started, let me tell you about the interview format:
   a. The interview consists of 6 questions and should last roughly 60 minutes.
   b. Our conversation should also be somewhat open-ended so feel free to interrupt if you would like to add something.
2. I would like to ask for your permission to record the interview, which is to ensure that I do not lose any information. Would that be ok with you?
   a. Ok, I will turn on the recorder on. Do you have any questions for me, before we get started?
   b. Also, I want to re-emphasize - as stated in the Invitation to Participate - that all interviews I conduct for the study will be rendered anonymous and no names will be used; meaning, I will not use the name of any participant in any use references.
3. Any questions about the informed consent document?
4. I will put you on speaker phone now as well so I can take notes. Let me know if that makes it more difficult for you to hear.

Interview questions:

1. Tell me about your role/position. How did you get to this position?
   Prompts:
   a. What is your role/title as a leader?
   b. Number of years in this role?
   c. Brief overview of previous roles at current and past employers.
   d. Number of direct and indirect reports?
   e. Headcount in previous leadership roles?
   f. Number of years of leadership experience?
   g. Level of formal education – college, non-degree employee training, etc?

2. Tell me about your mindfulness practice.
   Prompts:
   a. When did you start to practice mindfulness?
   b. Why did you decide to learn mindfulness?
   c. Tell me what you do when you practice mindfulness

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d. How often per day do you practice? How often per week?
e. Do you have formal time set aside for your practice?

3. Do you believe your mindfulness practice influences your leadership effectiveness? If so, how?

Prompts:
a. Does it affect your self-awareness?
b. Does it affect your awareness of the emotional state of others?
c. Do you feel there is an effect on specific aspects of your job?
d. Do you feel that it directly influences your leadership effectiveness?
e. Any examples relating to employee performance?
f. Any examples relating to personal efficiency?

4. Do you feel your practice has had a positive impact on leadership/management performance? If so, how would you classify it? For example has the impact been minor, moderate, or significant? Please use your own terms to answer, and feel free to elaborate on why you answered the way that you did.

5. Can you give me an example of a time when you were more effective as a leader, and to which you attribute some of the effectiveness to mindfulness?

6. Is there any mindfulness program in your company that you are aware of? If so can you describe the program?

7. Are you aware of any individuals in your organization that are independently learning and practicing mindfulness?

8. What is your opinion of this interview? Is there anything you think I should have asked or that you would like to add?
APPENDIX 3

Detailed Examples of ESCI Behavioral Indicators

ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Awareness, Competency: Emotional Self-Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Indicators</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Able to describe how own feelings affect own actions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describes underlying reasons for own feelings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Aware of the connection between what is happening and own feelings</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shows awareness of own feelings</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does not describe own feelings</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Acknowledges own strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 65

Table 1. Example of ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified

Emotional Self-awareness. I identified this ESCI competency by reviewing transcripts for ESCI behavioral indicators that demonstrated participants’ abilities to describe how their feelings affect their actions, whether or not they were able to explain the underlying reasons for their own feelings, and their awareness of the connection between events and their own feelings, including reactions to environmental cues and the role that emotions play in professional performance (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

Additional measures of this ESCI competency are oriented towards openness to feedback, willingness to develop new perspectives about oneself, and indicators of interest in self-development, such as the ability to acknowledge one’s own strengths and weaknesses (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). All participants demonstrated this ESCI competency, which tied with empathy (both having been coded for 65 times) as the third most frequently cited ESCI competency out of 12 total competencies. Participants’
responses indicated that the development of this ESCI competency played an important role in many areas of their leadership effectiveness.

Indicators of the ESCI competency *emotional self-awareness* appeared not only in the form of conscious awareness of emotions and its relationships to events, but also in descriptions indicating an ability to observe, understand, and effectively manage feelings. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “aware of the connection between what is happening and [one’s] own feelings”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “I'll notice that I'm being triggered by a particular participant in the meeting, you know, somebody who I noticed I'm kind of reacting to more than other people” (Participant #30, 2015).

2. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “shows awareness of own feelings”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…identifying my emotions as they happened, not in retrospect, but right as they were happening” (Participant #19, 2015).

3. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “able to describe how own feelings affect own actions”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…then I said, ‘Oh my god, this is stupid, I am under the amygdala hijack condition.’ So I walked away from my desk” (Participant #22, 2015).

4. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “describes underlying reasons for own feelings”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…and the rejections stem from my own feelings, of course” (Participant #1, 2015).

5. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “acknowledges own strengths and weaknesses”
Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I don't know everything, and I'm not that smart… but I know how important [it is] to be agile…” (Participant #6, 2015).

Additional examples of Emotional Self-Awareness behavioral indicator coding:

The following example aligns with the ESCI behavioral indicator “aware of the connection between what is happening and [one’s] own feelings”:

Once we became aware of the amygdala hijack condition, oh my God it, it changed our, our whole response style to become much more even keeled. And I would say that would probably be the turning point of my maturity as a leader. (Participant #22, 2015)

The following example aligns with the ESCI behavioral indicator “shows awareness of own feelings”:

…very strong experience of an awakening of compassion, and empathy, and a greater sense of connection, and less fear where other people were concerned. (Participant #35, 2015)

…I feel more connected to who I am. Not just oh, I'm general counsel. (Participant #27, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “able to describe how own feelings affect own actions”:

if I am able to recognize…when I'm getting attached to something, then I can eliminate suffering. (Participant #18, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Describes underlying reasons for own feelings”:

…internal stress and the need to have somebody to vent to was infinitely higher. (Participant #3, 2015)
… I had been doing a lot of volunteer work…it was a much more rewarding experience. (Participant #39, 2015)

…if I'm upset then I maybe need to look no further than myself. (Participant #23, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Acknowledges own strengths and weaknesses”:

…my emotional intelligence is fairly high, which can be very good from a leadership perspective but often can be a bit of a challenge depending on the specific organization that you're running. (Participant #8, 2015)

…it's [being reactive] caused issues in relationships in the past for me both personally and professionally. (Participant #34, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management, Competency: Adaptability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicators:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Has difficulty adapting to uncertain and challenging conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adapts by smoothly juggling multiple demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Adapts by applying standard procedures flexibly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to fit the situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Adapts to shifting priorities and rapid change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to cope with unexpected events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified

**Adaptability.** I identified evidence of the ESCI competency *adaptability* by reviewing transcripts for examples of participants being able to smoothly manage multiple demands; modify standard procedures to satisfy changing requirements; and adapt strategy, goals, and project requirements to fit individual situations (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Other indicators include the ability to adapt to rapid change and/or shifting priorities, cope successfully with unexpected events, and be able
to adjust their perceptions and beliefs (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Finally, a person with strength in this ESCI competency will be able to work effectively in changing environments and with diverse groups or individuals (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

Examples indicating the presence of this ESCI competency, which is part of the self-management ESCI competency cluster, were found in all of the interview transcripts. It had the second lowest code incidence (47), ranking it at number 11 of 12 ESCI competencies. Indicators of this ESCI competency focus on changes in workplace strategies in response to unexpected challenges or demands arising from environmental (workplace) changes. For example, participants described initial failures relating to high profile projects that they later turned into successes, thereby demonstrating not only adaptability in their capacity for self-awareness but also leadership behaviors. Other examples indicated that participants were able to work effectively in more than one organization and/or with different groups of people, for example, being able to independently duplicate sophisticated training programs delivered by specialists at a prior place of employment. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to cope with unexpected events”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “I backed away from it completely and became even more razor-focused on the things that I was responsible for, and the things that I had control over” (Participant #35, 2015).
2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to fit the situation”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I wanted to quickly understand how I could be a good manager opposed to a good technologist… so I started focusing on management leadership” (Participant #16, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “adapts by smoothly juggling multiple demands”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…my role was a large one… I wore several hats… juggling work and a personal life” (Participant #42, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “adapts by applying standard procedures flexibly”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I need to flex my style just to be able to adapt to different characters” (Participant #13, 2015).

5. ESCI behavioral indicator: “adapts to shifting priorities and rapid change”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…there's a calmness about it that allows for new innovation… You can still achieve the goal… You just have to be able to change your plans and your actions” (Participant #6, 2015).

Additional examples of Adaptability behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to cope with unexpected events”:

I backed away from it completely and became even more razor-focused on the things that I was responsible for, and the things that I had control over. (Participant #35, 2015)

…there was no talent program in place…so I worked with my counterpart in HR and we put something together that the team responded very favorably too (Participant #8, 2015)
…rather then doing what we usually did, which was to sort of convince him why they were bad people…I just started asking questions
(Participant #30, 2015)

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “adapts overall strategy, goals, or projects to fit the situation”:

…we took the walls down from the cubes…so that we created communities of people as opposed to lining them up in boxes. (Participant #34, 2015)

…I came with a lot of research to show that it was evidence based, came up with a curriculum idea…did a lot of the leg work to make it a very easy thing to just drop into the schedule. (Participant #31, 2015)

…I wanted to quickly understand how I could be a good manager opposed to a good technologist…so I started focusing on management leadership. (Participant #16, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Adapts by smoothly juggling multiple demands”:

I am responsible for re-engineering process…so I'm constantly influencing sister departments, budget, technical agenda…12 different projects that we're running. (Participant #32, 2015)

…I my role was a large one…I wore several hats…juggling work and a personal life. (Participant #42, 2015)

…I when everybody's running around like their head's on fire, screaming and yelling, I can be rational. (Participant #7, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Adapts by applying standard procedures flexibly”:

I'm able to be flexible in the training…if somebody goes in a different direction I'm able to respond because I stay right with them. (Participant #33, 2015)
I need to flex my style just to be able to adapt to different characters. (Participant #13, 2015)

I've had feedback to the effect that people feel like there's much more space for them to grow and succeed, versus in the past, it was, it felt more like it was much more transactional. (Participant #35, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Adapts to shifting priorities and rapid change”:

…I learned was how to survive layoffs and how to be valuable to the company. (Participant #22, 2015)

we had a run-in and she had a breakdown…I was able to work through that….and get her back on track…we ended up getting great results. (Participant #26, 2015)

…there's a calmness about it that allows for new innovation…You can still achieve the goal… you just have to be able to change your plans and your actions. (Participant #6, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management, Competency: Achievement Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Indicators</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Initiates actions to improve own performance</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Seeks to improve own self by setting measurable and challenging goals</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does not strive to improve own performance</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Strives to improve own performance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does not try to improve</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Seeks ways to do things better</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency: 44

Table 13. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified
Achievement Orientation. ESCI Behavioral indicators used to identify this ESCI competency included examples of participants initiating action, making an effort to improve their own effectiveness, setting measurable and challenging self-improvement goals, and identifying better approaches to problems (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). The ESCI competency achievement orientation also includes ongoing commitment to improvement of effectiveness, attempts to take advantage of opportunities, and developing creative strategies for the attainment of goals (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). An individual with strong achievement orientation will also be open to new challenges, be adept at proactively preparing for problems, and willing to take responsibility for failures (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

This ESCI competency was detected in all of the transcripts; however, it had the lowest ESCI code count (44), ranking it twelfth out of the 12 ESCI competencies. It is grouped under the self-management ESCI competency cluster, and the topic generally came up when interviewees described their educational backgrounds, professional career progressions, and details relating to personal development initiatives such as certifications and new skill acquisition. This may partially account for the low code count because discussions touching on this topic were intentionally kept brief, and were conducted primarily to identify relevant participant details such as title, role, and number of direct reports. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “seeks to improve own self by setting measurable and challenging goals”
Quotation taken from transcripts: “I've worked my way through… started off in the marketing space, have an MBA… I've become an accredited coach. I'm now also studying to be a coaching supervisor, and I'm an NLP practitioner” (Participant #38, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “seeks ways to do things better”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “I am constantly challenging myself to find new ways to culturally have a very positive impact on them [team]” (Participant #34, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “initiates actions to improve own performance”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “I'm just finishing a graduate continuing studies certificate in applying mindfulness meditation from the University of Toronto” (Participant #39, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “strives to improve own performance”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…worked my way through a variety of roles, started off with training specialist… to a variety of team leader roles” (Participant #7, 2015).

Additional examples of Achievement Orientation behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations aligned with the ESCI behavioral indicator “seeks to improve own self by setting measurable and challenging goals”:

I've worked my way through…started off in the marketing space, have an MBA…I've become an accredited coach. I'm now also studying to be a coaching supervisor, and I'm an NLP practitioner. (Participant #38, 2015)

…did all of my undergraduate work at night, while I was working full-time…I also got my law degree at night. (Participant #27, 2015)

I've run large-scale international manufacturing operations and global supply chain organizations, most of which has included strategic procurement efforts. (Participant #8, 2015)
The following quotation aligns with the ESCI behavioral indicator “seeks ways to do things better”:

I am constantly challenging myself to find new ways to culturally, have a very positive impact on them. (Participant #34)

…I decided to go through an eight-week session on my own. (Participant #32, 2015)

I went into studying some of the new research that came out around unconscious bias, and then moved on to the neuroscience of it…(Participant #30, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Initiates actions to improve own performance”:

…I started reading more books about meditation, and then made my way to a day of mindfulness at a zen center in Chicago. (Participant #18, 2015)

I'm just finishing a graduate continuing studies certificate in applying mindfulness meditation from the University of Toronto. (Participant #39, 2015)

…did other things…to help myself move forward as a manager. #16

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Strives to improve own performance”:

…started competing and training fighters in mixed martial arts…I think that was a good outlet for a little bit of excess energy. (Participant #26, 2015)

…it's, been on an upward track for me…I grew every single year…won some awards. (Participant #18, 2015)

…worked my way through a variety of roles, started off with training specialist…to a variety of team leader role, roles. (Participant #7, 2015)
ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management, Competency: Emotional Self-Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Indicators:</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gets impatient or shows frustration inappropriately</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Acts appropriately even in emotionally charged situations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Remains calm in stressful situations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Remains composed, even in trying moments</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Controls impulses appropriately in situations</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Loses composure when under stress</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 56

Table 14. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified

**Emotional self-control.** Part of the self-management ESCI competency cluster, the *emotional self-control* ESCI competency is identified by examples of appropriate action and the ability to remain calm in emotionally charged or stressful situations (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Other indicators are the ability to control emotional reactions appropriately and remain composed during tense situations (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Individuals with strength in this ESCI competency are also more likely to complete work amidst negative circumstances, maintain a positive attitude, and manage stress in a calm and composed manner (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

ESCI behavioral indicators for this ESCI competency were identified in all of the transcripts; however, the total code count was the third lowest (56) and therefore this ESCI competency was ranked number 10 out of the 12 ESCI codes. Participants described an improved understanding of how they could monitor and regulate their emotional responses to external triggers and revealed an improved sense of ownership
concerning how they chose to react when they believed others were provoking them.

Furthermore, participants linked this ESCI competency to many positive behavioral changes and workplace outcomes, several of which are touched on below. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “controls impulses appropriately in situations”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “… Let's take a step back, and let's don't get all wrapped up into the emotion of the other person” (Participant #27, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “acts appropriately even in emotionally charged situations”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…those situations would arouse rage in me… but now I can see it coming up… and ignore it” (Participant #12, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “remains calm in stressful situations”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “I think people describe me as somebody who handles stress well. Who's able to be calm and composed in difficult situations” (Participant #15, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “remains composed, even in trying moments”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…before [mindfulness] I would have jumped on a pretty extreme emotional personal roller coaster with her, and viewed everything very, very personally” (Participant #32, 2015).
Additional examples of Emotional Self-Control behavioral indicator coding:

The following examples align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “controls impulses appropriately in situations”:

…people started remarking about it…said, ‘you know what, how come you don't get angry at all?’ (Participant #21, 2015)

You can deal with people with very high emotions…let's take a step back and let's don't get all wrapped up into the emotion of the other person. (Participant #27, 2015)

I've learned to rely on my mindfulness to…back off on things…in Corporate America, there are plenty of instances where you just need, to let things go. (Participant #8, 2015)

work very hard on identifying my emotions as they happened…you're really angry…don't say something hurtful or that you'll regret. (Participant #19, 2015)

…I can react in an appropriate and thoughtful manner, as opposed to a quick, you know reactionary approach. (Participant #34, 2015)

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “acts appropriately even in emotionally charged situations”:

The only thing I can do is control my own actions…don't react. (Participant #22, 2015)

…those situations would arouse rage in me…but now I can see it coming up…and ignore it. (Participant #12, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Remains calm in stressful situations”:

I [can]…maintain perspective and balance during a crisis or a period of great change or intensity. (Participant #19, 2015)

…I start to actually be much more focused on my breathing versus…anything else relative to the situation. (Participant #29, 2015)
...I was just present with her anger and I wasn't feeling it, it wasn't personal. (Participant #35, 2015)

I think people describe me as somebody who handles stress well. Who's able to be calm and composed in difficult situations. (Participant #15, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Remains composed, even in trying moments”:

...before [mindfulness] I would have jumped on a pretty extreme emotional personal roller coaster with her, and viewed everything very, very personally. (Participant #32, 2015)

[mindfulness] has enabled me to pause and not so much have a knee jerk reaction to...an interaction with a difficult manager. (Participant #33, 2015)

...anxiety around taking risks and making decisions...this gives me an infrastructure internally to face the anxiety around that. (Participant #41, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management, Competency: Positive Outlook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency Cluster: Self-Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESCI Competency: (4 of 4) Positive Outlook</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicators:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Sees the positive in people, situations, and events more often than the negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Believes the future will be better than the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Views the future with hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sees possibilities more than problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sees opportunities more than threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sees the positive side of a difficult situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified

**Positive Outlook.** The ESCI behavioral indicators for this ESCI competency include examples of interviewees tending to see the positive more than the negative in
events, people, and situations, and in indicating a belief that the future holds better potential outcomes (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). In addition, this ESCI competency is indicated by examples of seeing opportunities more than threats, and a tendency to focus on positive aspects of difficult circumstances (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Finally, a person with a high measure for this ESCI competency tends to have positive perceptions of others (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

I identified this ESCI competency, which is part of the self-management ESCI competency cluster, 58 times, giving it one of the lowest ESCI code counts, and ranking it 9 out of 12 on the list of ESCI competencies. Participants demonstrated this ESCI competency in a number of ways, ranging from comments that directly referred to optimism to detailed examples that indicated the presence of the ESCI behavioral indicators. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “sees the positive in people, situations, and events more often than the negative”
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…anything… whether it's a bad experience, or a positive experience… it has its reasons, it comes to teach you a lesson” (Participant #6, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “believes the future will be better than the past”
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “I feel like… the traditional job sense is fulfilled, on the side my passion is fulfilled… and it's going well” (Participant #18, 2015).
3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “views the future with hope”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…it seems to be working for me, generally speaking… I've got a continued opportunity and growth” (Participant #32, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “sees possibilities more than problems”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “Can I network with people?… When you start doing positive action… you start to become much more empowered” (Participant #22, 2015).

5. ESCI behavioral indicator: “sees opportunities more than threats”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…mindfulness has helped me… make sure that I am acting from a place that is congruent with my values, and what my highest aims are” (Participant #31, 2015).

6. ESCI behavioral indicator: “sees the positive side of a difficult situation”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…that [visualizing a better situation] would make it more fun than looking at it as, you're getting a divorce, and you have to sell your house, and you have no job” (Participant #20, 2015).

Additional examples of Positive Outlook behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “sees the positive in people, situations, and events more often than the negative”:

The company actually went bankrupt, but it was a great way to get out of a situation, which actually propelled my career in a big way. (Participant #22, 2015)

… understanding that the people there are often making the best decisions they know how to make, doing the best they can. (Participant #33, 2015)

…anything…whether it's a bad experience, or a positive experience…it has its reasons, it comes to teach you a lesson. (Participant #6, 2015)
The following quotation aligns with the ESCI behavioral indicator “believes the future will be better than the past”:

I feel like…the traditional job sense is fulfilled, on the side my passion is fulfilled…and it's going well. (Participant #18, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Views the future with hope”:

…it seems to be working for me, generally speaking…I've got a continued opportunity and growth. (Participant #32, 2015)

…I am on a different path now as a result of mindfulness and I think I'm much more effective. (Participant #34, 2015)

It [mindfulness] has been powerful…and as I move into coaching I will definitely be helping people find mindfulness. (Participant #37, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Sees possibilities more than problems”:

Can I network with people?...when you start doing positive action…you start to become much more empowered. (Participant #22, 2015)

…just focus [on] this alone, then in a one hour session you can probably achieve [more than] other teams can achieve in a couple of days of discussion. (Participant #21, 2015)

…am I gonna be able to make better decisions? And the hypothesis would be that I can. (Participant #29, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Sees opportunities more than threats”:  

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...mindfulness has helped me...make sure that I am acting from a place that is congruent with my values, and what my highest aims are. (Participant #31, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Sees the positive side of a difficult situation”:

I have an incredible support system, because it takes a village to raise a bipolar...you know...you're here with everybody else to help you. (Participant #16, 2015)

...that [visualizing a better situation] would make it more fun than looking at it as, you're getting a divorce, and you have to sell your house, and you have no job. (Participant 20, 2015)

I tend to start looking at how thankful I am that I can actually get in my car and go to work. (Participant #27, 2015)

it's something that is imposed by someone else...how can we actually look at it in an affirmative way? (Participant #6, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Social Awareness, Competency: Empathy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency Cluster: Social Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency: (1 of 2) Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicators:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Understands another person’s motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understands others by listening attentively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does not understand subtle feelings of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Understands others by putting self into others’ shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Understands others’ perspectives when they are different from own perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency: 65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 16. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified*

**Empathy.** This ESCI competency is included in the social awareness ESCI competency cluster. Its indicators include understanding the motivations of others, the ability to see things from others’ perspectives, and the ability to relate to differing perspectives (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). This behavioral indicator
also includes the ability to detect and appreciate unspoken or poorly expressed thoughts and feelings, and an increased capacity to respect diversity (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

All transcripts included ESCI behavioral indicators for the ESCI competency *empathy*, which tied with the ESCI competency *emotional self-awareness* (both having been coded for 65 times) as the third most frequently cited ESCI competency out of 12 total ESCI competencies. Participants linked empathy to improvements in the quality and effectiveness of their interpersonal interactions, attributing the results to their improved ability to relate to others. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “understands others by putting self into others’ shoes”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “It definitely increases your empathy… being able to put yourself in the other persons shoes” (Participant #21, 2015).

2. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “understands others by listening attentively”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…he knew that he had my support… that I was being a non-judgmental listener” (Participant #30, 2015).

3. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “understands another person’s motivation”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “that [mindfulness] enables you to read other people better and be more sensitive to what's driving their commentary, their presentation, their behavior” (Participant #19, 2015).

4. **ESCI behavioral indicator:** “understands others’ perspectives when they are different from own perspective”
Quotation taken from transcripts: “…the person on the other side of this interaction… They’ve got their own pain, they’ve got their own frustration, they’ve got all of their own stories” (Participant #35, 2015).

Additional examples of Empathy behavioral indicator coding:

The following examples align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “understands others by putting self into others’ shoes”:

…when you can relate to and be compassionate about the stresses they feel as a leader. (Participant #28, 2015)

It definitely increases your empathy…being able to put yourself in the other persons shoes (Participant #21, 2015)

I listen, I hear people, I try to put myself in their shoes. (Participant #34, 2015)

The following examples align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “understands others by listening attentively”:

My experience is the first thing that people really want is they actually want to be heard. (Participant #35, 2015)

I have a 30-minute meeting with them each week…we talk about work, we talk about kids…whatever they need to talk about. (Participant #27, 2015)

…he knew that he had my support…that I was being a non-judgmental listener. (Participant #30, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Understands another person’s motivation”:

…it gets people excited about who they work for…that there's some interest and that they can do bigger and better things. (Participant #8, 2015)
that [mindfulness] enables you to read other people better and be more sensitive to what's driving their commentary, their presentation, their behavior. (Participant #19, 2015)

…I would tell them look, the only way you can make your job secure is to make sure that you have amazingly sharp and current skills…that's the only defense you have. (Participant #22, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Understands others’ perspectives when they are different from own perspective”:

…so, instead of shutting down that particular faculty member…I said, lets hold that opinion of yours, pilot, let's hear the feedback, and then let's relook at it. (Participant #42, 2015)

…it if my director does something that I'm not happy about, instead of just becoming reactive to that, maybe being judgmental, I'm more inclined to say to myself, well are you really sure if you understand what her motive is? (Participant #33, 2015)

…the person on the other side of this interaction…they've got their own pain, they've got their own frustration, they've got all of their own stories. (Participant #35, 2015)

…actually being much more in tune with how that's working for the other person and where they are. #38

ESCI Competency Cluster: Social Awareness, Competency: Organizational Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Indicators:</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Understands social networks</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Understands the values and culture of the team or organization</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Understands the informal structure in the team or organization</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Understands the informal processes by which work gets done in the team or organization</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Understands the team’s or organization’s unspoken rules</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 64

*Table 17. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified*
**Organizational awareness.** This ESCI competency is also included in the social awareness ESCI competency cluster and was identified in all transcripts. It was the fifth most highly detected of the 12 ESCI codes with 64 occurrences. An individual with a high measure of the organizational awareness ESCI competency will possess an understanding of social networks along with both formal and informal organizational structures, processes, values, and cultures (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Such an individual will also possess an understanding of the true nature of relationships, influence, and authority within his/her organization, including internal politics and reward systems (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

Participants references to the organizational awareness ESCI competency indicated an understanding of the potential interpersonal and career issues created by misalignment between personal and organizational values. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “understands the values and culture of the team or organization”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “I'm more accepting of certain limits…the constraints of the company that I work for in terms of… change that would make mass improvements… I understand the company isn't going to invest a certain dollar amount to do that” (Participant #5, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “understands social networks”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I have to connect the internal fibers of the company… so I have a bridging role in order to… fulfill the strategic objectives” (Participant #12, 2015).
3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “understands the informal structure in the
team or organization”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “Particularly in a sophisticated law
firm where it's very acceptable for a partner to be a shitty manager,
and really demanding, and not give a crap… just do your job type
mentality” (Participant #26, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “understands the informal processes by
which work gets done in the team or organization”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I’ve surrounded myself and put
the right people in the room to help make that decision” (Participant
#23, 2015).

5. ESCI behavioral indicator: “understands the team’s or organization’s
unspoken rules”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “So I have to make sure that I am
cognizant of their supervisor's role… and work to make it a win-win
for both them with their supervisor” (Participant #3, 2015).

Additional examples of Organizational Awareness behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “understands the
values and culture of the team or organization”:

…these are all Stanford, Harvard, you know really smart people, and it's a
culture of accountability, it's a very healthy culture. (Participant #9, 2015)

I'm more accepting of certain limits…the constraints of the company that I
work for in terms of…change that would make mass improvements…I
understand the company isn't going to invest a certain dollar amount to do
that. (Participant #5, 2015)

I've been in a role where I was sticking up for organizational principles,
technology and innovation…setting up new practices, creating new solutions for
the organization (Participant #21, 2015)
The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “understands social networks”:

this greater sense of awareness of how other people are feeling can really help bridge gaps and build stronger partnerships moving forward. (Participant #18, 2015)

…I have to connect the internal fibers of the company…so I have a bridging role in order to…fulfill the strategic objectives. (Participant #12, 2015)

…it just kind of shifted my whole perspective about how I interact and network with people. (Participant #25, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Understands the informal structure in the team or organization”:

the second board…they didn't want me…they knew they had a problem, but they didn't want an outsider coming in to sort it out. (Participant #37, 2015)

…the first thing I did was I reached out to a really senior person, a president level person here at the company. (Participant #35, 2015)

Particularly in a sophisticated law firm where it's very acceptable for a partner to be a shitty manager, and really demanding, and not give a crap…just do your job type mentality. (Participant #26, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Understands the informal processes by which work gets done in the team or organization”:

So thank God I've surrounded myself and put the right people in the room to help make that decision. (Participant #23, 2015)

I was always one that was able to bring collective groups of people together, form teams and, execute tasks or missions. (Participant #32, 2015)
…these Federal Agencies I work for, they're complicated…there's just lots of different pieces to these programs and projects…there's a way of being with it and being able to assess it and work with it. (Participant #41, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Understands the team’s or organization’s unspoken rules”:

So I have to make sure that I am cognizant of their supervisor's role…and work to make it a win-win for both them with their supervisor. (Participant #3, 2015)

It's their systems, the ebb and flow of the office environment…but also how the leadership team works together. (Participant #8, 2015)

…but we're also an organization where typically the loudest or most forceful person in the room will win the debate. (Participant #35, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management, Competency: Conflict Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency: (1 of 5) Conflict Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicators:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tries to resolve conflict instead of allowing it to fester</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Resolves conflict by de-escalating the emotions in a situation</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Allows conflict to fester</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tries to resolve conflict by openly talking about disagreements with those involved</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Resolves conflict by bringing it into the open</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 18. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified*

**Conflict management.** Strength in the ESCI competency *conflict management* involves the ability to manage emotionally charged situations in a diplomatic and appropriate manner, including the use of the correct strategies to resolve conflict, which may involve open discussion or skillful de-escalation (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Individuals with strength in this ESCI competency will be comfortable
discussing disagreements and effective in communicating the positions of all parties involved in a conflict, and also skilled in resolving disputes by discussing mutually beneficial goals or areas of agreement (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

I identified this ESCI competency, which is part of the relationship management ESCI competency cluster, in all of the transcripts, where it accounted for a total of 64 incidences and ranked sixth highest out of 12 ESCI competencies. References occurred when participants shared examples of how mindfulness had helped them to become more effective at managing or even avoiding conflict through their improved abilities to recognize the early signs of conflict in themselves and others. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “resolves conflict by de-escalating the emotions in a situation”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…just being able to essentially inject some calm into it… I got the floor back and was able to bring the energy back down in the room” (Participant #35, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “tries to resolve conflict by openly talking about disagreements with those involved”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…and then had some tough discussion with him… I was able to make him open his eyes” (Participant #40, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “tries to resolve conflict instead of allowing it to fester”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I called the person up, and [said] if there's something that we haven't done relative to this, let me know and we'll work through what we have to get done in order to make it work” (Participant #29, 2015).
4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “resolves conflict by bringing it into the open”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “I ask them if I'm doing something that you don't like, or I'm not doing enough of something, or you're not getting from me what you need, I want you to come and tell me” (Participant #27, 2015).

Additional examples of Conflict Management behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “resolves conflict by de-escalating the emotions in a situation”:

…just being able to essentially inject some calm into it…I got the floor back and was able to bring the energy back down in the room. (Participant #35, 2015)

…I maybe the reaction really has nothing to do with me or it's not about me…they're coming to me for reassurance, for answers. (Participant #27, 2015)

I was able to say…Please don't scream at me in a very calm voice…you know, calm the situation down. (Participant #18, 2015)

…I if I don't react, then the other person suddenly becomes powerless. (Participant #22, 2015)

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “tries to resolve conflict by openly talking about disagreements with those involved”:

I recognize your frustration, and we can certainly discuss it. (Participant #18, 2015)

…I if there's any difficult conversations to be had I like to have them…in person. (Participant #27, 2015)

…and then had some tough discussion with him…I was able to make him open his eyes (Participant #40, 2015)

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The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Tries to resolve conflict instead of allowing it to fester”:

…I called the person up, and [said] if there's something that we haven't done relative to this, let me know and we'll work through what we have to get done in order to make it work. (Participant #29, 2015)

…just being able to be there and just essentially inject some calm into it [argument erupting in meeting]. (Participant #35, 2015)

I started giving everyone permission to just pause…feeling like they can just relax, even if it's a point of contention or conflict. (Participant #41, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Resolves conflict by bringing it into the open”:

I ask them if I'm doing something that you don't like or I'm not doing enough of something or you're not getting from me what you need, I want you to come and tell me. (Participant #27, 2015)

Have constructive clashes about ideas…you're gonna have these passionate arguments, but it's okay. (Participant #22, 2015)

…with my team for the talk once a month or when they were resentful or angry at someone…(Participant #6, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management, Competency: Coach and Mentor

| Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency: | 70 |

Table 19. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified
**Coach and mentor.** This ESCI competency is also part of the relationship management ESCI competency cluster. Individuals with strength in this ESCI competency will indicate a commitment to career-oriented development of others, which includes guiding others to identify their own strategies for improvement through performance feedback, rather than simply teaching or training (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Examples of strength in this ESCI competency include recognition of others’ strengths, performance improvement-oriented feedback, and encouragement of others (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

The code *coach and mentor* was applied 70 times to the data set, and indicators of this code were found in every transcript. This ESCI competency was the second highest code counted out of 12 ESCI competencies, which is not surprising because it was a topic that participants often raised voluntarily during interviews. In many of these cases, participants raised the topic when describing the role that ongoing and as-needed mentoring activity played in improving their relationships with team members and others in the workplace. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “cares about others and their development”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…develop really good talent. I put probably 15 to 20% of my time [into it]” (Participant #8, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “provides feedback others find helpful for their development”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “speaking with CEOs… I'm able to listen and contribute something to them” (Participant #39, 2015).
3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “personally invests time and effort in developing others”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…really trying to understand, in a way that you can help them help themselves, or help find ways to help them solve issues that they have at work” (Participant #28, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “coaches and mentors others”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “[I] really enjoyed the teaching, the mentorship that was associated with that” (Participant #32, 2015).

5. ESCI behavioral indicator: “provides ongoing mentoring or coaching”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “I mentor a number of people” (Participant #18, 2015).

Additional examples of Coach and Mentor behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “cares about others and their development”:

Have an employee, overwhelmed and needed to talk it through and have a deep listening and compassionate discussion. (Participant #28, 2015)

…I develop really good talent. I put probably 15 to 20% of my time [into it]. (Participant #8, 2015)

…I step back and allow people to lead me so that I am…supporting people, giving them the courage to do something that they are not used to doing. (Participant #14, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Provides feedback others find helpful for their development”:

speaking with CEOs…I'm able to listen and contribute something to them. (Participant #39, 2015)
…I just said that it's really important that we ask these questions…it would've been a much more natural part of your conversation, than me entering into that conversation with him. (Participant #29, 2015)

Quotations below are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Personally invests time and effort in developing others”:

I'm actually running a small meditation group for our own staff. (Participant #33, 2015)

…really trying to understand, in a way that you can help them help themselves, or help find ways to help them solve issues that they have at work. (Participant #28, 2015)

…once a month I would talk with them…career path and so…no one really expected me to do it. (Participant #6, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Coaches and mentors others”:

While I transition to an area that is my deeper passion, which is coaching and mentoring people…(Participant #37, 2015)

[I] really enjoyed the teaching, the mentorship that was associated with that (Participant #32, 2015)

…a person that I'm working with on doing coaching. (Participant #35, 2015)

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “provides ongoing mentoring or coaching”:

I worked with him for a year and half…he showed to be a very eager, willing and accepting student... (Participant #19, 2015)

I mentor a number of people. (Participant #18, 2015)

I was working with some police officers, and teaching them to use mindfulness practices as they approach emergent crime scenes. (Participant #30, 2015)
ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management, Competency: Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Indicators</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Convinces others by getting support from key people</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Convinces others by using multiple approaches</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Convinces others by appealing to their self-interest</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Anticipates how others will respond when trying to convince them</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Convinces others by developing behind the scenes support</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Convinces others through discussion</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:** 59

Table 20. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified

**Influence.** Individuals with strength in the ESCI competency *influence* exhibit the ability to positively guide the decisions and actions of others, including appealing to others’ self-interests (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). These individuals also possess a stronger ability to communicate effectively with others and capture their attention, in addition to building consensus, and both anticipate and adapt to responses or objections (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Finally, strength in this ESCI competency also indicates an ability to solicit support from key people and develop behind-the-scenes support (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

The ESCI competency *influence* is part of the relationship management ESCI competency cluster. I coded for it 59 times in the data, making it the eighth most frequently occurring ESCI competency out of 12. Examples of influence shared by participants often touched on their improved leadership effectiveness, much of which required the participation of others. In addition, descriptions of the positive results produced by an improved ability to influence others in some cases also included comparison with less successful, pre-mindfulness attempts to influence others. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with
which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “convinces others using multiple approaches”

Quotation taken from transcripts: (From a description of improved influence abilities comparing pre-mindfulness interpersonal behaviors to post-mindfulness interpersonal behaviors) “…I’m gonna do my best to make this as painless as possible while still meeting the regulations… So I'd appreciate your help” (Participant #9, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “convinces others through discussion”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “And I'm just gonna go and address it head on, but diplomatically and factually and, and deal with it that way” (Participant #27, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “Convinces others by getting support from key people”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “I knew it [was the right candidate]. But it didn't matter that I knew it… It mattered that at least six other people knew it” (Participant #23, 2015).

4. ESCI Behavioral indicator: “convinces others by appealing to their self-interest”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “…concentrate on what challenges they're facing and how to have them help themselves or help them through it” (Participant #28, 2015).

Additional examples of Influence behavioral indicator coding:

The following examples align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “convinces others using multiple approaches”:

…I'm gonna do my best to make this as painless as possible while still meeting the regulations…So I'd appreciate your help. So things like that were before you know, when it was just like, okay, we need to do this, I
need this now, why don't you respond to me? I'm gonna go talk to your boss. (Participant #9, 2015)

…they feel valued, appreciated, they're given opportunities. They have a leader who tries to understand, who’s passionate with them. (Participant #27, 2015)

I tried to show a perspective that makes them be aware about the impact of those [strengths and] weaknesses in the workplace. (Participant #40, 2015)

In this example the quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “convinces others through discussion”:

…when you really relate to another person, you're able to gather a lot more information about how to influence the situation, or influence the outcome. (Participant #28, 2015)

But when you pause and you ask more questions and once again, try to gain a more grander understanding of what's really going on. (Participant #18, 2015)

And I'm just gonna go and address it head on, but diplomatically and factually and, and deal with it that way. (Participant #27, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Convinces others by getting support from key people”:

…I did outreach and education with the physicians…in order to get those additional referrals. (Participant #31, 2015)

…I part of the reason I get picked is because I'm not afraid to tell people when they're messing up. (Participant #3, 2015)

I knew it [was the right candidate]. But it didn't matter that I knew it…it mattered that at least six other people knew it. (Participant #23, 2015)

… they [executive leaders] were very open to me, suggesting the types of programs that would work and the type of guest speakers we should have, the type of programs we should look towards in the future. (Participant #31, 2015)
The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Convinces others by appealing to their self-interest”:

an environment like this where you’ve got a lot of different people grinding a lot of different agendas to find teams and individuals that can bring people together. That's fundamentally what I do, and I use a lot of different tools to do that. (Participant #32, 2015)

And [I] also identified maybe a dozen of his needs that I think we were much more important. (Participant #19, 2015)

…concentrate on what challenges they're facing and how to have them help themselves or help them through it. (Participant #28, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management, Competency: Inspirational Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Indicators:</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Leads by building pride in the group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leads by inspiring others</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does not inspire followers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Leads by bringing out the best in people</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Leads by articulating a compelling vision</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency: 60

Table 21. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified

**Inspirational leadership.** The ESCI competency *Inspirational leadership* focuses on the personal interest in, and ability to lead, regardless of one’s formal title, and an individual strong in this ESCI competency will exhibit leadership behaviors enabling him/her to unify others towards a common goal (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). An inspirational leader will be adept at exhibiting a sense of pride in his/her work, in addition to developing a sense of group ownership (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). Examples of behaviors associated with this ESCI competency include creating an engaging work environment and motivating others by articulating a
compelling goal or vision (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012). A person with strength in this ESCI competency will also inspire higher levels of performance in others (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

The ESCI competency *Inspirational leadership* is part of the relationship management ESCI competency cluster, and I identified indicators of it in all transcripts. I coded for this ESCI competency a total of 60 times, making it the seventh most frequently coded ESCI competency. Indicators included examples of building common vision among team members and presenting a group with new or challenging ideas at times of crisis. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “leads by articulating a compelling vision”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “And providing a vision [to senior leaders] for how those programs would be best delivered” (Participant #31, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “leads by inspiring others”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…[if] that leader is doing it with integrity, people are all in… and will kinda join with you at the hip to do what you're trying to do” (Participant #41, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “leads by building pride in the group”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…entrusted them to drive their own culture… had some very real conversations about the type of culture we wanna create, free thinking, fun, collaborative, open, honest” (Participant #34, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “leads by bringing out the best in people”

   Quotation taken from transcripts: “I always considered [employee development] a priority because I wanted to have high-performing
teams, and I wanted people to be a part of my team that were excited for working for me” (Participant #18, 2015).

Additional examples of Inspirational Leadership behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “leads by articulating a compelling vision”:

We need to really access the way we treat people, the way we treat ourselves, the way we understand emotion in the work place. (Participant #34, 2015)

And by the time our first two-hour meeting was over I was going to do some very much needed work in corporate culture and leadership development. (Participant #19, 2015)

And providing a vision for how those programs would be best delivered. (Participant #31, 2015)

…we were defining what our both the charter and the structure should be in, in this new world. (Participant #35, 2015)

Participants also provided examples aligning with the ESCI behavioral indicator “leads by inspiring others”:

…[if] that leader is doing it with integrity, people are all in…and will kinda join with you at the hip to do what you're trying to do. (Participant #41, 2015)

I'm going to try my best and do the best I can, and I think just that one little thing can be inspiring to my team. (Participant #27, 2015)

It wasn't like me big boss telling [them] to earn a certificate…I was willing to earn the certificate myself also. (Participant #22, 2015)

The following quotation is an example of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Leads by building pride in the group”:  

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…entrusted them to drive their own culture…had some very real conversations about the type of culture we wanna create, free thinking, fun, collaborative, open, honest. (Participant #34, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Leads by bringing out the best in people:”

You develop this sort of connection with the person you're managing…there's this empathy that goes on [when the] person you're managing respects and appreciates you for trying to understand what's really going on. (Participant #18, 2015)

I've always really worked to try to build trusting relationships with individuals through, not necessarily my words, but my actions. (Participant #32, 2015)

I always considered [employee development] a priority because I wanted to have high-performing teams, and I wanted people to be a part of my team that were excited for working for me. (Participant #18, 2015)

ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management, Competency: Teamwork

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESCI Competency Cluster: Relationship Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESCI Competency: (5 of 5) Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Indicators:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Does not cooperate with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Works well in teams by being supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Works well in teams by encouraging cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Works well in teams by soliciting others’ input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Works well in teams by being respectful of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Works well in teams by encouraging participation of everyone present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavioral Indicator Code Total for this ESCI Competency:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 22. ESCI Competency and Behavioral Indicators Identified*

**Teamwork.** This ESCI competency is defined by cooperative versus separate/independent or competitive work, and also includes participation in building team capabilities, working towards common objectives, and taking ownership of both positive and negative outcomes (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).
Individuals with strength in this ESCI competency will be able to build and maintain working relationships, in addition to promoting a supportive environment conducive to input from teammates (Hay Group, 2015; Goleman & Boyatzis 2012).

The ESCI competency *teamwork* is part of the relationship management ESCI competency cluster, and was the most highly identified of the 12 ESCI competencies, with a total of 74 instances occurring in the transcripts. The following quotations are provided as examples of the ESCI behavioral indicators with which they are paired. A quotation appears for each of the ESCI behavioral indicators identified for this ESCI competency:

1. ESCI behavioral indicator: “works well in teams by being supportive”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…the deepness of listening and relating to a person and helping them connect on an individual level so they feel valued and connected to you as a leader” (Participant #28, 2015).

2. ESCI behavioral indicator: “works well in teams by encouraging cooperation”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I used those leaders of those units to help each other improve” (Participant #37, 2015).

3. ESCI behavioral indicator: “works well in teams by soliciting others’ input”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…the people that I work with in giving me these insights… I asked for it, and therefore they felt comfortable giving it to me” (Participant #29, 2015).

4. ESCI behavioral indicator: “works well in teams by being respectful of others”
   
   Quotation taken from transcripts: “…I listen to my colleagues… I value their contributions” (Participant #42, 2015).
5. ESCI behavioral indicator: “works well in teams by encouraging participation of everyone present”

Quotation taken from transcripts: “We would give everybody an opportunity to run the meeting… It finally becomes a collaborative agenda” (Participant #22, 2015).

Additional examples of Teamwork behavioral indicator coding:

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Works well in teams by being supportive”:

…I wanna make sure that people when they're off, they're truly off…certainly something can wait or we'll try to get something else done. (Participant #27, 2015)

…the deepness of listening and relating to a person and helping them connect on an individual level so they feel valued and connected to you as a leader (Participant #28, 2015)

…then being able to be available to, present for, the people on the team that were also experiencing a lot of that stress…as we were having some of the conversations around the fears and the concerns that were coming up out of this. (Participant #35, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Works well in teams by encouraging cooperation”:

…I used those leaders of those units to help each other improve. (Participant #37, 2015)

And as far as, as collaborating with the other person, I think it's recognizing that they may be going through some of the same things. (Participant #33, 2015)

…I realized that somebody had the same issue and by bringing them together, we talked more with each other. (Participant #17, 2015)
This is illustrated by the following quotations, which align with the ESCI behavioral indicator “works well in teams by soliciting others’ input”:

I've created an employee survey that they can go in…it can be something like I don't think my manager respects me. (Participant #34, 2015)

…in our team meetings, discussing what it means to be team…we would have to define that in our own terms. (Participant #22, 2015)

…the people that I work with in giving me these insights…I asked for it, and therefore they felt comfortable giving it to me. (Participant #29, 2015)

The following quotations are examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “Works well in teams by being respectful of others”:

I'm being respectful and…really listening, really understanding where they're coming from…and then reflecting (Participant #9, 2015)

you have to do it in a sensitive diplomatic, caring, but clear and direct way. (Participant #19, 2015)

…I listen to my colleagues…I value their contributions. (Participant #42, 2015)

The following quotations provide examples of the ESCI behavioral indicator “works well in teams by encouraging participation of everyone present”:

We would give everybody an opportunity to run the meeting…it finally becomes a collaborative agenda. (Participant #22, 2015)

I've decided to allow space for her and her team to design the new model, and giving everyone space to have their own thoughts and ideas. (Participant #32, 2015)

…we've used what's referred to as the council process, which is an age old indigenous style of bringing community together, to resolve issues. (Participant #42, 2015)
References


Boyatzis, R. E. (1999). The financial impact of competencies in leadership and management of consulting firms. Unpublished paper, Department of Organizational Behavior, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH.


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