



## **About LPI**

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), a 360-degree assessment instrument which participants take as part of their pre-work for The Leadership Challenge® Workshop, serves two purposes: It allows us continuously to test our initial findings that The Five Practices model is a valid view of the world of leadership, and it provides a tool that helps leaders assess the extent to which they actually use those practices so that they can make plans for improvement.

The LPI is a questionnaire with thirty behavioral statements—six for each of The Five Practices—that takes 10 to 20 minutes to complete. Leaders complete the LPI-Self, rating themselves on the frequency with which they think they engage in each of the thirty behaviors. Five to ten other people—typically selected by the leaders—complete the LPI-Observer questionnaire, rating the leaders on the frequency with which they think they engage in each behavior. Respondents can indicate their relationship to the leader—manager, co-worker or peer, direct report, or other observer—but, with the exception of the leader's manager, all the observers' feedback is anonymous.

The LPI can be completed online, or it can be completed in a paper-and-pencil version. Whether taken in a hard or soft format, the results are scored electronically and the system prints out a report that summarizes the results.

Our own and independent studies consistently confirm that the LPI has very strong reliability and validity. Today, it is one of the most widely used 360-degree leadership assessment instruments available. More than **400,000** leaders and over one million observers have completed it. Since the LPI was first used in 1985, we've analyzed surveys from more than 1.1 million respondents to determine the relationship between The Five Practices and a variety of measurable outcomes. In addition, more than 300 doctoral dissertations and master's theses have used the LPI in their research. Ongoing analysis and refinements of the instrument continue.

## **Where LPI Began**

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) has its origins in a research project Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner began in 1983. They wanted to know what people did when they were at their "personal best" in leading others. They started with the assumption, however, that they did not have to interview and survey star performers in excellent companies to discover best practices. They assumed that by asking ordinary people to describe extraordinary experiences, they would find patterns of success. They were right.

After some preliminary research, Kouzes and Posner devised a personal-best leadership experience survey consisting of thirty-eight open-ended questions such as these:

- Who initiated the project?
- How were you prepared for this experience?
- What special techniques and strategies did you use to get other people involved in the project?
- What did you learn about leadership from this experience?

Over its nearly 20-year history, the LPI has become the most popular "off-the-shelf" leadership instrument in the world, used by nearly one million leaders worldwide. Repeated analysis of the instrument has proven it to be a reliable and valid measure of a leader's effectiveness. But most important to its creators, the results have also shown that leadership is understandable and learnable.

## **The Leadership Challenge Model**

From an analysis of the personal-best cases, they developed a model of leadership that consists of what Kouzes and Posner call The Five Practices:

- **Challenging The Process**
- **Inspiring a Shared Vision**
- **Enabling Others To Act**
- **Modeling the Way**
- **Encouraging the Heart**

This led them to develop a quantitative instrument - the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) - that would measure the leadership practices they uncovered.

## **Research Results**

Beginning with an initial sampling of over three thousand leaders and their constituents, the researchers began using the LPI to assess to what extent leaders were using The Five Practices. Since then, they have conducted hundreds of thousands of inventories. The results of their research have been striking, both in their consistency and in how they refute the stereotype that leadership cannot be learned:

- When doing their best, leaders do exhibit The Five Practices measured by the LPI.
- Measurement of The Five Practices does not vary from industry to industry, profession to profession, community to community, and country to country.
- Leaders can and do learn to become better leaders by adjusting their behavior to follow The Five Practices.

Good leadership, as Kouzes and Posner have shown, is a universal and learnable process.

## **Validity and Reliability of LPI**

Any good instrument should have sound psychometric properties, reliability, and validity. In general, an instrument is reliable when it measures what it is supposed to measure; it's valid when it accurately predicts performance. When Kouzes and Posner were developing the LPI, they conducted a number of tests to determine whether the inventory had sound psychometric properties. Here's what they found:

- The LPI is internally reliable. The six statements pertaining to each leadership practice are highly correlated with one another.
- Test-retest reliability is high. The scores from one administration of the LPI to another within a short time span (a few months) and without any significant intervening event (such as a leadership training program) are consistent and stable.
- The five scales are generally independent (statistically orthogonal). The five scales corresponding to the five leadership practices don't all measure the same phenomenon. Instead, each measures a different practice, as it should.
- The LPI has both face validity and predictive validity. Face validity means that the results make sense to people. Predictive validity means that the results are significantly correlated with various performance measures and can be used to make predictions about leadership effectiveness.

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### **EXPERIENCE IT FOR YOURSELF**

We are pleased to offer you complimentary licenses for a **“test pilot”** to experience the Leadership Practice Inventory® online for yourself.

Contact us to get started today.

**START LEADING TODAY, CONTINUE LEADING TOMORROW!**