Tango for managers: A dance of lead and follow

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TANGO FOR MANAGERS: A DANCE OF LEAD AND FOLLOW

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In the Roman writer Ovid's recounting of the myth of Narcissus, Echo, a nymph, loses her body and becomes a mere voice. As such, she is capable only of echoing the words of others. While organizations talk about the need for self-management, creative leadership and flexibility, the epistemology used to deliver the associated notions is for the most part, itself disembodied, as is the `knowledge' transmitted. A more or less static, cross-sectional approach is inherent in concepts and theories and the conventional methods of delivering them to practitioners. But thinking about something and experiencing it directly in a lived, felt way are not the same. Whereas abstract human rationality may have characterized effectiveness in the industrial age, we are moving into an era outside of this sphere. A discontinuity that requires understandings in organizations of what makes us human to be much broader.

Learning theory, science and the proliferation of forms of `body work' (e.g. Feldenkrais method, Alexander method, Somatics, Bioenergetic Analysis) in recent years attest to the emerging importance and meaningfulness of embodiment in living both scientifically and to many people in their actual lives. However such notions have barely made a dent in most organizational practices, such as leadership. The increasing need for adaptability to rapid change and reliance on `followers' who may know more than their `leaders' raises the importance of protean selves and blurs the traditional line between leader and follower. (Following, interestingly, receives scant attention in the leadership literature. This omission is telling in its implicit assumptions.) -So how can individuals be invited to expand their self-view and what they `know' about leadership/followership in a lived, felt, embodied way?

A novel approach, developed by one of the authors, incorporates argentine tango and capitalizes on its

characteristics to translate certain universally applicable principles of lead and follow to the individual professional practice

of management. Argentine tango as a dance genre is complex and intricate. -One key element relevant to the topic of

leadership is that of an archetypical polarization of lead and follow. What brings this dance a step further than most

others, such as the waltz, is the strong improvisational element and the myriad of possible movements (and pauses) that

`fit' the same piece of music. Also distinguishing, if both partners take leadership over their own role, is the nonuse of

excessive pushing and pulling in connecting, communicating and coordinating – consistent with the old adage, `force is

the absence of power'. A `good' dancer can adapt to many different leaders and followers, each with their own ways,

strengths and limitations. Knowing one's own is a necessary first step and risk-taking at times is required in any dancer's

development. The other people on the dance floor are also a key part of the dance space and its emerging,

unpredictable nature. And all this movement happens within the overarching framework of the music. More often than

not, it is graceful and fluid in what might seem like a chaotic context to an observer.

The challenge of how parallels between argentine tango and leadership may be made useful in a lived,

concrete way to individuals in organizations was addressed in a workshop conducted as part of a larger leadership-

training program in deBaak, a leading Dutch management center. The work in this workshop is based on four years

experience in developing and conducting similar, made to measure workshops.   A common thread is the creation of a

new space into which people are invited to enter. A space of concrete, in-the-body movement that represents a

discontinuity from the outmoded remnants of the industrial age. Argentine tango in this venue constitutes a dance map

for leadership while simultaneously inviting individuals to go beyond the known and familiar, to enter a realm not yet put

into words. Given the significance in both process and content in extending traditional practices, a natural question arises

as to the effects of this segment on participants.   It is this question our study proposes to address. As this is exploratory

work, we asked three open-ended questions included as part of the feedback survey completed by participants, managers

in Dutch organizations, at the end of their program. The questions address leadership `content' learned from the workshop, the `process' and its contribution to learning, and, finally, participants' subjective reflections on their experience with the process itself were invited.   Results from three samples of 13 people each are analyzed using grounded theory techniques.

We begin by visiting three sites of work (`body work', leadership and Argentine tango) that we draw from in our exploration. We attempt to illustrate the multi-faceted, richly textured nature of the workshop and how it might potentially contribute to participants' knowledge and effectiveness. In the following section we examine some key thinking on `body work', specifically what we term `embodied epistemology' – a term having significant ramifications on the question of what it is to be human that lies at the heart of this work. We then look at the current state of leadership thinking and how the present approach may offer a way to step out of an irresolvable debate and on to a different trajectory. The third site we meander through collecting what may be useful to understanding the workshop endeavor is Argentine tango. In part, we use tango as topos with respect to leadership, thus serving as both an association of ideas and also as a mnemonic. We then proceed to look at the sample and methods employed in the study. A discussion of analysis and results follows. Finally, we summarize our discussion and present our conclusions. Our findings represent both an extension of previous research and suggest the emergence of a new and potentially transformative space for our understanding and practice of the dance of lead and follow.

Body/Mind

"…here we confront the inadequacy of language…there is no such separation; there is no body that is not mind, no mind that is not body".
[Mate, 2004, pp. 9]

In recent years there has been significant development in embodied human experiencing, both in formal therapeutic settings and in interpersonal processes. Where people were once `mute', vocabularies have developed which

both inform and reflect the subtle nuances of experience and relational complexities.   Organizational and social

communities which related mostly from a basis of roles with their coarse grained determinants are rapidly breaking down.

New kinds of more nuanced, finer grained forms of being and being-with are emerging and even `worded'.   These

elements, however, do not seem to have permeated much into organizations.

The notion of `experiential thinking' moves beyond postmodern "rupture" and contradiction (Gendlin, 1997). Or

rather, it does not render them invisible by invoking `a priori' a cognitive schema overlay.   The implicit academic and

intellectual value of `consistency', or its illusion, is abandoned. Experiential thinking reverses the usual philosophical and

empirical order of giving some cognitive system dominance and reading it into experience and/or observations.   Priority is

given to experiential, embodied sensing. Once occurred, it may (or may not) be explained in retrospect by introducing

cognitive elements. This reversal makes a more radical and expanded form of empiricism possible.   Contrary perhaps to

general preconceptions, it is a more orderly form and also more exact and precise in its results, albeit multischematic and

non-numerical (Gendlin, 1997).

Thomas Hanna, in his groundbreaking work before his premature death used the term `sensory-motor amnesia'

to refer to an "…habituated state of forgetfulness" that profoundly diminishes our image of who we are, and what we can

experience (Hanna, 1988,pp. xiii). Hanna's work on what he called Functional Integration was based on the work of Hans

Selye, reknowned stress researcher, and Feldenkrais, an Israeli scientist who developed his own modality of `body work'.

Sensory amnesia may result in `disembodied minds' which limits practical functioning. In turn, functioning will affect

structure. In response to the question as to what is the nature of a body that has life, Hanna (1979) responded that

autonomous movement is the way life manifests itself in living bodies. He adds, "Living bodies are **self-moving**"

(Hanna, 1979, pp.viii, bolding our emphasis).   Hanna saw this movement as immensely complex, "a subverbal realm of

movement and sensation that is the primary determinant of health and efficient functioning" (Ibid, pp. 47). Miller provides

some insight into what we are calling `embodied epistemology'. "[The body] is quicker to see through self-deception than

the mind, particularly if the mind has been trained to function as an alienated self…[the body's] language is the authentic expression of our true selves and of the **strength of our vitality** [Miller, 2005, pp. 207, bolding our emphasis]. The privileged position sophistry accords clever speakers is non-sense.

A lineage exists on this body situated theme from some of the work of Freud, Reich, Jung and fanning out to more recent work by people such as Alexander Lowen, Thomas Hanna (as discussed above), Frederick Alexander, Fritz Perls, and Moshe Feldenkrais to name only a few.   Lowen, for example, a one-time student and analysand of Reich, developed a system based on Reich's work. In `Bioenergetics' Lowen advances the critical importance of "sensing and sense", stating, "In a time like today, when there is such a strong tendency to manipulate people's thinking and behavior by words and images, this source of information is of paramount importance" (Lowen, 1975, pp.101).

Similarly examining embodied epistemology; Eugene Gendlin has developed what he calls `focusing', a way of accessing and living further the deepest bodily knowledge.  A `felt sense' of oneself, life and events consists of awareness, sensation, subtlety, variety, and rhythm (Levine, 1997). Bodily intelligence underlies the experience of a focusing that calls for giving up the convention of knowing for simply experiencing. For Gendlin, "the experiential side always exceeds the concepts" (Gendlin, 1997). It calls for going beyond thinking that employs conceptual logic, rules or distinctions to be able to think with the intricacy of situations through experience, practice and the `knowing' incumbent therein. Priority is given to making experiential sense rather than to a cognitive system that is then read into experience. In Gendlin's view (which is also relevant to the present work on the epistemological aspect of tango with respect to leadership), cognitive based systems rely on a model of limited degrees of freedom. The reverse happens with bodily intelligence in that the more requirements one imposes, the more new possibilities are opened (cf. analysis & results section).

In recent decades, scientific inquiry has established a more unitary perspective displacing the prevailing mind-body split in Western thought for the last several hundred years, and establishing that biological and psychological

activities can no longer be considered as autonomous or separate from each other. A relatively new scientific discipline, psychoneuroimmunoendocrinology, or psychonueroimmunology as it is sometimes called, studies the interrelated functions of the organs and glands that regulate our behavior and physiological balance. A leading American researcher and neurobiologist, Candace Pert, has referred to the traditional conceptual divisions between these fields as historical artifact (Pert, 1999). Arising from this work is the notion of "cellular memory" which locates memory and learning in cellular imprints and not simply in the brain. The biology of belief is ingrained at the cellular level. (For a more detailed discussion of this groundbreaking field, we refer the reader to Pert's 1999 book written for the lay person, "Molecules of Emotion".) The result of stress, for example, is a measurable set of physical events in the body that involve the brain, hormonal processes, the immune system and many other organs. In spite of this systemic response, people can experience chronic stress with no awareness of its presence. Perhaps a form of what Hanna called sensory motor amnesia. The preceding notions form a key thematic lens for the current work and tools in crafting our workshop exploration. Next, we look at existing thinking and research on leadership – the topic of the workshop.

The Ghost Dance of Leadership

`Ghost dances' gained popularity among Native American tribes in the nineteenth century as a ritual to ward off the impending destruction and disintegration of their dying way of life and to attempt to restore the past by receiving the spirits of the ancestors. This tendency may be a natural one in the death throes of a civilization and the end of an era such as that of the industrial age. Historians have shown that the end of each epoch has concurred with an eruption of proliferations of its forms and artifacts just before the final fade-out. This last ditch attempt to evade the inevitable by

frantic efforts at restoring the past may itself be inevitable. Or, possibly, an unwillingness or inability to let go of the old,

particularly for those vested in that location.

Gemmill and Oakley (1992) viewed the state of leadership construction, research and its soaring popularity as a `ghost

dance'. In a provocative article, the authors refer to the "leadership mafia" and also provide a compelling argument for

`leadership' as nothing more than an alienating social myth. (This position is extensively analyzed, developed and

researched in the psychoanalytic and psychodynamic literature on organizations.) Alternatively stated, the emperor has

no clothes.

In a recent interview published in Harvard Business Review, Stanford University professor emeritus in

management, sociology, political science, and education, James March, expressed doubts about the usefulness of the

concept of leadership in scholarship. He viewed the idea of leadership as imposed on the interpretation of history by the

way people think that history is supposed to be described (March, 2006).   At the same time that some noteworthy, even

iconic, scholars are arguing that leadership is a social fiction, the popular press is pouring forth increasing numbers of

books on the topic to a seemingly unquenchable public. Management seminars on the topic of leadership abound and

show no signs of abating. The fact that people talk about leaders and assign them importance is neither surprising nor

informative (March, 2006) given the pervasiveness of the leadership phantom. The title of the HBR interview, "Ideas as

Art", was reflected in March's comments and has its parallels in the workshop on tango.   For March, a significant feature

of scholarship is that ideas must have "some form of elegance or grace or surprise…Scholarship will always have an

element of aestheticism…It is the **combination** of academic and experiential knowledge…that yields improvement" (March

2006, pp.84-85, our emphasis).   A combination inherent throughout the present work in its various sites. We would

propose that the embodiment in tango of elegance, grace and surprise are also powerfully aesthetic, opening unique

possibilities particularly in its principles and lived experience of lead and follow. In addition, tango is a way of being

human `more than' the rational ideal of the industrial era, and an embodied epistemology that is `more than' the abstract rationality of that time.

The need for something `more than' the solely rational construction of what it means to be human is a key theme in the present work.  A `something more' also seems to exist in March's suggestion that reading poetry helps managers in what he terms their "critical need" to come to terms with the inherent contradictions and inconsistencies of management. When asked why he writes poetry and recommends the reading of poetry to managers – he responds in part, "Poetry celebrates the senses; it celebrates the feelings in ways that other things don't." (Ibid, pp.89).   We would concur with this critical need for managers, and the unknown possibilities as to how that may be found by venturing into a venue that celebrates the senses and feelings. The results of the present study suggest that most participants may have found such a lived experience of this need in the tango workshop.

The ghost dance 'enactment' of leadership past (as with any enactment unrecognized as such) resembles closely the mechanism of self-fulfilling prophecy (Weick, 1987, 2004). In discussing self-fulfilling prophesies as substitutes for strategy, Weick (1987) used the term `presumption of logic' to refer to general expectations abut the orderliness of what will happen, presumptions that will structure and define a situation from its beginning (analogous to Gendlin's `a priori' cognitive overlays). Selective attention may take the form of seeing what we believe thus beliefs crystallized in previous activities tend to edit what is currently `seen'.  This process is rooted in the past and a ghostly dance may attempt to perpetuate it.  The commonly assumed value in `walking the talk' may in fact over constrain current walking to conformity to a crystallized talk from the past. The value of `movement' or sensitivity to motion and unfolding has been pointed out (cf. Weick, 2004).  Quoting Dewey (1922/2002, p.290), Weick states, `the infinitive and the imperative develop from the participle, present tense' (Weick, 2004, p.410).   Movement and sensitivity to motion are fundamental to `lead' and `follow', and to their embodiment in tango. The fact that a person might heartily announce with great pride, "I took

the lead!" but rarely with equal fervor "I took the follow!" illuminates more about ignorance and the absence of knowledge or understanding than about grammatical exigencies.

A recent article (Porter & McLaughlin, 2006) reviewed the leadership research literature from 1990 to 2005 focusing on work (conceptual and empirical) that incorporated `context' factors. This category would seem to include what is also termed `contingency' or situational theories, person variables such as gender and heterogeneity, `servant leadership' (the underpinning of the practice of `coaching' and its leadership ideology) and also charismatic leadership theories. The authors express puzzlement as to why there is a relative dearth of research incorporating contextual variables despite numerous calls to do so. While this lack may be attributable, as the authors suggest, to an oversight on the part of researchers, it may also be due to an increasing number of contexts that are fluid, flowing, emergent and fragmentary. `Measuring' and constructing representations in conceptualized abstract terms of smoke-like (we borrow the image from Weick, 2004) contextual variables is of dubious validity, and reliability becomes a nonsequitur. These theories may have reached the limits of usefulness, even assuming that leadership is more than a tautological fiction, an ephemeral, ghostly phantom. Nevertheless, we would agree with the authors' conclusions of the need in future research to focus on dynamic aspects of leadership, "a need to build more movies rather than just snapshots" (Porter & McLaughlin, 2006, pp. 574). What these authors identify as missing from most of the extant static literature is the feature of dynamism and change.

The authors acknowledge the constant flux within organizations and recommend that future research aimed at providing a "more nuanced and textured – indeed, more sophisticated – understanding of how leadership operates…" is needed. We fully concur. The choice of words "how leadership operates" seems to tacitly shift the focus from a static "leader" whose behavior or characteristics are the focus, to the process itself, albeit a mechanistic one ('operates'). The location of this `operating' is not articulated. It is our position that the location is between a leader and a follower, leaders and followers; an interplay that is vibrant and alive rather than dead and mechanistic. The play field might seem static,

well defined by a set of rules or presumptions of logic. Individuals, however, make up their own personal `game' as they move along in interplay. Also, the issue of how this more richly textured, nuanced, and sophisticated understanding may be developed with the static and mechanistic tools of abstraction and current understanding is not addressed. We would suggest that it is not meaningfully possible. The authors also question the fact that usually only one situational variable is considered in a design and suggest that this over simplification needs to be rectified by including more. However, the question as to **why** not more are included is not directly raised and seems also to be implicitly attributed to shortsightedness on the part of researchers. Perhaps indeed researchers have for decades been particularly recalcitrant in this respect or simply continuing on the treadmill, working hard and methodically doing what they have always done in their paradigm. An intuitive understanding or felt sense of its eroding viability on the part of researchers, particularly in empirical studies such as the present one, offers a plausible alternative explanation for this lack.

For obvious reasons the literature on `self-leadership' did not meet the criterion for inclusion in the above review. Yet it has been a growing focus over the last couple of decades, both in the Academy and in popular culture and practice. As indicated in Neck & Houghton's (2006) review, this field of leadership came out of the shift away from industrial production work contexts towards knowledge work, often team-based situations. The field purported to be a better `fit' than traditional theories in this new context. As with the other theories already mentioned, who is the follower in `self-leadership' isn't clear. `Self-followership' would appear as a logical correspondence but there is nothing there but a solipsistic vacuum. Is the leader self then a dictator, a tyrant? Is it a self master-slave relationship? Is rebellion, mutiny or resistance of the follower self possible? For that matter, is there more than one follower-self? If a rope is pulled with only one hand, is there really any pull? We could find no mention of these questions in Neck & Houghton's (2006) examination of two decades of self-leadership theory and research although they did conclude that "shared leadership" is one of the most promising areas in self-leadership. Shared leadership does not refer to sharing leadership with a follower, self or otherwise. It is defined as an ongoing process of mutual influence when the members of a team share

traditional leadership roles and responsibilities (e.g. Pearce, 2004). But is the receiver of the influence at a point in time

not, by definition, a follower? How can there be a `dynamic' process with two leads? Is this not then simply a children's

game of `my turn"; at best, leader and non-leader?

In the article Neck & Houghton also make a brief and daring foray into territory uncharted in other leadership

fields – pleasure. (Aesthetic experience, pleasure and the process of coming to know embodied in these ways are taken

up in more detail elsewhere when we analyze the second question of our survey.) The authors talk about the potential

power of intrinsically enjoyable aspects of a task or activity, in this case `mutual influence'. However, pleasure is de-

potentiated almost immediately by being re-cast as a "natural reward strategy", a mere mechanistic device of

reinforcement. Thus the authors deploy a strategy of mechanistic reductionism in beating a hasty retreat from what might

be construed as an embodied site of vitality - an unconditioned response. This area of leadership research seems

similarly vitally impaired and statically afflicted to those previously considered. Is leadership anything more then than a

ghostly vapor evoked in an illusionary search for comfort and security? While it is beyond the present scope to resolve

this debate, the question of illusion is an important one from the perspective presented in the previous section on

Mind/Body. As Lowen (1975) points out, the danger of an illusion is that it perpetuates desperation. Quoting from

"Betrayal of the Body" (Lowen, 1967), he explains: "As an illusion gains power it demands fulfillment, thereby forcing the

individual into conflict with reality which leads to desperate behavior. To pursue the fulfillment of an illusion requires the

sacrifice of good feelings in the present, and the person who lives in illusion is, by definition, unable to make demands for

pleasure. In his desperation he is willing to forgo pleasure and to hold life in abeyance in the hope that his illusion-come-

true will remove his despair" (pp. 127).

We step around the debate into an entirely other site where the question itself is rather like asking – is a circle

blue or yellow? A site that we believe to be more resonant with the human condition and that grasps more fully the

dynamic, transient flow increasingly characterizing work environments. It is on this latter point, as can be seem from the

above discussion, that even researchers who are diametrically opposed as to the nature of `leadership' seem to have a common ground.  We also pick up the threads from the literature on `body work' as discussed above and what we have termed an embodied epistemology in informing our approach to this work. The abstract debate about leadership may be an interesting intellectual exercise. The reality of an improvised, emergent, in the moment dance of lead and follow is as obvious as gravity and as richly nuanced as the subtlest scents to those individuals living this experience. However, the vocabulary and concepts comprising traditional theories of leadership available to us as we continue our exploration are both inadequate and limiting.   Rather like having a language where the word `boulder' is the only word available in reference to rocks of all kinds, multitudinous variations of sand, precious stones etc. combined. There is a complete disconnect between the static lumping and clumping that exist in these coarse-grained abstractions and the finely tuned, refined, nuanced, complexity of a `felt' lead and follow.   Staticness is embedded in existing ways of speaking and thinking about leadership, yet dance is perhaps the most smoke-like of all the arts. Unlike the others, it leaves no trace in the wake of its execution. While fine distinctions exist and allow for the living of lead and follow in an unworded way, tango lead and follow are simultaneously holistic, forming a gestalt. It is in constructing the matter in this way that we propose to let go of old, static notions that may have outlived their usefulness.

Existing theories have shaped conditioned responses, in part through `proactive manifestation' (Hatch, 1993). Applied to the notion of leadership, proactive manifestation refers to an imaginative act in which expectations about the nature and potentialities of leadership are produced through cognitions, emotions and perceptions grounded in cultural assumptions.   We maintain that the main container for these assumptions is a disembodied abstract rationality, which constructs, names, and enables their transmission. Embodied knowing is a different entry point into human experience. Tango may serve as a portal invoking a different realization of what it is to be human. A smokey, transitory realization that is potentially profound and enduring, yet devoid of the cold stone `comforts' of artifactual abstracted memorials and their illusion of non-death. If such richness of lead and follow exists within the dance, we asked, why couldn't the same

principles be lived in management? Or perhaps they are lived, but not yet understood, because they operate in a broader

realm than the solely rational.

Argentine tango. Adapting aesthetic techniques to the study of organization must use methods that create or

simulate first order experiences, as is the case with aesthetic techniques (Hatch 1993, Witkin, 1990). Tango allows

participants to directly experience lead and follow. The aesthetic of tango is also used as a representation of these

processes in organizations.   Intellectualizing practices are de-throned form their place of prominence and their tools set

aside, giving way to corporeal existence and embodied epistemology. Interestingly, positivism in Latin American never did

gain the unadulterated (if clinging) embrace that it did in some other parts of the world, nor was it ever installed there as

an altar for intellectual work. In the late 19th and early 20th century there was a group of Latin Americans (of which

Alejandro Korn, an Argentinean thinker, was a member) who were trained as positivists. Members later became

dissatisfied with what they saw as positivism's mechanistic determination and dogmatism and they went on to mount

criticisms of positivistic determinism.   Against this backdrop, Savigliano's (1995) position as to the dance's (i.e. tango's)

`defiance to intellectualization' is not surprising.

In Weick and Roberts (1993) terms, tango permits conversing in flux, "embodied in heedful interrelating" (Weick,

2004, pp.411). Ironically, the latter reference seems relatively unembodied given its location in the context of worded

discourse. In the present study it is the conversing beyond words into which we venture. Tango offers a powerful

aesthetic intersection where the arts of music, dance, lyrics, as well as poetry (so highly recommended by March to

managers), converge (Ferrer, 1980). This convergence provides a richness of resources well suited to representing

realities of leadership in organizations. "What is sung (said) in a tango is not necessarily what is danced (done), and the

music can dispense with both." (Savigliano, 1995, pp.13).

Generally speaking in communication about 90% is non verbal. However, when we are talking our energy is

totally focused on the spoken language, which is a complicated construct and requires a lot of attention. In tango the

verbal part is the mantric repetition by the singers of well known lyrics. The dancers remain mute and no "noise" is

present in the non verbal communication. Thus their energy can freely circulate and presence can be given to all senses,

heightening sensations and enlarging both the content and the quality of the flux of energy between the two partners.

Method

Thirty-nine surveys were completed in total, three samples of thirteen individuals in each sample. Respondents

were all managers in Dutch organizations in various industries in their first formal training as a manager. Most of the

participants were first-year managers, a few were more seasoned, typically having come up from the work floor, with no

prior training in management. They were participating in a weeklong leadership-training program in DeBeers, a large

Dutch management development center. The workshop was conducted as one of the final workshop components. In

each sample there were four women and nine men, average age ranged from 32 – 35 over the three samples. The

questionnaires consisting of the three questions relevant to this study were completed directly after the workshop.

Response rate was one hundred percent.   Participants were asked three open ended questions about the tango

workshop:

1.What has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?

2. In what way was the <u>form</u> of the workshop useful to you in your development of understanding?

3. What does it do to you to move a lot during the workshop and to be in physical contact with other people?

The questions and responses were in Dutch and translated into English for further work. Participants' responses to the

first question are considered in this paper. Our intent with this question was to invite reflections on **what** about leadership

participants came to realize or know **through this workshop** component of the weeklong training program.   The purpose

was to gain some insight into the specific elements of organizational leadership of **concrete and meaningful** import that

this application of tango lead and follow principles served to provide to those engaged in the workshop. The second and

third questions address more process-oriented factors and we consider them elsewhere. It needs to be stated, however, that there is an overlap and synergistic understanding when all three questions are considered in their entirety.

The scholarly sites visited in the beginning sections serve to place this work in its relevance to leadership, epistemological issues and what it is to be human in an age beyond that of the industrial. These threads are deeply intertwined and the complexity is considered in the results section that follows. Using grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), we move iteratively between the data and emerging theory, developing conceptual categories and then linking these categories to make sense of the data. The preceding three sites form the overarching frame of the linkages.

We also use as a lens, where useful, Gendlin's (1997) suggestion that rather than subsuming a small detail under wider categories, that we instead overarch them and build its more intricate pattern into them. This `odd' logic or what he refers to as the `logic of experiential explication' takes the following perspective: rather than diminishing degrees of freedom by imposing more requirements, more requirements open more possibilities. As will be seen later, the view provided through this lens is of particular relevance in analyzing comments about clarity of lead and its effects.

As the entire data set appears in Appendix A, descriptive discussion is minimal in the following and we focus on underlying dimensions, analysis and interpretation of the `dance of lead and follow' as experienced in the workshop. Key dimensions were identified in the data set, roughly corresponding to one of the three questions. As mentioned earlier, in this paper we consider two dimensions emerging from our analysis and interpretation of the first question (occasionally comments located under the other two questions in Appendix A are referred to, as relevant). We have termed the two dimensions, "Interplay" and "The serenity of clarity".

"Interplay" locates what seems to have emerged as foreground in participants' workshop experiences and the nature of this element. "Serenity of clarity" captures the nature of the lead in interplay, leadership being the topic of both

the workshop and the larger training program. There is overlap and interconnectedness between the two dimensions, and also among those arising from questions 2 and 3. The synergistic interactions are difficult to capture in this approach, however taking the dimensions up sequentially provides a framework for surfacing and amplifying key points. We attempt, where possible, to include meanings and relevancies that underlie the entire data set to bring to light possible synergies and deeper reverberations occurring throughout.   `Interplay' is taken up in the following section and three characteristics are identified, `mutuality', `trust', and `the alien other'. We then look at what we have termed the `serenity of clarity' dimension, which seems to characterize the nature of the lead in interplay.  Three elements of this dimension are identified: `more ways lead to Rome', 'know thyself', and, `typhoid Mary as leader'.

Interplay Interplay emerges in particular from the responses to the first question and appears consistently in all three samples. We lift this term from a respondent (2-9) who referred to leading and following as an "interplay" where "a leader does not always have to lead and a follower does not always have to follow".   The negative sentence structure in the preceding statement simultaneously allows for the importance of lead and follow, while adding a more nuanced understanding to that process.   By interplay we refer to the interaction of lead and follow between the two individuals, but also something more. The `inter' draws our eye to the `between' and what is happening in that space. `Play' reflects the nature of what is happening in the `between', shifting the focus away from the person of the leader and the person of the follower   Existing literature for the most part considers interaction as simply a means to an end – usually follower compliance in a static, somewhat disjointed two-step.   What steps forward in the `inter' is the movement, an embodied, lifeful interaction, the dance itself.   In the words of one participant, "…things must be taken on together with mutual trust/understanding".

`**Mutuality'** in this interplay is consistently reflected in the managers' statements implicitly reflecting a movement to the perceptual foreground of the dynamic exchange going on.  Examples from the first question, `what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?' include "to lead and to follow" (1-6), "what influence you have as a

leader, but also as a follower"(1-1), "that there is an interaction between leader and follower", "one cannot perform

without the other" (1-9), "the strong link between leader and follower: (1-11), "two directional traffic" (2-3), "that interaction

is needed, leading is not always forcing your way…" (2-8), "there are leaders and followers: one cannot do without the

other" (3-4), "how it <u>feels</u> to deal as a leader and a follower with each other… (emphasis in original)" (3-7), "followers and

leaders are interdependent" (3-10), "follower is as powerful as leader" (3-13). The `between' space is characterized by an

ongoing dynamic where each person is critical and recognized as so, in a mutuality of being and movement. What might

participants mean by a "strong link" or "two directional traffic"? In tango, each person holds responsibility for creating and

sustaining the texture and weave of the continuous, emerging interplay and the adaptations involved. The other is what

they are, can do what they can do. Acceptance of this reality and response to it in a given moment ensures the integrity

and harmony of the `inter'. It does not mean passive acquiescence or the absence of direction. To quote one of the

managers, "…in the end nothing [happens] without collaboration, understanding and energy". If the `inter' reflects the

where of what became clear to many participants, the `play' speaks to the nature of both what and how.

`Play' has long been linked to creativity and innovation, and has elements of spontaneity and improvisation.

This association would seem to be intuitively reflected in the comment of one participant: "…improvisation, play,

creativity" (2-3). While managing may be serious business, "foolishness" is not frivolous and has long been held forth as

potentially of much value. The sage-fool or court jester, for example, has played a pivotal role throughout history, a role

intricately bound with that of the king (Kets de Vries, 1990). The fear of looking foolish is inhibiting to most people. As

March (2006) says: "Play is disinhibiting…you are allowed to do things you would not be allowed to do otherwise" (Coutu,

2006, pp.l88). The "temporary foolishness" encouraged by play "gives you experience with a possible new you" (Ibid,

pp.88). Most workplaces are characterized by use of the language and metaphors of serious undertakings such as war,

battle and sports (e.g. strategy, winning this round, taking the ball and running with it, raising the flag and seeing who

salutes). The Warrior may be an archetypal character, so too is the Fool. Whereas the Warrior obeys the King and

defends the borders the King has set, only the fool has the right to tell the king the whole truth right to his face. This impunity puts the absolute power of the King into perspective. Trust, also a constituent of interplay is considered next. Its emergence is linked to the second dimension (serenity of clarity) without which trust is unlikely to exist.

Trust is another property of dynamic interplay noted directly in many of the comments, in addition to being implied in the above analysis of `mutuality'. It is impossible to walk backwards with conviction without trust. Interestingly, participants' comments seem to reflect the importance of trust for both lead and follow: "That I can …trust a leader" (1-2), "radiate trust" (3-5) "leader is radiating trust" (3-13), "trust that you have to give as a follower (3-2). While the role of trust to the follower seems clear, why might it be so for the leader too? Radiating trust by the leader may convey self-trust or confidence and evoke a response in kind. In tango, equivocation and hesitation in the lead are almost inevitably exacerbated in the follow, unless the follower is highly skilled and can circumvent this occurrence. If not, the resulting confusion and uncertainty can spread quickly through time and space with rapidly escalating disruptive effects. There may, however, be another meaning to the leader having trust which is this: To actively **give** one's energy without reservation is to trust that it will be suitably "received".

As mentioned at the outset, the art of the follow is beyond the scope of the present discussion; however, Zaleznik (1991) holds that "…the central question for each generation to solve is not what is leadership… - but how to follow" (Zaleznik, 1991, pp. 105).) Zaleznik (1991) discussed what he considered to be the narrow self-interest and absence of a sense of mutual obligations and responsibilities that had characterized the `leadership compact' between leaders and followers of earlier decades. While we would concur with this historical assessment, it is our position that a nostalgic return to the compact he suggests may be neither realistic nor desirable. The becoming obsolete of such a compact may have been at least partly caused by the increasing sophistication in manipulating cognitions, behavior and meaning. A touchstone of being human is intelligent rationality but when it is twisted, distorted and seen as the sole constituent of what it means to be human, it is no longer intelligent. The term `spin doctor' entered the dictionary around

the mid-1980s and reflects the increasing sophistication of this control of human nature and the resulting (quite fitting) skepticism, suspicion and lack of trust. It is our position that a discontinuous shift, rather than a return to what worked in the past, is needed and is already under way in other fields of human endeavor as discussed at the outset of this work. The substance of this discontinuity is a different understanding of what it means to be human than that characterizing the industrial era.

As seen through the cognitive behavioral lenses of what it is to be human, trust is earned, built on exchanges that render future ones possible. This kind of trust is, of course, part of life. But what seems evoked in the responses and what we have termed `mutuality' is something more. James March (referred to in a recent Harvard Business Review interview as a management guru's guru – rather ironic given that he effectively declares a moratorium on leadership in the same article) attests to this notion of trust beyond that contained in a purely exchange relationship. "The relationships…between leaders and their followers certainly involve elements of simple exchange and reciprocity, but humans are capable of, and often exhibit, more…" (Coutu (quoting March), 2006, pp. 86). The allusion to something more than what is logical by cognitive and behavioral protocols is at the heart of this work. Our corporealness and its epistemological aspects may be lived in tango and the workshop invited participants to step into this possibility. After all, if every act of lead and follow in tango had to be preceded by a series of exchanges building trust, there would be no dance.

Trusting trustworthy people is more like a "calculated exchange…a standard rational transaction" (Coutu, 2006 (quoting March), pp.86) for which trust is somewhat redundant. What might seem in March's comment `rationally' naive and incredulous (at least as viewed through disembodied lenses) does not appear to be reflected as such in participants' comments. Several participants' state (answering question 3) that they were already familiar with one another at least for the preceding few days of the intensive program. It is reasonable to assume they already had opportunities to `build trust' as it is commonly thought of. However, individuals were unlikely to have encountered one another on a basis comparable

to that of the workshop. The previous modules focused on techniques and theoretical frameworks that could be useful for

managers. This workshop was the first one in the program where the participants had to put   themselves on

the line in quite the same way. It is thus also possible that the uniform absence of incredulousness in comments points

the way to something more than cognitively structured trust in individual experiencing during the workshop. `Trust' as

embodied in tango is infinitely more complex and richly hued than the language, concepts or dynamics of trust in purely

exchange relationships can capture or convey.

The term `interplay' as used by a participant in describing their experience was chosen to express this

dimension as reflecting something more delicately shaded than simply interaction. While other respondents as seen

above do use the term `interaction', the contexts of its usages also seem to strain after expressing a lived experience

more distinct, varied and lively. In further exploring the `something more' we shift the lens by asking, what is the nature of

elements that "interplay" as compared, say, to those that simply "interact"?

In a subtle way, perhaps the different verbs denote different qualities of subject. For example, chemicals and

other substances, both inert and not, interact. But `interplay' is spoken of, for example, as happening between paradigms

(cf. Schultz & Hatch 1996). Strauss and Corbin (1998) refer to the possible `interplay' between qualitative and

quantitative research paradigms. `Paradigms' would seem to connote entities that are huge, complex, powerful, and

multi-faceted. Two-together resemble cosmic forces, with contrasts, connections and tensions. Each has its own

character and rules of being; neither is subsumed by the other.   This tango-consonant image of two individuals engaged

in the interplay of lead and follow in the preceding way seems far richer and vital than that of a quasi-mechanistic clone or

derivatives of Pavlov's dogs.   Making space for such almost poetic grandness in the workplace may open unexisting

possibilities; however, these forces may be less susceptible to manipulation and control.   For workshop participants to

experience one another as "embodied" in the lead and follow may have extended, even momentarily, their understanding

of what it is to be human, and to experience one's self and another person beyond the cognitive and behavioral

perspectives commonly underpinning leadership theory and training.

The Alien Other. We see in the responses a bringing to the foreground of this sense of the other quite

differently lived than merely as an object to be acted upon. For example, a repeated theme was the apparently often

surprising, felt (by the leader) effect the leader's actions had on the follower. There is a sense of something almost `alien'

about both the follower as thus experienced, and the known concrete, agentic effects of the leader-self as lived in the

interplay. Perhaps this alien-ness is critical to an expanded understanding of what it is to be human, a homeopathic

antidote to alien-nation. Current visions and practices of organizational life are called into question when the familiar is

rendered strange (Winter et al. 1997; Foucault, 1977). Winter et al. brought out this point in arguing that managers have

been penalized for developing mindsets outside the bounds of bureaucratic rationality and the need to reframe managers'

control orientations and practices. However, while noteworthy, reframing is not intrinsically more than another cognitive

process, even though we may be collectively or individually smitten by our own reframed languaged refractions.

Language is not inevitably static; it is the sole reliance on abstracted cognitive substance constructing it that congeals it

so. As Merleau-Ponty (1945, 1964) discusses at length (and Ovid suggests in the fate of Echo), the power of spoken

language to influence, alter, and transform derives from words as felt, bodily presences. The alien strangeness of self

and other that we hear, and have tried to amplify with our choice of words, in the reflections of workshop participants is

perhaps more closely approximated by Abram (1996) in speaking of:

> "…the ability that an alien form of sentience has to echo one's own, to instill a reverberation in oneself that
>
> ***temporarily shatters habitual ways of seeing and feeling***, leaving one open to a world all alive, awake, and
>
> aware." (pp.19, our emphasis added).

The workshop topic was leadership and with the caveat already mentioned about the absence of `followership', we examine more closely what participants learned about the lead. The preceding focus on interplay if viewed from a cognitive-behavioral perspective might suggest leading as a somewhat homogenous, up-for-grabs, fuzzy thing. However the comments made by the managers, in keeping with tango principles of lead and follow, repeat themes of clarity, definiteness, decisiveness. What is perhaps most interesting is that these qualities which when cognitively viewed may seem to conflict with `mutuality', seemed to raise no trace of dissonance or confusion in managers who spoke of both mutuality and clarity. This conspicuous absence raises the possibility that the embodied practice participants engaged in evoked a `something more' of what it means to be human, an embodied epistemology where rational rules of processing receded, where the preeminence of abstract, totalizing logic over bodies was a tad **unlearned**. In selecting a nomenclature for the next dimension under consideration, we again look to participants' words, combining two representative comments with some editorial license.

Tbe serenity of clarity   "A clear feeling gives tranquility, clarity, trust" (3-10).   "That you have to be clear as a leader, that roles can/should be acted in accordance with the situation, that too much direction is not always a negative experience, more often even positive" (2-7). There are two key points to this section seen in the preceding quotes. First, the importance of clarity in the lead; second, surprising (at least from abstract conceptualization perspectives) benefits or effects of giving direction.   The managers' reflections on clarity seem to pertain both to being clear in one's own mind and also clear in what one conveys: "it is easier for me to lead with a goal" (1-2), "To be clear and which direction" (1-3), "you have to be clear as a leader" (2-7), "Important: have a clear vision of your goal…"(2-6), "…giving direction, clarity.." (3-1), "having a clear vision/goal and going there" (3-5).   As vision, goal setting, communication and goal attainment are fundamental concepts in traditional leadership (and organizational) viewpoints, the question arises as to **what** about these ubiquitous elements became clear from this workshop, especially as it took place at the end of an intensive leader training

program! (The **why** and **how** we take up elsewhere in more detail in examining responses to the second question in the

survey.) The comments of participants would seem to indicate, for lack of a better term, "the penny dropping". Pennies

cognitively accumulated in the preceding training sessions of the leadership program, possibly bottled at the neck, may

have been ripe for finding a home in a lived, felt spot where they can become meaningfully integrated and skillfully

deployed. In part, a potentially synergistic relationship may have occurred between preceding seminars and this

workshop.   Also, the time after their last module back at work possibly made individuals more ready to look at

themselves. They come back with more tools and awareness, but probably realized that they still could cope more

smoothly with the situations arising in their work. While role-play and similar devices may be part of cognitively or

behaviorally based training sessions, `cognitive' experiential learning is **not** what we are replicating in embodied tango

movement (more about this later).

We are also suggesting something more emerges from these data. The cognitive frames of the preceding

concepts (goal setting, etc.) are by nature crude, static, coarse-grained and implementationally-challenged.   Goals set,

lived, communicated in `inter-play' as described by participants previously, have lived, moving, vital aspects – refined,

nuanced, fine-grained – also timely, and naturally fluid. There does not seem to be a language or way of speaking that

can easily distinguish the two experiences, but distinct they would seem to be.   The lock-step flow chart representations

of both goal setting and (at least contingency/situational) theories of leadership reflect neither the nature of most of the

world today nor emerging understandings in other fields of thought and work of what it is to be human. The innate

inertness of cognitive constructions of leadership, with their (relatively speaking) lock-step clumsiness and heavy-footed

elephantine shuffle seem incongruous with a fluid, often fragmented, speeding flow of emergent change characterizing an

increasing number of work environments. A characterization, we are suggesting, that seemed meaningfully captured in

the inter-play of study participants within the tango field. In addition to the distinction illuminated when participants'

comments are considered in conjunction with `inter-play', there seem to be two other distinguishing factors seeping

through. Giving direction clearly, decisively and with confidence is **not** seen as inherently undermining, impinging upon or in opposition to, follower autonomy. A position that seems to contradict conventional `knowledge' of leadership. A third factor is the interweaving of clarity with agility in peoples' responses (see Appendix, question 1). There is adherence to goals but not fixated attachment.

`Directive' leadership under its various names and terms is consistently predicated on the assumption that it takes away from follower autonomy and choice. To the extent that directive leadership may also serve as a pseudonym for tyranny, toxic leadership, hyper-control, excessive force or other harmful aspects, it probably does.   However, in the principles of tango lead and follow, and embodied epistemology more generally as seen, for example, in the work of Gendlin discussed earlier, the operating laws are quite different from those of disembodied abstraction. `Giving direction' can provide more degrees of freedom, not less.  It is part of the interplay, the role of the leader.  In this context, giving direction is perhaps best understood when viewed as an integral dynamic of the dance and `interplay', rather than as a fixed, uniform and unilateral designation assigned to the leader as subject. It can open possibilities, not close them. Perhaps the comment most clearly articulating this axial principle of embodied epistemology is the one from the participant quoted above: "too much direction is not always a negative experience, more often even positive". This `knowledge' may be cognitively or abstractly impossible; nevertheless, it is consistent with the internal integrity of this way of human being/knowing and the lead-follow principles of tango.   The dimension of `clarity' also seems characterized by initiative, radiating power, trust and confidence, (e.g. "that you have to take initiative yourself and give confidence; radiate power, clarity and obviousness" (2-1)).

Another property of `clarity' is suggested by the word "obviousness" in the preceding quote: transparency of intent. A basic principle in the lead of tango is first the intent is expressed in a clear, clean, direct way, and then the movement happens.   There is an absence of manipulation of hidden agendas in the expressed intention preceding any given movement. Confusion and distrust would erupt otherwise.   Concealment is not as facile as when cognitively

executed. From the responses, it would seem that at least some participants came to `know' the opening of possibilities that can arise from this notion of clarity in lead through their engagement in the workshop.

"More ways lead to Rome" (3-0)   The `clarity' understanding in respondents' comments is intertwined with flexibility and agility.   As the following representative quotes indicate, what clarity here is **not** is a fixed and rigid attachment to goals which may often unconsciously serve as devices to avoid anxiety and to provide the illusion of certainty in organizational settings (Sankowsky, 1995). Examples of what clarity in this situation **is**: "…by reacting in a flexible manner it is doable to give direction" (2-4), "…being aware of your role, and there are different ways to reach your goal: (2-6), "…you have to decide swiftly, deviating temporarily from a goal is allowed, if the end goal is clear…trying some other tactics if something does not work…(3-10), "clarity and flexibility are important" (1-4).

Leaders need to be clear in giving direction. To pretend that this clarity exists apart from ambiguities and shifting ground is naïve and a fiction that is both a strain on managers to sustain, as well as implicitly infantilizing non-leaders. In many organizations, enactment of this fiction is one of the `undiscussables' (Gemmill & Oakley, 1992).  In turn, leaders may then wonder about what they perceive as excessive dependence and lack of initiative on the part of their people.  There may be no awareness that this lack may have been unwittingly elicited by the assumption of `good parent' or `benevolent authority' position in which followers may have colluded for (usually unconscious) reasons of their own (cf. Sankowsky, 1995; Kets de Vries & Miller, 1985).   Workshop participants express a sense of relaxation and well being (see Appendix A) amidst the unfamiliar flux of workshop activities.   During the workshop, participants' experiences of clarity in tango/lead co-existed with ambiguity, uncertainty, confusion and strangeness. (A possible exception being one individual who indicated an existing familiarity with the workshop's process.) We could find no indication in the data of difficulties in dealing with these aspects which from a purely cognitive viewpoint may be contradictory or inconsistent.

Apprehensions about the process itself, yes, but this is something quite different and elaborated upon elsewhere (Mason & Soekarjo, "Lead and Follow in 3-D", working paper).

Know Thyself.   This ancient Socratic injunction echoes through participants' experiences and what became clear to them about leadership from the workshop: "I found it fascinating to experience that how I am as a manager [I] also use in the dance" (3-5), "…I have seen/noticed some things abut leadership with myself that I did know, but which became clearer…" (3-7), "immediately being able to see what the habits are by moving for 5 minutes" (2-8), "by feeling leadership, you experience what it does to you" (1-7), "(a little bit of) insight into own style. Physical is more directly visible/measurable and therefore useful" (2-10), "`feel' leadership" (1-3), "helps to reflect how you act at work and gives insight into it…"(1-5), "shows how it goes in reality" (3-3), "…a confirmation of my style. It was very recognizable" (3-8). It may seem obvious to state that managers must be aware of themselves, how they are in leading, whether or not what they are doing is working at a given moment in time, have alternative ways of leading available, the skills to execute these alternatives, and be able to `turn on a dime'.   Processes used in cognitively based approaches to self-awareness often include role-play, personality questionnaires, `inventories' of learning styles, etc. and these may be very useful to a point. These approaches are, however, still abstracted, one step removed, comprised of sweeping generalizations unsupported by rigorous research (in the case of personality `types' and `inventories') and essentially static. In situations characterized by a high velocity flow of varying followers, tactical twists and turns and constantly shifting ground, an emergent lead as in tango, may be the most effective. It is a form executed `in the moment', cognitizing means stepping out of the moment. It is our position that the rationality considered synonymous with the ideal industrial age employee and the interwoven cognitive-behavioral constructions operating as definitions of what it means to be human, have become fully `mined' and increasingly unuseful. The descriptive power of these constructions has been confounded with reality.

As discussed earlier, tango offers a gateway to a space where clarity and interplay are lived alongside uncertainty, ambiguity and an ever shifting landscape potentially without dissonance or other cognitively arising

impediments.   Instead of compelling a drive to its own eradication (advisable or otherwise), tension can be held, can

exist, and is, in fact, necessary. (See Deetz, 1996, for a discussion of the role of tension, ambiguity and unsettledness in

discourse in enabling creative and other possibilities.)   This `holding' capacity of tango and other elements discussed

provided an opportunity for participants to uniquely live and experience themselves in leadership. As indicated by the

comments at the opening of this section, the lifeful, embodied form of tango can, in a moment (or 3 minutes), yield a lived,

felt, concrete, and reality-based sense of oneself without words. A person can't go anywhere (other than in solipsistic

thought) if they don't grasp in a meaningful way where they are at this moment. The absence of movement is life-

lessness.

Along with this sense of self-awareness, there seems to emerge from participants' reflections a powerfully lived

experience of the effects of one's lead on the `other'.   Any correspondence to this `knowing' or even space for it in

conventional leadership theories, practice or training appears absent. It is perhaps too subtle and nuanced to be

incorporated by cognitive-behavioral forms. The notion of "toxic leadership" that has appeared in the literature in recent

years expresses the potentially pathological manifestation of the power of a lead on the receiver of that lead.

Typhoid Mary as leader. `Stress carriers' are sometimes likened in the stress literature to Typhoid Mary.   A

server in a public establishment during a typhoid epidemic, Mary was herself immune to the disease but passed it on to

many who crossed her path while she proceeded merrily and obliviously on her way. We would reposition Mary as a

leader and suggest the same story can play out in an organizational setting. As mentioned before, follower compliance

without disruptive fallout seems to be the concern of most leadership theories. Disruptive fallout as cognitively identified

and measured may be relatively static, imprecise and vague. The social forces underpinning the industrial age, together

with individual leaders` defense mechanisms, may collude in an alliance to defend the status quo (cf. Gemmill & Oakley,

1992; Winter et al. (1997); Sankowsky, 1995; Gabriel, 1999) and trivialize or discount harm to an `other'. Argyris (1990)

suggested that executives are often aware of ineffectual interpersonal behavior in others in similar positions who they

perceive as ineffectual; all the while they too are engaged in the same ineffectual behavior. (We talk elsewhere about the process dimensions of the workshop and "blind spots" as one participant put it.) For the present discussion, the point is that tango opens an entry location into the dance of lead and follow in which part of what `became clear' to many participants was the effect their lead (and different leads) had on an embodied, human other. A fluid, ongoing awareness that is, we would suggest, integral to the `interplay' analyzed earlier. The emphasis on `interplay', with its incumbent processes of lead and follow, is consistent with the view of dialogue as discursive coordination (cf. Gergen et al., 2004). These authors noted the lack of attention to non-verbal forms in their analysis and we would propose a potential site of intersection with the present work, which illustrates the eloquence and fine-grained coordination possible non-verbally. Also noted in their work is a shift away from viewing organizations as problems to be solved (problems being `solved' through cognitive processes) and towards seeing organizations as locations of infinite relational and imaginative capacity - open, alive, and indeterminate.

Entrenched social forces and deeply embedded defense mechanisms, intertwined into cognitive structures, have a notorious resistance to, and resilience from, change efforts. The workshop approach bypassed this self-sealing cognitive gridlock entirely. The embodied epistemology of tango opened a way for individuals to live the mirrored effects of their each and every act of lead in a direct, nonthreatening, way, as private as they wanted it to be, or not. Tango brings participants into `felt' experience without having to declare or announce, even to themselves, what the nature of that experience actually is. Some indications that this finely grained, continuous, alive `feedback' registered: "the influence of signals from leader to follower: (1-12), "you directly see the effect on the follower. You are more conscious of these effects and take them into account" (1-13), "what influence you have on followers. What did they like and what didn't they? Which tactics you can use in different situations" (2-5), "the adapting of the leadership style in combination with the follower(s)" (2-13), "to hear each others experiences" (2-4), "mirroring to yourself with regard to unwilling followers" (3-1), "by corporeal contact more understanding for and sensitivity by leader and follower" (3-0). To express

what one means and to hear what another means is a rare thing. The dissipation of energy that can happen with endless

talk, words as occupation, words used to confound is eloquently represented by Peter Bruelgel's painting "Tower of Babel"

(c.1563) in which a huge, monstrous tower dwarfs an entire landscape seemingly consuming all who labor on or near it.

Our respondents' comments make note of corporeal existence, embodied presence, and the power of what can pass

without words in the dance of lead and follow.

CONCLUSION

The overall intention in designing and conducting the workshop was to translate the richness of argentine

tango's lead and follow principles to a leadership setting relevant to organizational life. Participants were invited to

engage in an unworded experience of these principles in a lived, felt way; intertwined with moments of reflection and

feedback. We used the three questions as an initial structure for examining respondent's comments, the first question

`what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?' was the focus of this paper. In analyzing the

comments, we followed as best we could the leads of our respondents, amplifying and expanding, interpreting and even

embellishing from time to time. As all good followers do.

Our results suggest that in the final analysis leadership as experience by the workshop participants is less a **thing**,

than it is an **event** or a happening. A dance of lead and follow in which the complexity, endless movement and nuances

of this interplay were known and lived beyond what is possible in conventional approaches to leadership training.   The

likelihood of a synergy between earlier sessions in the training program and that of the tango leadership workshop also

seemed likely. For many of the managers, the workshop seemed to serve to further `take in' and grasp more

conventional notions that they may have been exposed to earlier in the program. The added richness, subtleties, together

with the fluid, emergent nature of leadership as represented by tango, seems to have effectively represented a unique

experience of the dynamic leadership reality faced in most organizations. The epiphanies of self-insight of a kind not

possible through more conventional modes, or at least, not in such short a time span, also emerged. Unlike the abstracted `self-awareness' of formulaic typologies, these insights were highly specific, concrete, vibrant, and by all accounts, meaningful to practice.  The characteristics and nature of tango lead were seen to reflect the `future directions' called for in much of the extant literature and to offer a unique point of entry.

Bypassing entirely the usual cognitive blocks of defensiveness consonant with disembodied consciousness may be the most effective way to eradicate their force towards rationalization, justification, inertia and maintenance of the status quo. As Merleau-Ponty (1945, 1964) has argued, the act of cognition does not exist prior to perception. Perception is located in the physical body, the primal modality of consciousness. A modality characterized by its intentionality and ability to overcome the constraining contingencies of facticity (which contingency leadership theories take as `givens') and thus move into the future.   All the forces of the industrial era are rallied against this movement, consciously or not, and the cognitive mechanisms that have served them well constitute at this point self-sealing loops that simultaneously perpetuate the status quo and form the boundaries within which the "unspeakable" remains both unspoken and incapable of being perceived.

In contrast, embodied consciousness, in addition to its place in perception, is a dynamic container for lifeful being in the world, inhabiting (versus merely existing in) time and space. It is this element into which tango offered a gateway through which workshop participants were invited to pass. Their comments as to what became clear to them about leadership express a distinctly lived, richly textured, delicately nuanced experience, one that eludes language. As one of the managers stated, "it is more than just words" (2-3). The non-verbal dynamic was also brought to the fore in other comments, e.g., "you can already give direction in a non verbal way " (1-7). Embodied consciousness thus perceives its own being and moves in a way `more than' anything cognitive or abstract can adequately grasp, perhaps beyond the bounds of language itself.

In a special leadership edition, Harvard Business Review recently featured eight people in top management

positions from around the world.   One of the eight articles, entitled, "Intuition", featured F. Humer, CEO of Roche.   In

reflecting on his own experience, Humer spoke of the need for a leader to make a decision on how much to trust by

"becoming hyperaware of the environment and learning to sense the vibe in the room…tries to have his entire body, his

entire mind, all his emotions switched to "receiving" (Humer, 2007, pp.17). In tango we simply speak of "having presence"

as a measure of excellence and personal leadership in both leader and follower.

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Appendix

Summary

1   Jan 22th, 13 out of 13; 4F/9M ave. age 32, first year of being a manager. deBaak: Sandy / Rutger

Jan 25th, 13 out of 13; 4F/9M ave. age 35, first year of being a manager. deBaak: Sietske

Bierens/ Michelle

2   2M,1F in their 40ies, a few end 20ies

Feb 1st, 13 out of 13; 4F/9M ave. age 33, first year of being a manager. deBaak: Bianca

3   Stokman, Jacqueline

These three workshops were given by Mark Soekarjo and Marjon Reinders in a comprehensive program for for managers "How to manage people". This particular workshop has been given about 20 times now. This workshop is one of a series of workshops which have been developed by us over the last decade. Other themes include: "collaboration" and "non intuitive interventions using the Rose of Leary".

Sample 1

Jan 22th, 13 out of 13; 4F/9M ave. age 32, first year of being a manager. deBaak: Sandy / Rutger

		what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?	**in what way was the <u>form</u> of the workshop useful to you in your development of understanding?**	**what does it do to you to move a lot during the workshop and to be in physical contact with other people**
1	1	Which influence you have, as a leader, but also as a follower. That you still can reach one goal together	A different approach of leadership. Very nice.	Excellent. It is [exciting/scary??] to look each other in the eyes.
1	2	That I can also follow really easily and trust a leader. That it is easier for me to lead with a goal. That communicating where we are going is important for me to share	Relaxing, fun. Good to have a different partner all the time.	Fine, I do not feel any objections
1	3	different forms of [leadership]. To be clear and which direction	Very nice way of transferring information / "feel" leadership and the role of the follower	Nice start of the day. Also, the physical contact immediately gives relaxation
1	4	clarity and flexibility are important	Original approach, because normally you are never getting physical with fellow human beings.	clear and a pleasant change
1	5	that it is a game between leaders and followers	Helps to reflect how you act at work and gives insight into it could different	No problem. A good way to start the day. Nice and loose and active
1	6	to lead and to follow	a completely different form by non verbal leadership and follower: good to talk about the specifics after the dance	excellent
1	7	that you can already give direction in a non verbal waydat je non-verbaal ook al richting kan geven	by feeling leadership you experience what it does to you	nice, no problem
1	8	to have goals, vision en confidence	[sculpturelike, with 3-d images???] see what the consequences of leadership on followers/employees can be	in the beginning a little apprehensive, later much fun. Was not a goal, but a means

		what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?	in what way was the <u>form</u> of the workshop useful to you in your development of understanding?	what does it do to you to move a lot during the workshop and to be in physical contact with other people
1	9	that there is an interaction between leader and follower. One cannot perform without the other	beautiful metafors, very clear	Good start of the day, makes you ready for what follows
1	10	By being clear, [...?] and visible in leading the follower/employee gains confidence in the leader	because of the physical form of it	good
1	11	the strong link between leader and follower	zeer beeldend en practisch, hierdoor meteen zichtbaar	no problem
1	12	the influence of signals from leader to follower	it was plain fun	we know each other as a group, so no problem
1	13	there are different styles to give direction. You directle see the effect on the follower. You are more conscious of these effects and take them into account.	Very good. Nice and relaxed, a bit of movement. Changing partners worked very well. Definitely keep the closing act.	No problem, we know each other reasonably well

Sample 2

		what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?	in what way was the <u>form</u> of the workshop useful to you in your development of understanding?	what does it do to you to move a lot during the workshop and to be in physical contact with other people
2	1	that you have to take initiative yourself and give confidence radiate power, clarity and [obviousness?]	Moving is very illustrative. It makes a lot clear.	Fine, no problem. Warm though
2	2	that the proper collabotration is essential	to give direction is more than just talking	it took a bit getting used to. In the end it did me good
2	3	it is more than just words two directional traffic improvisation, play, creativity	metaphor of movement in couples really shows the dynamic managing is not leading	fun, dynamic develop, practice, non verbally
2	4	good leadership depends on your follower but by reacting in a flexible manner it is doable to give direction	By looking at your team and your leadership in a specific way. And to hear each others experiences	No problem. Nice workshop
2	5	Which influence you have on followers. What did they like and what didn't they? Which tactics you can use in different situations	discovering things in a playful manner less ratio, more feeling	enjoyable builds up the energy / good start of the day no problem witrh physical contact (except when I was a follower and put into motion with great force by leader)
2	6	Important: have a clear vision of your goal, and being aware of your role, and there are different ways to reach your goal	that you do not always have to clarify your goals or target verbally	nice
2	7	that you have to be clear as a leader, that roles can/should be acted in accordance with the situation that too much direction is not always a negative experience, more often even positive	in the beginning reluctant, what is going to happen to me than the standard appears not too high (musicality and such) and you start to appreciate the form	good, I felt free within the group to surrender to that

		what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?	in what way was the form of the workshop useful to you in your development of understanding?	what does it do to you to move a lot during the workshop and to be in physical contact with other people
2	8	that interaction is needed, leading is not always forcing your way, but also now and then let the reign relax	comparison of situations on the dance floor with`daily practice, immediately being able to see what tha habits is by moving for 5 minutes	it took getting used to in the beginning, after that it all became clear
2	9	Leading and Following. A leader does not allways have to lead and a follower does not always have to follow. It is an interplay.	To translate the playfull and active way of execution which is indepandent of the practice back tomy own professional situation	Nice, you feel in another manner which quickly becomes clear what impression your manner of leading makes on someone else.
2	10	effect of different styles (a little bit of) insight in own style	effect is directly visible (in practice often later and less direct)	fysical is more directly visible/measurable en therefore usefull (also see question 2)
2	11	that there are a lot of aspects which you have to take into account	the fact that you are comparing the situation at hand to your daily job	nice, funny
2	12	many different styles of leaderhipp, but also many styles of followers influencing the style of leaqderschip	used many different styles, especially those from the practice	am not a dancer, but liked it
2	13	different forms of leadership the adapting of tj leadership style in combination with the follower(s)	to be occupied breaks "tension" => relaxes to bring into practice remains the most educative moment of a workshop	In the first instance it took getting used to, then it was fine

Sample 3

		what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?	in what way was the <u>form</u> of the workshop useful to you in your development of understanding?	what does it do to you to move a lot during the workshop and to be in physical contact with other people
3	**0**	More ways lead to Rome	by listening to/ be sensitive to the follower reach your goal together	By corporal contact more undertanding for and sensitivity by leader and follower
3	1	a number of things; like giving direction, clarity, gaining trust and mirroring to yourself with regard to unwilling followers	The matters of dance bring things into a <u>simple</u> perspective. Thru this "metaphor" a lot of parallels can be drawn to the own daily way of leading and following. Playful, but clear way; delicious music.	Wonderful. Personnel contact works well in my opinion. Good form.
3	2	Dependence of the leader on the follower. Trust that you have to give as a follower	Fysically experience that someone sometimes does not want to start moving. Also to let you physically be led, without knowing where you are going	Movement is nice, touching is also fine. It did feel a bit warm -> sweat
3	3	Yes, leader and co-worker must do it together, but one take leadership upon him	shows how it goes in reality, but regarded from another angle	no problem
3	4	There are leaders and followers: one cannot do without the other. Both need to take up their role	Nice, it is another ways of taking up theory and makes a lot clear in little time	Something pleasantly different. Nice though that this workshop is only at the end. Group is already used to each other
3	5	radiate trust (I find the exercise with the eyes closed very good) Being [Daadkrachtig] having a clear vision / goal and going there	I found it fascinating to experience that how I am as a manager [I] also use in the dance But also the role of the follower was very recognizable	It took some getting used to, afterwards very good. It does help that you already know the group Maybe different if it had happened in the first module. Fun, creative, recognisable

3	6	leadership is indispensable, but in the end nothing without collaboration, understanding and energy.	Unknown subject matter (tango, dance) which broadens the scope. Avoids occupational blind spots	Especially a bit strange because of early start. Movement and contact are in principle fine.
3	7	How it <u>feels</u> to deal as a leader and a follower with each other and with resistance. Apart from that I have seen / noticed some things about leadership with myself that I did know, but which became clearer and gave me a handle to work with	For me it is very good to feel and experience things. It works better than a piecce of theory	Nice, you learn a lot from this. I have done it before so it was not new to me.
3	8	* recognizable forms * determining you heading leading-following * [pas op de plaats - step in same place] * assess the situation and anticipate	nice way to look "differently" at leadership and a confirmation of my style. It was very recognisable.	Fine, no problem
3	9	* You cannnot do without a follower * leader must be clear, give direction * there are more possibilities to lead	you can try out some different things	gives a good contact with one another, so that you are closer instead of keeping a distance. Moving gives a feeling of action and that is enjoyable
3	10	* A clear feeling gives tranquility, clarity, trust * At obstacles you have to decide swiftly, deviating temporarily from a goal is allowed, if the end goal is clear * followers and leaders are interdependent * try some other tactics if somethjing does not work, etc, etc, really a awfull lot!	Direct execution and confrontation works really well! Feedback helped with insights. Surpsing the amount of parallels you can draw to your own work	Although it was warm, it was a nice and refreshing start.
3	11	In one team things must be taken on together with mutual trust/uinderstanding	The playfull rendering of reality, in which the roles of leader and follower became physically visible and tangible	See above. Practically it is often a feeling or an assumption and now it is physically visible. I experience this as valuable to also feel this relationship and act accordingly

		what has become clear to you about leadership from this workshop?	in what way was the <u>form</u> of the workshop useful to you in your development of understanding?	what does it do to you to move a lot during the workshop and to be in physical contact with other people
3	12	a lot of people struggle with the same things. I discovered myself in the last excercise how difficult it was as a follower not to co-operate when we were instructed not to	difficu,t to answer, because this is not really my thing. I noticed resistance within myself. I think the excercises could last be shorter.	moving is OK, I do not have the urge to touch everybody, so that was awkward and not always nice
3	13	follower is as powerfull as leader leading is making choices, follow [a] vision, winning trust. Leading is radiating trust	The tango is a very good metaphor for a polarized form of leadership and followership	Nice to move and to use the space. Touching creates a bond, sometimes the other keeps more distance Prettig om te bewegen en de ruimte te gebruiken. Het elkaar aanraken creeert een band, soms houdt de ander meer afstand; probably from an awkward feeling