



A MODEL FOR FUTURE HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP

The Catholic healthcare ministry has always been blessed with exceptional leaders dedicated to improving the health of the communities they serve. But today, more than ever, the ministry needs strong guidance and vision from its senior executives. The Catholic Health Association's (CHA's) study "Transformational Leadership for the Healing Ministry: Competencies for the Future" is a powerful and timely tool for the identification and development of leaders who will carry Catholic healthcare into the future. (Study results are described on pp. 28-33.)

Stakeholders in the healthcare ministry will look at the transformational competencies from the perspective of their governance or management responsibility. The study can help executives measure their own performance against a standard of excellence and establish goals to improve their performance. Using the competency model, leadership teams can assess their strengths and weaknesses and work collectively to improve the leadership of their organizations.

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development, and career planning for senior executives. Sponsors might consider the competencies as they intensify collaboration in ministry with lay colleagues by encouraging leadership development or as they participate with trustees in the selection of executives.

The competency model should be applied with care and tact—and with a clear understanding of the organization's culture and strategic outlook. Since it represents a composite of excellence, no one executive will possess in equal measure the skills, knowledge, self-image, traits, and motives elaborated in the model.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EXECUTIVES

The competency model presents a number of opportunities for executives interested in devel-

Summary The Catholic Health Association's (CHA's) study "Transformational Leadership for the Healing Ministry: Competencies for the Future" is a powerful tool for the identification and development of leaders in Catholic healthcare.

The study can help executives measure their own performance against a standard of excellence and establish goals to improve their performance. Trustees can use the study to establish policies for identification, assessment, development, and career planning for senior executives. Sponsors might consider the competencies as they intensify collaboration in ministry with lay colleagues by encouraging leadership development or as they participate with trustees in the selection of executives.

The model presented in CHA's study is dynamic and adaptable to the leadership needs of various organizations. It should not yield a homogenized view of the "ideal" leader in the Catholic ministry. Nor should it encourage elitism or invidious comparisons between leaders or organizations.



oping their own competencies, as well as those of other executive team members.

Personal Competency Assessment Senior executives can use the model to assess themselves or executive teams. Exploring the fit between their competencies and those identified by the model, executives can recognize and enhance their strengths and identify areas for development. Self-assessment will help executives better understand the model and its potential for selecting and developing outstanding leaders within their organization.

Since the study's results indicate that spirituality is a fundamental competency for leaders in Catholic healthcare, executives may benefit from reflecting on their spirituality, which can be understood either as their faith in God or their ability to find a purpose in what they do and what happens to their organization. Spirituality can also be manifested as positive affiliation—a compelling interest in relating with sponsors, trustees, and other appropriate publics. And given the critical integrating role of insight-driven strategic action, executives may also review their style of decision making and outcomes of their recent decisions.

Executives also have access to computer-based tools to assess themselves against the model of outstanding performance in Catholic healthcare. When used in conjunction with other programs designed to assess motives, managerial style, and organizational climate, such tools can give leaders a detailed picture of their leadership abilities and the impact these have. They can use the results to establish self-development plans to pursue competency-based educational opportunities.

The Executive Team Executives may also use self-assessment to build and strengthen their teams. The first step would be to arrange for a formal assessment of all leadership team members. The results of these assessments could be used to structure developmental activities and even mentoring relationships that give team members needed

Senior executives can use the competency model to assess themselves or executive teams.

support and direction.

Such assessments could also provide the foundation for examining implications of members' competencies for overall team performance. Approaching competencies from a team perspective can help senior executives assess their contributions to the team and surround themselves with other executives whose competencies complement their own.

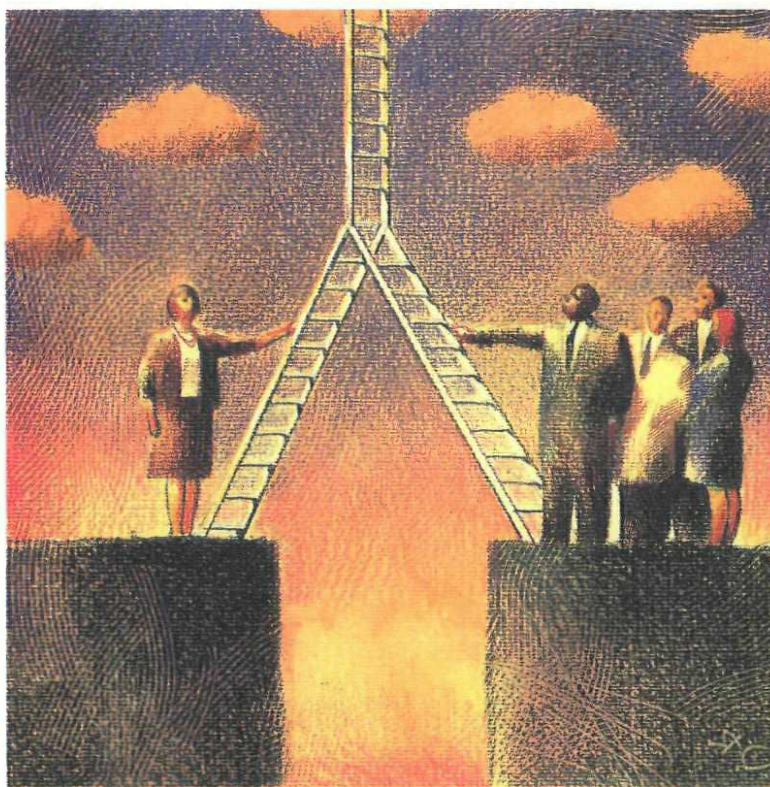
Selection and Succession To build a strong team, executives must carefully integrate the assessment, development, selection, and succession processes.

Senior executives, along with sponsors and trustees, can establish a leadership selection program that assesses candidates based on the competencies identified in the model. Establishing such a program involves training organizational insiders to interview candidates, analyze the interview for evidence of their competencies, and look for competencies indicative of excellence. These trained facilitators may also be instructed to specify competencies that could indicate the candidate's skills do not fit with organizational objectives.

To ensure continuity, sponsors, trustees, and executives should identify persons within the organization who are good candidates for executive positions. With this information and assessment results, the organization can match individuals with positions that allow team members needed developmental opportunities, while at the same time optimizing strategic choices for the organization.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TRUSTEES

Trustees will be particularly interested in applying the competency model to protect the integrity of the governance process—one of their key responsibilities to sponsors. The board should ensure that a process for selection, assessment, development, and succession planning for executive leaders is in place. Given the current turnover rate for executives of Catholic healthcare facilities, a



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leadership transition can occur at any time.

CHA's study, as well as its products and services, will assist trustees in selecting and developing candidates for executive leadership in Catholic healthcare. Every healthcare organization has values that matter greatly in the selection or development process and that help in matching senior executives to the institution's core strategies. The competency model allows trustees to weigh the relative priority of competencies in accord with their institution's unique attributes or needs. To familiarize trustees with the model and ensure they are using it effectively, those responsible for board education can establish or participate in programs that explore the model's usefulness to the ministry.

Trustees must remember, finally, that spirituality is the most critical competency among excellent leaders in Catholic healthcare. However important other competencies may be to institutional mission, none is as likely to promote excellence in the executive role.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SPONSORS

The sponsoring congregation or diocese is charged with ensuring that the mission of the particular system or institution extends the mission of the congregation or sponsoring group. The model provides sponsors with guidelines for selection, assessment, development, and succession planning. In particular, persons representing the sponsoring group on executive search committees should be familiar with the model of

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excellence for leaders in the Catholic healthcare ministry and understand its potential usefulness in the search process.

Sponsors are especially well-positioned to support their executives in the development of competencies that predict outstanding performance in Catholic healthcare—particularly competencies in the spirituality core. Beyond the standard cognitive “exposure” to the history, spirit, and charism of an order or diocese, the sponsoring group can support executives in experiences that further their personal and professional development and help them become the healthcare leaders of the twenty-first century.

The central importance of spirituality in the competency model suggests that the role of the mission integration agent needs to be strong. Mission professionals should do more than merely compensate for gaps in the executive leader's awareness of or ability to implement the mission. Rather, the mission effectiveness person must be a true collaborator with senior executives, working directly with them to implement the organization's mission. Sponsors can also make available resources for addressing issues related to moral decision making, development of spirituality, and consistent integration of healthcare ministry values into their organization's operations.

Perhaps one of sponsors' most crucial roles is their involvement in succession planning. Most sponsors now have fewer human and financial resources than they had in the past. Thus those

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPETENCY PROJECT

With its study on transformational leadership complete, the Center for Leadership Excellence is creating comprehensive leadership development programs and products to help its members apply the study's results. The center's initial efforts will be applied in two directions: assessment and development.

SERVICES

Assessment The core product is Dossier, a computerized method of assessing leadership teams using the competency model. This product will be available in fall of 1994. A professional interpretation of the assessment will be available on an individual or group basis.

Development Leadership Enrichment



through Assessment and Development (LEAD) is a program for assessing organizational climate, management style, motivation, and leadership competencies. Two pilot programs will run this summer. Then in the fall the Advanced Institute will use LEAD as the first component of its structured developmental experiences for advanced leaders in Catholic healthcare.

In addition, the Center for Leadership

Excellence will offer programs for basic leadership development, mentor training, and team building.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

CHA plans to implement a number of research and development projects tied to the competency project. For example, the association is working on a process for using a team assessment profile as the basis for a team retreat. In other research and development activities, CHA is building a competency-based leadership curriculum.

For more information on programs and products offered by CHA's Center for Leadership Excellence, call or Regina Clifton or Jim McEnroe at 314-427-2500.

MODEL

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institutes which sponsor healthcare organizations must assess their interest, willingness, and ability to continue to do so. If they decide to continue in the ministry, they must devote serious effort to identifying and developing executives who can provide excellent leadership. Members of the sponsoring group may identify from among themselves those who can provide such leadership and encourage them to pursue the appropriate career paths.

The importance of mentors in the experience of excellent executive leaders points to another area of potential involvement for sponsors. This is a particularly interesting possibility for those who, while not in positions of executive leadership, have the opportunity to identify and encourage those who demonstrate promise of developing the competencies identified in the model.

A DYNAMIC MODEL

The model presented in CHA's study is dynamic and adaptable to the leadership needs of various healthcare organizations. It should not yield a homogenized view of the "ideal" leader in the Catholic ministry. Nor should it encourage elitism or invidious comparisons between leaders or organizations.

The pace of change in healthcare has put a premium on leaders who can make quick decisions, form innovative alliances, and reconfigure institutions in response to community need. The most effective leaders display the full spectrum of competencies in the model as they maneuver in the ministry and marketplace. Although their talents may seem to set them apart, the majority of us can take heart in knowing that each of the competencies can be learned, developed, and improved. □

LEADERSHIP

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xcellence in the Catholic healthcare ministry is a complex weave of character and intellectual rigor.

To implement strategic action, leaders draw on the Integration and Action Cluster, which represents three key competencies: Organizational Awareness, Interpersonal Understanding, and Insight-driven Strategic Action.

Organizational Awareness is the ability to understand the power relationships within the executive's own environment. Included is the ability to identify the real decision makers and those who influence them.

Interpersonal Understanding is a desire to understand other people. Leaders in Catholic healthcare have the ability to listen actively and understand the unspoken or partly expressed thoughts, feelings, and concerns of others.

Insight-driven Strategic Action is the uncommon intuitive ability to integrate and translate thoughts and values into strategic action. Executives with this competency seize opportunities to strengthen the Catholic healing ministry and respond to the needs of the communities they serve. They see openings that others miss in such areas as alliances, networks, and new services.

A COMPLEX WEAVE

When we began this study about one year ago, we hypothesized significant differences between religious and lay executives, and we anticipated gender differences as well. In fact, the profile of excellence applies equally to each of

the groups studied: religious and lay, male and female.

The significance of this fact is obvious. Religious and lay executives relate to the healthcare ministry in similar ways, and men and women equally exhibit the behaviors that characterize excellence. The only exception to these similarities was among outstanding female leaders, who possess a higher Power Motive than their male colleagues. One possible explanation for this difference is that women in executive leadership are forced to act from the motive of power to compete in the healthcare industry. The differences are intriguing and worthy of further reflection and study.

Excellence in the Catholic healthcare ministry is a complex weave of character and intellectual rigor. The study clearly suggests that Spirituality, defined as a Positive Affiliation for others and Faith in God, provides a positive organizational climate and, in fact, relates strongly to overall leadership effectiveness. When Spirituality is combined with Professional Expertise and a strong capacity to care for people, the outcome is a highly effective leader who serves a community. Although "reading the handwriting on the wall" suggests a relatively simple action, these leaders have shown us how complex—yet attainable—this prophetic action is in the Catholic healing ministry. □