

# Development of a Private Sector Version of the (Engaging) Transformational Leadership Questionnaire

### Abstract

**Purpose** – Notions of leadership change over time. The last two decades have been dominated by US models of ‘heroic’ leadership, based largely on predominately male-biased samples, which have been focused on studies of ‘distant’ leaders, but these are being challenged by the findings from more recent studies which question the potential dangers of adulating the few ‘gifted’ charismatic’ individuals, not least of which because of the disasters they may cause. In addition, there is a growing interest by organisations of identifying how they can increase ‘engagement’ amongst their employees, since this process appears to contribute significantly to organisational success.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This study sought to replicate an earlier study of ‘nearby’ leadership in UK public sector organisations, by initially gathering qualitative data from a sample of female and male managers at various levels in three UK FTSE100 companies, developing a pilot questionnaire, and then gathering quantitative data from 743 managers in a range of UK and Hong Kong private sector organisations, and testing the validity of the instrument in predicting job satisfaction, motivation, commitment, and other psychological variables found to affect performance.

**Findings** – The model of ‘nearby’ leadership to emerge in the private sector was highly similar to the public sector model, but very different from the ‘heroic’ notions of leadership. Twelve dimensions of leadership emerged, all of which were found to predict the criterion variables outcome measures. This has led to the creation of a private sector version of the ‘(Engaging) Transformational Leadership Questionnaire’™, and provides empirical evidence of its validity among male and female managers in two countries.

**Research limitations/implication** – There is a need to extend research on the ETLQ in a wider sample of organisations and industries, and to undertake longitudinal studies to examine the predictive validity of the instrument on external outcome variables.

**Practical implications** – The findings have immediate practical application to leadership development, selection, promotion, appraisal, performance management, and culture change activities.

## Real World Group Research

**Originality/value** – This investigation has adopted an inclusive approach to investigating the nature of day-to-day leadership behaviours that have a significant effect on the levels of stress, job satisfaction, motivation, commitment, engagement, and other psychological outcomes that have been found to significantly affect organisational performance in private sector organisations. It has also tested the validity of a new 360-feedback instrument on a sample of over 700 direct reports of managers who exert a powerful influence on the motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment of staff at various levels of leadership, based on male and female managers, and individuals from different ethnic backgrounds, in a range of private sector organisations, which focuses is a new model of ‘nearby’ leadership

### References:

This paper was published in a peer-reviewed journal: Alban-Metcalfe, J. & Alimo-Metcalfe, B. (2007). Development of a private sector version of the (Engaging) Transformational Leadership Questionnaire. *Leadership & Organisation Development Journal*, 28, 104-121.