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**Mark E. Mendenhall, Joyce S. Osland, Allan Bird, Gary R. Oddou, and Martha L. Maznevski. Global Leadership Research, Practice and Development. London and New York: Routledge, 2008.**

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**Mark E. Mendenhall, Joyce S. Osland, Allan Bird, Gary R. Oddou, and Martha L. Maznevski. *Global Leadership Research, Practice and Development*. London and New York: Routledge, 2008.**

As our world continues to flatten and the effects of globalization increase, research initiatives in the field of human resource management and leadership are looking to define, analyze, and apply global leadership competencies. Although much of what has previously been written on this topic has developed from a review of expatriate research, *Global Leadership Research, Practice and Development* defines for the reader, through a rich review of the current literature, global leadership competencies that have been deemed necessary in the development of global leadership. Mendenhall et al. asserts from the onset that their purpose is to focus, in particular, on the area of business; however, as a researcher in the field of interdisciplinary studies, I found this text to be applicable across a variety of academic fields.

For those unfamiliar with the underlying theories of leadership, the authors provide an in-depth overview of the different approaches to domestic leadership: trait, behavior, situational, power-influence, and the integrative approach (pgs. 2-6). They thoroughly describe each approach, while emphasizing that although these approaches are research-defined views, they are not predictive of leadership behavior. A detailed analysis is then provided of the difference between leadership and management, and an argument is developed in favor of increasing the amount of research in interdisciplinary leadership. Although such research is rare, Mendenhall et al. assert that there is a need for an increase in interdisciplinary research “because it requires the learning of an entirely new scholarly paradigm” (p. 10). Global leadership is different from current domestic leadership definitions in two ways: “degree, in terms of issues of connectedness” (p. 16) and “kind, in nature of outcomes the global context can produce” (p. 17). An understanding of global leadership requires a new paradigm, a different global view, and this book provides the framework to foster this shift in perspective.

At the heart of global leadership is an ever-increasing need for cultural competence, an increase in our own “mindfulness” (p. 19). In this context, mindfulness is described as the ability “to recognize multiple perspectives, switch from automatic communication routines to paying attention simultaneously to the internal assumptions, cognitions and emotions of oneself and the other person” (p. 19). Each of these abilities will be critical to global managers of multinational corporations. It will no longer be enough to possess a surface level understanding of different cultures. Global leaders will need to internalize this understanding of cultural competence and, in an anthropological sense, immerse themselves in the very mindset of other cultures. Overcoming ethnocentrism is not easy, and organizations will need to purposefully implement development opportunities to increase learning in the area of cultural competence. For instance, Mendenhall et al. highlight Colgate’s global leadership development program, which includes opportunities for international assignment exposure, classroom training, and continuous mentor support (p. 173).

Mendenhall et al. provide the reader a thorough review of expatriate research in chapter two. Expatriates are those “who have been sent by their employers to reside and work outside of their home country on temporary assignment” (p. 20). Experience becomes the foundation for shifts in mental models and the creation of a global mindset, required by those seeking success in an international setting. It is often the creative or cultural tension experienced while working in an international setting that helps to develop an individual’s flexibility and cognitive complexity and increases the individual’s ability to manage uncertainty, all of which are necessary

ingredients in global leadership. As a researcher in the area of educational leadership and international studies, it was validating to read that the characteristic of lifelong learning was crucial in the development of global leaders, who experience a wide ranging and challenging set of circumstances.

In chapter three, the authors provide an extensive review of global leadership competency research. The research of Kets de Vries and Mead, Tichy and his colleagues, Rhinesmith, Moran and Riesenberger, and Brake (p. 35) are reviewed. Overall, the authors come to the conclusion that the current research is varied, complex, and in a state of continual development: “the list of fifty-six global leadership competencies contained in the literature are too extensive to be useful” (p. 54). This chapter clearly states that further research is needed in the area of successful global leaders beyond mere traits. The authors suggest that a more exhaustive view would include research of those who do not exhibit these particular traits as well as delving into the reasons why certain individuals are drawn to these types of assignments. The authors stress a need for longitudinal research that focuses on specific behaviors that occur before the development of a global mindset as well as the outcomes once an individual is placed in an international setting, saying, “Finally, the ability to measure the level of global leadership capacity in both individuals and organizations would be very useful” (p. 63).

The difficulties in defining and assessing global leadership competencies are addressed in chapters four and five. Up to this point there are few, if any, agreed upon definitions, and the list of leadership traits can be exhausting. Previous thoughts on leadership skills have been based on the discussion of whether leaders are “born” or “made” through experience and education; however, it is difficult to apply this paradigm to the study of global leadership. Global leadership is a specialty, requiring an individual to develop a list of strengths that are not only dynamic but that also may only be developed after becoming a domestic leader. Providing opportunities for learning can increase the level of global competency skills and the level of application. An assessment of these particular skill types can serve as a tool for recognition from which to develop a baseline for further development. The authors stress the need for future research in this particular area, specifying the need for “research that observes and measures actual performance...and then [works] backwards in the development of global competencies” (p. 79). Two models for global leadership assessment are discussed in detail: *The Global Competencies Inventory* (p. 74), developed by the authors and the *Global Executive Leadership Inventory* (p. 77), developed by Kets de Vries et al. in 2004. Competencies measured in both of these assessments are valid and reliable, yet Mendenhall et al. question their predictive ability. The future of global competency assessment lies within the possibility of predicting global competency beyond the concrete level of identification.

Joyce Osland, author of chapter eight, describes the process of change within various cultures, change management, and key factors of global change. Hiatt’s ADKAR model (awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement) (p. 141) is reviewed at length, as are Scaroni’s key factors (p. 141). Many of the same traits described within both of these models were referenced in earlier chapters that defined global competencies. Due to the limited amount of current research in the area of leading global change, Osland references many ideas currently noted in other leadership text (e.g. creating, communicating a vision, and building community). Innovation is viewed by these authors as a concept linked to global change and a key component within a learning organization. Global leadership competencies support the process of innovation and at the same time leverage the appreciation of cultural differences, a valued means of building a successful global business. The development of global leaders will become increasingly

important as multinational organizations increase. The final chapter addresses the need for ongoing coaching by those who have experience in international settings and are able to interpret international issues that are increasingly complex and varied (as well as different in degree and kind from domestic issues). The authors note that learning global competencies will include both classroom and experiential types of education built around Black and Gregerson's learning process "Contrast, Confrontation and Replacement" (p. 163). Osland refers to this process as "Letting Go" and "Taking On" (p. 164).

Globalization has increased the degree and complexity of international business. Students graduating from higher education institutions and/or currently working in the field of international business will need a high degree of global leadership competency to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This text successfully argues that domestic leadership will continue to be valued but no longer sufficient as the increase in global technology permits communication among cultures and facilitates the possibility of working or studying in the international arena. Mendenhall et al. provide a strong foundation of research that defines the skills necessary for global leadership competency. Those who are looking to build and/or assess their global mindset within educational and business environments will find *Global Leadership Research, Practice and Development* to be a foundational text.

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