



# SELF-ACTION LEADERSHIP: A QUALITATIVE, NOMOLOGICAL EXPANSION OF SELF-LEADERSHIP THEORY ROOTED IN ATMOSPHERIC AND ASTRONOMICAL METAPHOR

**Jordan R. Jensen**

Freedom Focused, LLC

**Christopher P. Neck**

Department of Management, W. P. Carey School of Business,  
Arizona State University, USA

**Rodney J. Beaulieu**

Human Development Department, College of Education, Health  
& Human Service, School of Health Sciences and Human Services,  
California State University San Marcos, USA

---

## ABSTRACT

This paper introduces an expanded, qualitative, nomological theory of self-leadership – referred to as Self-Action Leadership – that employs metaphorical analogues rooted in atmospheric and astronomical science. The theory was designed to achieve three primary goals: 1) Assist individuals in bolstering personal growth and development; 2) Aid organizations in enhancing the overall effectiveness and productivity of work teams – especially self-directed work teams; 3) Positively influence nations of the world that have, in recent years, given way to a troubling trend of moral back-peddling in relation to the value placed on human life and other issues impacting the growth, development, liberty, and freedom of individual human beings.

**KEYWORDS:** self-leadership, nomological, self-action leadership, leadership, existential growth, existential intelligence, existential gravity, existential crabs

---

### Correspondence address:

Christopher P. Neck, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
W. P. Carey School of Business  
Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287, USA  
e-mail: [christopher.neck@asu.edu](mailto:christopher.neck@asu.edu)

### Article info:

Available online: 23 March 2015  
Editor: Adam Szpaderski

### Journal information:

©2015 Published by Institute  
of Leadership in Management Inc.  
Journal homepage:  
[www.leadership.net.pl](http://www.leadership.net.pl)

---

## 1. Self-leadership

Successful project execution and organizational development hinges on the self-leadership efficacy of the leaders, managers, and workers who undertake and make them up. Self-leadership (S-L) is defined as: “A process through which individuals control their own behavior, influencing and leading themselves through the use of specific sets of behavioral and cognitive strategies” (Neck and Houghton 2006: 270). S-L involves the conscious direction of self to get results and otherwise “perform in desirable ways” (Houghton and Neck 2002: 672). It is an umbrella topic with subordinate relationships to many related concepts that have been studied and researched since the late 1960s. These concepts include:

- Self-control (Cautela 1969),

- Behavioral self-management (Luthans and Davis 1979),
- Intrinsic motivation theory (Deci and Ryan 1980; Steers et al. 1996),
- Autonomy and control of behavior (Deci and Ryan 1987),
- Mental practice (Driskell et al. 1994),
- Self-awareness and self-discipline (Goleman 1995),
- Self-development (Zenger 2002),
- Self-esteem, self-concept, self-fulfilling prophecy, self-reinforcement, self-respect, self-confidence, self-monitoring, self-assessment ability, self-talk, and self-reliance (Kreitner and Kinicki 2004),
- Self-regulation (Forgas et al. 2009).

Self-leadership is uniquely ubiquitous in the sense that, “Everyone practices self-leadership” (Manz 1983: 289). Moreover, the scope of self-leadership training and

development is universal in the sense that everyone is a self-leader, but “not everyone is an effective self-leader” (Manz 1983: 289). Moreover, “effective self-leadership can be learned and thus is not restricted to people we describe as ‘self-starters,’ ‘self-directed,’ ‘self-motivated,’ etc.” (Manz 1983: 289). As a result, the potential of self-leadership (S-L) theory to positively inform the practice of virtually everyone’s exercise of self-leadership, as well as its potential to enhance the quality of life in any life arena, is limitless.

When Manz (1983, 1986) first introduced his theory of self-leadership in the mid-1980s, some scholars did not readily embrace its validity or recognize its utility in practical settings. Some found it to be “conceptually indistinct” (Neck and Houghton 2006: 274) from other, related, theories. Others were unimpressed by its relatively unempirical scholarly presentation (Neck and Houghton 2006). As a result, the field’s academic relevance was largely disqualified in its early days.

Over the past three decades, however, its reception has warmed due to increased academic coverage and an expanded scope that now includes several empirical studies; see Manz and Sims Jr. (1987), Neck and Manz (1996), Houghton and Neck (2002), Houghton, Bonham and Neck, and Singh (2004), Georgianna (2007), and Pattni and Soutar (2009). It has also begun tackling issues related to diversity and multiculturalism; see Alves, Lovelace, Manz and Matsypura, Toyasaki, and Ke (2006), Neubert and Wu (2006), Georgianna (2007), and Pattni and Soutar (2009).

Perhaps it was James G. S. Clawson (Clawson 2008) who best summed up the academe’s growing acceptance of this burgeoning branch of leadership studies when he wrote: “I remember when Manz (1983) first came out with his work on self-leadership. At the time it seemed odd to me. I will admit I am a slow learner on some things. I have come to believe that one of the biggest leadership issues is the inability of people – even and especially managers and executives – to lead themselves” (Clawson 2008: 175).

According to Neubert and Wu: “The importance of self-leadership to organizations is self-evident” (Neubert and Wu 2006: 360). The importance of self-leadership to management, leadership, and successful project management execution is similarly self-evident. In the words of Neck and Manz: “If we ever hope to be effective leaders of others, we need first to be able to lead ourselves effectively” (Neck and Manz 2010: 1). Similarly, if we ever hope to lead, manage, work on, and complete projects efficiently and effectively, we must first lead, manage, work on, and improve ourselves. Simply stated, efficacious self-leadership is an indispensable prerequisite to the effective management and leadership of people as well as the successful management of projects.

## 2. What is self-action leadership?

*You cannot do right in one department of life whilst occupied in doing wrong in any other department. Life is one indivisible whole.*

– Gandhi

In many regards, Self-Action Leadership (SAL) is analogous to self-leadership (S-L). SAL, however, builds upon S-L theory in several vital ways. Unlike self-leadership, Self-Action Leadership is implicitly aimed primarily at holistic long-term results. It is also morally informed, thereby demanding that its *means* and *ends* contribute to the *long-term* well being of self and others. To date, self-leadership theory (Manz 1986; 1992; Neck and Manz 1999, 2004, 2006, 2010, 2012) has, explicitly speaking, remained morally neutral, although many of its primary exponents have suggested self-leadership should not be a means of merely doing whatever you want (Neck and Manz 2010). While it can be assumed its several authors intend for the field to promote ends that are positive, constructive, productive, and collectively beneficial, its various academic definitions have not, to date, made the point explicit and salient.

This is problematic for the simple reason that unsavory self-leaders exist (and have existed) who seek out and practice self-leadership principles in order lie, cheat, steal, manipulate, abuse, neglect, and even kill. Perhaps the most obvious and broad historical example of self-leadership versus Self-Action Leadership would be to compare and contrast the lives of Adolf Hitler and Nelson Mandela. Early on, Hitler and Mandela’s lives mirrored each other in fascinating ways. For example, both were marginalized socialists with a personal and political axe to grind, and both ended up in prison for illegally and violently protesting against the policies of their adversaries. Prison is where these two famous characters’ stories diverge dramatically, and the rest is, as they say, “history.” Hitler, while an impressive self-leader in many ways, could never qualify as a self-action leader. Mandela, also a brilliant self-leader who, while serving his prison sentence was motivated by none other than the inspiring self-leadership poetry of Henley’s *Invictus* (Cook 1958/1997: 95) *decided* to allow a humanity-centric moral compass to inform his thoughts, speech, and actions moving forward. Hitler and Mandela both possessed extraordinary amounts of vision, discipline, and passion (Covey 2004: 68-77), but in the end, it was Mandela who *chose* to add conscience (Covey 2004: 77-85) to the mix. The difference in the long-term results of these two historical figures has been carefully chronicled. In the words of Covey: “Immanuel Kant said, ‘I am constantly amazed by two things; the starry heavens above and the moral law within.’ Con-

science is the moral law within. [...] Many believe, as I do, that it is the voice of God to his children. Others may not share this belief but recognize that there is an innate sense of fairness and justice, an innate sense of right and wrong, of what is kind and what is unkind, of what contributes and what detracts, of what beautifies and what destroys, of what is true and what is false. Admittedly, culture translates this basic moral sense into different kinds of practices and words, but this translation does not negate the underlying sense of right and wrong. As I [have] work[ed] in nations of different religions and different cultures, I have seen this universal conscience revealed time and again. There really is a set of values, a sense of fairness, honesty, respect, and contribution that transcends culture – something that is timeless, which transcends the ages and is also self-evident” (Covey 2004: 77-78).

Conscience is the indispensable Self-Action Leadership cement that adheres and galvanizes self-leadership characteristics such as vision, discipline, and passion into structures and achievements that last. Without the aid of conscience, self-leaders gamble on their future results – even if they possess ample quantities of vision, discipline, and passion. Add the epoxy of conscience to the right mix of vision, discipline, and passion, and, barring some unforeseen tragic accident, injury, or illness that precludes your efforts moving forward, lasting success is virtually guaranteed.

Self-Action Leadership draws a moral line in the sand by mandating that those practicing its precepts pursue ends that contribute to the long-term well being of self *and* all others whom one’s thoughts, speech, and actions may impact. Therefore, while everyone is a self-leader (Manz 1983), not everyone is a self-action leader. One graduates from self-leadership to self-action leadership, or in other words, one *becomes* a self-action leader by virtue of one’s intent to live according to a broadly defined parameter of morality that prohibits thoughts, speech, and actions that would contribute to destructive or counterproductive long-term ends to self or others. Self-Action Leadership therefore builds upon traditional self-leadership theory by defining Self-Action Leadership (SAL) thusly:

**Self-action leadership (SAL):** Morally informed self-leadership that is action-oriented, focused on long-term results, and aimed at a continual rise in the *Existential Growth* of self and others<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The authors wish to credit – and thank – Rodney Beaulieu, Ph.D. (Beaulieu 2013) for originally coining the term, Self-Action Leadership, in an informal, non-published setting. Jensen (Jensen 2013) has gratefully utilized Beaulieu’s aptly coined term to describe his original theory of self-leadership ever since.

**Existential growth (X-growth):** The holistic (spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, social, and moral) growth of personal character, capacity, and integrity.

In order to define “morally informed,” general conceptualizations of “right” and “wrong” are defined thus:

**Right:** Thoughts, speech, and actions that create positive and constructive long-term consequences for self and others.

**Wrong:** Thoughts, speech, and actions that create negative and destructive long-term consequences for self and others.

It is unorthodox, to say the least, to academically define terms such as, “right,” and “wrong,” which scholars have traditionally sequestered to the non-scientific domains of theology, religion, philosophy, and politics. It is also problematic because of the potential of creating what may be viewed as an inappropriate merger between fields that many consider to be fundamentally incompatible. To remedy these concerns, Self-Action Leadership is presented as a nomological construct that is both non-partisan and secular. Any efforts to try and align its theoretical underpinnings with any one theology, religion, philosophy, ideology, or political party, or any attempts to perfectly test and validate the Self-Action Leadership theory in a quantitative, scientific manner, would be incompatible with its academic intent. Careful observers of the theory’s principles will discover implicit connections to tenets of many – perhaps even all – major theologies, religions, philosophies, and political ideologies. This is to be expected, as the theory’s author has intentionally drawn from a variety of sources throughout a worldwide canon of wisdom literature to develop the SAL theory into a universal construct that can both appeal to and benefit as many people as possible throughout an extremely diverse planet. Lastly, while great efforts have been made to loosely align the theory’s principles with bona fide atmospheric and astronomical science, such parallels are rooted primarily in metaphor and anecdote, not mathematics, physics, and astronomy.

### 3. Existential intelligence

It has been several decades since Gardner (Gardner 1983) posited his “theory of multiple intelligences,” which suggested there are several different ways to be smart (i.e., linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal). In expanding his research on the subject, he has also suggested the “possibility of a spiritual intelligence” (Gardner 1999: 59). In the end, Gardner opted against adding “spiritual intelligence” to his theory

of multiple intelligences on grounds that it failed to fully meet the criterion used in academically legitimizing other forms of intelligence (Gardner 2006: 20).

He did, however, suggest that a “cognitive strand of the spiritual” (Gardner 1999: 60), namely, existential intelligence, “seems a promising candidate” (Gardner 1999: 60). Gardner’s short definitions of this version of intelligence include: “the intelligence of big questions” (Gardner 1999: 60), and “a concern with ‘ultimate issues’” (Gardner 1999: 60). His full definition of existential intelligence reads thus: “The capacity to locate oneself with respect to the furthest reaches of the cosmos – the infinite and the infinitesimal – and the related capacity to locate oneself with respect to such existential features of the human condition as the significance of life, the meaning of death, the ultimate fate of the physical and the psychological worlds, and such profound experiences as love of another person or total immersion in a work of art” (Gardner 1999: 60).

Gardner (Gardner 1999) has also written about morality as a subject of intellectual inquiry. In so doing, he admits his inability to capture “the essence of the moral domain as an instance of human intelligence” (Gardner 1999: 76), especially if “it connotes the adoption of any specific moral code” (Gardner 1999: 75). He does, however, concede that: “The central component in the moral realm or domain is a sense of personal agency and personal stake, a realization that one has an irreducible role with respect to other people and that one’s behaviors toward others must reflect the results of contextualized analysis and the exercise of one’s will. We do not think of Gandhi as a moral person just because of the sophistication of his philosophy or the praiseworthiness of his behaviors. Rather, we think of Gandhi (or of Mother Teresa, or Nelson Mandela, or Andrei Sakharov) as moral persons because of the central roles they have been willing to play in the realm of human affairs. ... it is fundamentally a statement about the kind of person that one is or, more properly, about the kind of person that one has developed to be. [...] ‘Morality’ is then properly a statement about personality, individuality, will, character – and, in the happiest cases, about the highest realization of human nature” (Gardner 1999: 77).

From the passage above, as well as the impressive amount of time Gardner devoted to the study of related subjects – “[he] devoted the better part of a year to reviewing the evidence for and against a spiritual intelligence” (Gardner 2006: 20) – it appears that he, like many of us, would like to be able to empirically prove the existence of such potentially valuable – perhaps even vital – domains of

intelligence. Nevertheless, in Gardner’s intellectually savvy words: “quips are no substitute for scholarship”. As such, it has been, to date, impossible to achieve the goal that Gardner and others have pursued.

Unwilling to devote a career to a task that may be academically impossible, the goal of Self-Action Leadership is to produce a nomological theory of self-leadership that is admittedly non-scientific beyond its self-evident moorings in Manz’ original theory of self-leadership (Manz 1983), and its metaphorical connections to atmospheric and astronomical science F. K. Lutgens and E. J. Tarbuck (Lutgens and Tarbuck 2010), and E. J. Tarbuck and F. K. Lutgens (Tarbuck and Lutgens 2009). Nevertheless, due to the nomological essence of much of the application of theory (scientific or not) in regards to leadership, self-leadership, communication, emotional intelligence, and any other number of professional soft-skill training topics, this non-scientific theory is presented as a bona fide option for nomological-based personal and professional development initiatives and trainings.

Gardner (Gardner 1999) and others (e.g. Wilson 2015; Wigglesworth 2012; and Zohar and Marshall 2000) have produced various definitions of existential intelligence and related terms (i.e. spiritual intelligence) over the years. The Self-Action Leadership theory re-defines the term to refer specifically to the knowledge a self-action leader obtains that empowers him or her to progress through a series of Maslow-esque stages of Self-Action Leadership (or existential) progression.

**Existential intelligence (X-intel):** Holistic (spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, social, and moral) knowledge that empowers a self-action leader to *earn* Existential Growth.

## 4. Research assumptions

### 4.1. Preliminary remarks

Aside from its obvious roots in self-leadership theory (Manz 1983; Neck and Manz 2012), Self-Action Leadership theory, minus its atmospheric and astronomical analogues, is a non-scientific, non-empirical, nomological construct synthesized out of a combination of extensive literature reviews and qualitative, experiential, and analytical autoethnographic, (Anderson 2006) action research (Beaulieu 2013) projects.

Such non-empirical, qualitative methods employed in constructing the SAL theory may be grounds for strict empiricists and quantitative scholars to discount it altogether.

With this in mind, on what grounds should the SAL theory be granted serious scholarly consideration or legitimization? A compelling answer can be found in the pages of existential philosophy, where Roubiczek (Roubiczek 1964) put forth a persuasive argument that implicitly endorses the qualitative brand of experiential, autoethnographic, action research upon which the SAL theory was built: “All experience shows that the powers of reason have strict limitations; that a purely logical, rational, scientific way of thinking illuminates only a strictly limited sector of reality. [...] [For example], to think in a purely objective way cannot help us to deal with feelings; feelings described in an impersonal way cannot be understood. If, for instance, we are given an exact scientific description of pain, physiological and psychological, including all the processes which take place in our body and all the nerve reactions, we shall still not know what pain actually is unless we experience it. [...] Existentialism will [therefore] teach us that we have to admit experience as evidence (Roubiczek 1964: 1, 5).

The concept of consulting personal experience to mine meaningful insights into common sense life lessons is not new to the contemporary, autoethnographic movement. It doesn't take a scientist or empiricist to discover that “life is bigger than logic” (Schumacher 1977: 123), facts, data, and scientific objectivity. Schumacher (Schumacher 1977) addresses this reality by drawing a distinction between the instructional [or hard] sciences (Schumacher 1977: 105) and the descriptive [or soft] sciences (Schumacher 1977: 107). Descriptive sciences, which include the fields of philosophy, theology, leadership, management, self-help, communication, etc., typically cannot provide empirical proof of their principles and postulates.

*What, now, is the nature of proof in the descriptive sciences? The answer is /*

*inescapable: there can be classifications, observed regularities, speculations, /*

*theorems of different grades of plausibility, but there can never be proof. /*

*Scientific proof can exist only in instructional sciences. ... [Descriptive] theories /*

*can never be “scientifically proved” (Schumacher 1977: 107, 110).*

In acquiescing this point, Schumacher does not diminish the importance of the descriptive sciences. To the contrary, he purports that their postulates and principles possess vast storehouses of theoretical value and practical utility. He also lauds the inherent value of “traditional wisdom” literature (Schumacher 1977: 131).

*All traditional wisdom, of which both Dante and Shakespeare are outstanding /*

*representatives, transcends ordinary, calculating logic and defines “The Good” as /*

*that which helps us to become truly human by developing our higher faculties – /*

*which are conditional on, and also part of, self-awareness... (Schumacher 1977: 131).*

It is understandable that Gardner (1983, 1999, 2006) and others find themselves bumping up against discouraging dead ends in their well-intentioned efforts to academically quantify the unquantifiable. The fact that such scholars bother to spend as much time as they do making the effort speaks to the nomological transparency of mankind's fundamental desire to understand all things and arrive at universal truisms – one way or another. Perhaps at some point in the future, the academe will possess the hard science toolbox and data to accomplish what Gardner and others have thus far been unable to do. At present, however, the prospects of empirically proving any theological, spiritual, or existential construct, is dim indeed.

But should this present fact lead members of the academe to forever close the door on positing and putting forth qualitative approximations of unempirical “truisms,” the practice of which quantitative science may yet corroborate as universally beneficial to personal and professional pursuits? The undergirding philosophy of Self-Action Leadership holds that any human being in possession of a fully-functioning mind, heart, and conscience will readily recognize the vital importance of keeping this door open and vehemently value the place of nomological constructs that can empirically prove over time to lead to positive results in the actual experiences of *real* people who can *feel* and *discern* as well as *think*. It is in the *spirit* of this nomological reality – the veracity of which most, if not all, honest and sentient beings would accede – that the author presents the SAL theory, positioning it as a qualitative necessity in aiding a world adrift with ideologies that are leading to moral entropy and increased income disparity on the lighter end of the spectrum of evil, and murderous violent on its darker side.

## 4.2. The self-action leadership theory<sup>2</sup>

The Self-Action Leadership (SAL) theory provides a qualitative metric for measuring Existential Growth. It is based on an extensive atmospheric and astronomical metaphor. It likens the Earth's surface, the six layers of the Earth's atmosphere, outer space, and celestial bodies throughout the Uni-

<sup>2</sup> Primary sources consulted for information regarding the scientific realities of the Earth's atmospheric layers include: Lutgens, F. K., and Tarbuck, E. J. (2010), and Tarbuck, E. J., and Lutgens, F. K. (2009).

verse, to nine different stages of Existential Growth, which, like Maslow's (Maslow 1943) hierarchy of needs, are obtained sequentially from a lower stage to a higher stage through education in, and consistent application of, SAL principles.

As a rocket ship penetrates the Earth's atmosphere, gravity and air pressure are gradually transcended. This atmospheric ascendance results in the need for less fuel as the rocket travels to higher altitudes. Once a rocket reaches outer space, it needs virtually zero fuel as the absence of gravity and air pressure enables the vessel to maintain its momentum automatically and indefinitely as long as it remains outside the gravitational pulls of other astronomical bodies.

Similarly, as a self-action leader progresses upward through the nine levels of Existential Growth, he or she gradually transcends **existential gravity**, thereby making his or her journey easier relative to past personal travails and other life experiences that subjected them to stronger pulls of X-Gravity.

**Existential gravity (X-gravity):** Internal and external adversities influencing the poor exercise of Self-Action Leadership, thereby inhibiting Existential Growth and preventing a self-action leader's rise to higher levels of personal freedom.

SAL theory posits that metaphysical gravity exists to stymie Existential Growth. Existential Gravity does not dam one's potential for Existential Growth, but it does make it challenging – sometimes ponderously so.

Examples of X-Gravity include physical forces outside of your control (e.g. natural laws of science, weather, macroeconomics, geopolitics, structural inequality, and the thoughts, speech, and actions of others), physical challenges (congenital or otherwise), mental and emotional challenges, family and social challenges, character flaws and personal weaknesses, distractions and addictions, negative peer pressure and media exposure, etc.

**Table 1.** Stages of Existential Growth

Level 1) Earth's surface	Stage 1) Education stage
Level 2) Troposphere	Stage 2) Beginner's stage
Level 3) Stratosphere	Stage 3) Practitioner's stage
Level 4) Mesosphere	Stage 4) Refining stage
Level 5) Ionosphere	Stage 5) Polishing stage
Level 6) Thermosphere	Stage 6) Actualization stage
Level 7) Exosphere	Stage 7) Self-transcendence
Level 8) Deep Outer Space	Stage 8) Leadership stage
Level 9) Astronomical bodies throughout the universe	New existential creations that benefit mankind

**Level 1. Education stage ~ the Earth's surface.** In the Education Stage, a self-leader learns for the first time that he or she is an independent being with the liberty to choose

one's thoughts, speech, and actions. The Education Stage is also where a self-action leader learns the difference between right and wrong, and that living morally presents the opportunity to progress beyond the realm of self-leadership to the higher plane of Self-Action Leadership, where authentic Existential Growth is possible.

The Education Stage is ground zero of a self-action leader's Existential Growth. All people begin life at this stage. Some self-action leaders, however, are better equipped to learn and climb higher and faster based on the relationships and resources they are privy to growing up. A primary goal of the Self-Action Leadership theory is to proliferate education initiatives among student populations who do not naturally receive such in their homes or schools as children and adolescents. The grievous problem of broken families and community despair persists in many inner cities and other areas throughout the United States and world. To do, one must learn. Without education, one's capacity to *choose, do, and become* is greatly retarded. Self-Action Leadership theory has the potential to greatly empower students from these troubled populations as well as individuals from all other societal sectors.

**Level 2. Beginner's stage ~ the troposphere.** The moment a self-leader *decides* to pursue a moral course of action, one thereby *becomes* a self-action leader and *earns* his or her first spurt of Existential Growth by virtue of one's *intent* to do what is morally right. At this moment of decision, a self-action leader enters the Beginner's Stage. The Beginner's Stage – much like its weather-laden atmospheric analogue, the troposphere – is filled with metaphorical storms and the ponderous pressures of Existential Gravity. Many metaphorical “crabs” exist in the Beginner's Stage to “pull” a self-action leader down from his or her attempts at transcending this stage. As a result, many self-action leaders never graduate from the Beginner's Stage.

**Existential crabs (X-crabs):** People and organizations that act to undermine and limit one's Existential Growth. “Crabs” refer to a natural phenomenon whereby sea crabs placed in a bucket will pull down other crabs attempting to escape.

**Level 3. Practitioner's stage ~ the stratosphere.** The Practitioner's Stage may initially provide a welcomed reprieve from the existential storms of the Beginner's Stage. Gravity and air pressure have a much lighter pull in the stratosphere; that is why jet airplanes fly there – above most of the storms and other traffic found in the troposphere. Moreover, you are no longer within reach of many of the most puerile and vicious X-crabs. This may result in a combination of changes to your physical environment (e.g. new neighborhood, new job, new relationships) or a bolstering of your self-confi-

dence that disempowers the jejune jibes of X-crabs. Thus we see the wisdom of Plutarch and Otto Rank, who said, “What you achieve inwardly will change your outer reality.” Because of the relative peace often enjoyed in the Practitioner’s Stage, you are able to spend more time learning about your potential for Existential Growth, and in-turn pursuing new opportunities that will stretch you toward that growth.

**Level 4. Refining stage ~ the mesosphere.** Many self-action leaders grow content with the personal and professional achievements – and existential quality of life – in the Practitioner’s Stage. Unwilling to leave the comfort zones of this newly acquired *status quo*, they live out the rest of their lives on Level 3. Proactive self-action leaders who learn more about what lies beyond are typically more ambitious. They not only desire additional personal and professional growth and development; they also desire more existential freedom. Achieving all of the above requires that they leave the comfort zones of the Practitioner’s Stage to willingly take on the new challenges found in the Refining Stage.

The Refining Stage is compared to the mesosphere – the coldest and most mysterious level of any in Earth’s atmosphere. It is too high for planes to travel in, yet too low for satellites to orbit. Similarly, the Refining Stage is usually the most difficult stage of all to successfully pass through and advance beyond. This is the stage where an entrepreneur, visionary, or other proactive person is told by others (usually in higher, more advanced positions) that their ideas won’t work, their goals are unrealistic, and their ambitions and voice ought to be quelled, if not muted – for their own good. A self-action leader will initially find it surprising, and certainly deflating, to discover that many of those who were once cheering them on in lower stages have now become adversaries upon realizing that one is no longer a mentee, but a legitimate competitor. The number of X-crabs increases exponentially from the Practitioner’s Stage to the Refining Stage. While the total number of X-crabs may be fewer in number than in the Beginner’s Stage, the volume and vitriol of their voices can be even more intense – a result of Refining Stage X-crabs being more educated, and therefore more cunning.

In addition to the pull of X-crabs, the Refining Stage brings into one’s life other personal and professional challenges that can produce severe and painful difficulties. Such adversity may include a serious illness, injury, death of a loved one, personal and professional failure, and much failure and rejection. In the Refining Stage, a self-action leader’s faults and shortcomings are laid bare, exposing agonizing vulnerabilities. While many self-action leaders “attempt” to travel through the Refining Stage, many become casualties of its extraordinary “heat.”

Weaker self-action leaders eventually fold, *choosing* to return to the quieter, and certainly less stressful Practitioner’s Stage. Stronger self-action leaders will courageously bear the brunt of the criticism and vitriol of the crabs – accepting and using any valid feedback while discarding the unfair denunciations. They will also push through whatever adversity tries to beat them down. Those who persist and prevail will graduate to the Polishing Stage.

**Level 5. Polishing stage ~ the ionosphere.** The Polishing Stage resembles the Practitioner’s Stage in the sense that having finally escaped the X-crabs and storms of the Refining Stage, a welcomed rest and reprieve usually follows as a new comfort zone is reached and an old level of Existential Gravity is transcended. Moreover, like the Practitioner’s Stage, your graduation from the Refining to the Polishing Stage is often accompanied by a tangible change in your physical surroundings (e.g. new job, new relationships, new promotion, new opportunity, etc.). Such newness often creates a fresh ambiance imbued by beauty, comforts, and satisfactions a self-action leader hitherto lacked. This is an appropriate analogue to the physical reality of the ionosphere, where the universally admired *aurora borealis* and *aurora australis* are located.

The Polishing Stage also provides a self-action leader with opportunities to “polish” one’s inner strength and tranquility and outer approach in preparation for much greater achievements and contributions to come. Having already been “refined,” self-action leaders in the Polishing Stage can turn their attention to fine-tuning their personality, disposition, message, and vehicles of service.

**Level 6. Actualization stage ~ the thermosphere.** The Actualization Stage is a profoundly meaningful landmark on a self-action leader’s journey toward Self-Transcendence in that it signals one’s personal launch into existential “orbit” (the thermosphere is where satellites and space stations typically orbit the Earth). A person has reached the Actualization Stage when one arrives at the place where he or she not only knows what one’s life primary purposes and pursuits are and will be, but the moment when he or she can rejoice in the recognition that one is now existentially and practically (financially and otherwise) capable of pursuing those ends.

It is the stage where Edison no longer had to pick up side-work to pursue his genius inventions. It is the stage where Gandhi knew his primary focus was the liberation of his country from British Tyranny, and he possessed the means to pursue his vision without he or his family going hungry. It is the stage where Mother Teresa was equipped with the desire, know-how, resources, and support staff to dedicate her life to

lifting the existential station of India's most impoverished citizens. Siddhartha Gautama likely reached the Actualization Stage in his late twenties when he realized he must renounce his royal life and take up an ascetic existence in order to access true enlightenment. Jesus entered the Actualization Stage once he knew His life's purpose was to categorically conform to the will of His father. For anyone who reaches this stage of Self-Action Leadership development and Existential Growth, it is usually a welcomed arrival – as most lingering diffidence and inadequacies have been transcended and resolved in the Refining and Polishing stages. Becoming actualized empowers a self-action leader with the knowledge of *who* they really *are*. This knowledge effectively disempowers the influence of X-crabs. While X-crabs no longer have much sway on a self-action leader in the Actualization Stage, this does not mean they do not exist, nor does it mean one has entered into a safe haven free from all adversity. To the contrary, some of the greatest adversity a self-action leader can face may appear in the highest levels of Existential Growth. Despite such adversity, self-action leaders who reach this stage typically do not regress. Instead, they grow more confident in and peaceful about their chosen direction, come what may.

While technically labeled a “stage,” the Actualization Stage is much more of a “state” or an “arrival” than a stage. This is because most people who advance to the Actualization Stage transition almost immediately to a role of influence upon or leadership of others. While it is true that some self-action leaders may *choose* to wander off into the “desert” and spend the rest of their lives meditating or otherwise seeking states of constant solitude, the vast majority of individuals will, in some way, *choose* to influence others through their work, and thereby enter the next stage of Existential Development – the Leadership Stage.

**Level 7. Leadership stage.** While elements of leadership can and will be learned on lower levels of Existential Growth, the real-world practice of leadership in an executive oriented role cannot truly be applied until one *is* an executive. The Leadership Stage is therefore inhabited by leaders at the highest levels of organizations. One does not necessarily need to be an executive of a large organization to qualify for the Leadership Stage. A father or mother of a small family could very well reach this stage without any other formal authority to their name. The status of reaching any existential level is not determined primarily by the size or scope of one's influence, but by the authenticity and profundity of that influence on others.

Atmospherically speaking, the Leadership Stage is likened to the exosphere, the final level of the atmosphere, where Gravity is virtually absent and atmospheric particles are few and far between. The farther one progresses in the

Leadership Stage, the closer one comes to Self-Transcendence ~ deep outer space.

Self-Action leaders can still digress to lower levels *after* reaching the Leadership Stage. This is because Existential Gravity still exists in the Actualization and Leadership stages, albeit on a much smaller level. Moreover, external problems persist for *all* self-action leaders – even those in the gravity-free zones of Self-Transcendence and Creation – as the lives of Jesus, Joan of Arc, Sir Thomas More, Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and others like them amply illustrate. Nevertheless, whatever challenges arise are strictly external roadblocks as opposed to the result of any internal ineptitude or moral deficiency on the part of the self-action leader.

**Level 8. Self-transcendence.** Self-Transcendence represents the pinnacle of existential *self*-achievement as a self-action leader. It is represented by the gravity free zones of deep outer space. At this point in your existential journey you have finally escaped *all* of the gravitational pull of lower levels. You have also moved beyond the reach of *all* Existential Crabs. While X-Crabs may still vocally taunt and harm one's physical person, they have no impact over the confident bearing and existential homeostasis a self-action leader has achieved at this stage. Upon reaching Self-Transcendence, a self-action leader will *not* digress again to lower levels. The very thought of doing so is anathema to those rare few who manage to achieve this extraordinary level of Existential Growth.

Siddhartha Gautama reached the Actualization Stage in his mid-thirties. After several years of desperate seeking and a near self-imposed starvation, he eventually reached the profound state of enlightenment he had quested after and meditated for with such discipline and zeal. Jesus may have entered the Actualization Stage much earlier, perhaps as young as age 12, when he, with a profound sense of authority and knowledge, taught the learned in the temple. One does not need to start a new religion to advance to this penultimate stage of existential development. Sadly, however, those who *earn* this elusive stage represent only a small fraction of the overall population.

**Level 9. Creation stage.** Having reached Self-Transcendence, a self-action leader is sure to do everything in one's power to create new messaging and processes by which other, willing self-action leader's on lower levels can follow in the footsteps of the leader on a quest to eventually realize Existential Growth for themselves. Such creations are the metaphorical analogue to celestial bodies throughout the Universe (i.e. asteroids, comets, planets, stars, galaxies, novae, supernovae, and in the case of the dark shadow [see next page], black holes).



Relatively few individuals ever reach Level 9 in their lifetimes, and even fewer individuals end up impacting large numbers of people. Jesus, Siddhartha Gautama, Socrates, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mother Teresa are some of the best real-world examples whose achievements qualify them as having reached Level-9 in their Existential Growth. Such leaders literally changed the world by “creating” new dogmas and movements rooted in moral, non-violent paradigms for others to join and follow that had lasting, positive and constructive results. It is highly likely, however, that many more individuals reach Level 9 over the course of their lifetimes, but never have an opportunity to extend their reach to a large audience. Perhaps you know someone, most likely someone in his or her later years, who has achieved this elusive stage. Such a person may or may not be well known to the general public. Such a one could even be your father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, teacher, pastor, etc. While the scope of their influence may be small on a global scale, their influence has truly been “global” on whatever audience it has impacted – a result of dedicating one’s life to personal integrity and service to others.

Prior to reaching Self-Transcendence, it is possible for a self-action leader to digress from a higher to a lower stage of development. This process of digression is referred to as Existential Atrophy.

**Existential atrophy (x-atrophy):** The digression from a higher stage of X-Growth to a lower stage.

This digression results from wrong, or immoral, thoughts, speech, and actions over time. Immoral actions can also produce an entirely different sort of progression throughout a metaphorical “dark side” of the atmospheric hierarchy. This “dark side” of the hierarchy is referred to as the “dark shadow.”

### 4.3. The dark shadow of the SAL hierarchy

Pursuing thoughts, words, and actions that are immoral, regardless how mentally, physically, socially, politically, militarily or culturally savvy, leads an individual away from Existential Growth, thus incurring Existential Atrophy. Despite such X-Atrophy, immoral actions can sometimes lead to personal, professional, social, cultural, military, and political popularity, hierarchical advancement, and financial success. Individuals progressing through this “dark shadow” will experience internal and external difficulties, realities, and successes that, viewed objectively, may *appear* strikingly similar to those experienced by authentic self-action leaders journeying to the top of the *authentic* hierarchy. The key difference is the long-term results garnered

by moral self-action leaders and immoral self-leaders. For example, one could rightly argue that both Adolf Hitler and Nelson Mandela progressed to the highest level – the Creation Stage – in that they both ended up creating movements and re-making entire nations in transformational ways. The difference, of course, is that Mandela’s creations benefited citizens in his country and around the world in the long-run. He essentially *created* a light that continues to shine forth after his death – much like a new star in the firmament. Hitler, on the other hand, and the Third Reich he founded, eventually collapsed within itself to form a historical “black hole” that all enlightened societies avoid like the plague and hold up as an example of darkness and evil-doing. While the movement Mandela created has remained – and continues to grow after he died a natural and noble death that was lauded the world round, the movement that Hitler created, while physically impressive, eventually crumbled to ash, punctuated by his own ignominious suicide.

Another striking difference between the SAL hierarchy and the dark shadow is the absence of any consultation of conscience by those progressing up through the dark shadow. By constantly ignoring and disregarding one’s conscience, an evil self-leader develops mechanisms that dull, and eventually exterminate, its voice. By squelching the voice of one’s own conscience, a person may, by degrees, *become* self-deceived to the point that whatever he or she thinks, says, or does, will – in the deluded mind of the individual – be judged as right simply because he or she performed it. Rather than submit one’s will to universal law and recognize the duty one holds to that law (Kant 2002), the fully immersed citizen of the dark shadow has *become* a polluted law unto oneself whereby one sees oneself as a godlike figure whose own selfish, hedonistic, terrorizing will reigns true, good, and supreme. It is the sorry endgame of all liars, evildoers and narcissists. Society is unfortunately strewn with individuals who have made extraordinary progress in advancing to higher levels of the dark shadow.

If not checked and reversed, progression through the dark shadow *always* ends in ignominy, as the fall of Hitler’s Third Reich and his cowardly suicide so eloquently illustrate. From Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, and Pol Pot on the darkest side of the spectrum to Richard Nixon, Janis Joplin, Bill Clinton, and Ken Lay on the lighter side of the spectrum, the passage of time has a way of powerfully tainting the legacy of individuals who pursue fundamentally flawed moral pathways – no matter how erudite one’s ideology, how popular or financially wealthy one may have become, or how temporarily productive one’s efforts may have been. As such, all self-action leaders should take heed to not mistake

evil self-leaders who rise up through the dark shadow of the hierarchy for *authentic* self-action leaders progressing up the SAL hierarchy. Such a mistake has, and will yet, spell disaster – for anyone bamboozled by the pied pipers of the dark shadow – which have always existed in this world.

Unfortunately, it often requires years, decades, generations, centuries, or even millennia to fully flesh out the long-term results of a given decision, philosophy, ideology, movement, or religion. Consequently, it can be quite easy to become seduced by a false dogma that is presently popular – either personally, professionally, socially, culturally, religiously, or politically – but existentially flawed all the same.

#### 4.4. In summary

To review, the nine stages of Existential Growth (including their dark shadows) included in the Self-Action Leadership theory is likened to the surface of the Earth, the six levels of the Earth's atmosphere, deep outer space, and astronomical bodies throughout the Universe.

As a self-action leader progresses to higher levels of Existential Growth, he or she becomes increasingly influential toward others. On lower levels, more people are *outside* of a self-action leader's sphere of influence. On higher levels, more people are *inside* of a self-action leader's sphere of influence. This is one reason why persons who reach the highest level of Existential Growth (i.e. Jesus, The Buddha, Gandhi, etc.) sometimes absorb millions or even billions of people into their personal sphere of influence.

#### 5. Implications for practice and research

The next step in the development of Self-Action Leadership theory will be to publish a follow-up paper that introduces a practical construct of cognitive and behavioral actions and habits that support the Existential Growth of self-action leaders. This construct, known as the Self-Action Leadership model, is rooted in action research theory. Beaulieu points out that while action research is often "misunderstood" in the "academic world" (Beaulieu 2013: 1), it is in fact, "solidly rooted in scholarly research" (Beaulieu 2013: 1), and, "as a growing [research] tradition, it fits well with scholarly research agendas that are aimed to improve the quality of life" (Beaulieu 2013: 6). As Self-Action Leadership philosophy was developed explicitly to improve quality of life through the Existential Growth of self-action leaders everywhere, it is appropriate that an action research approach was taken (both theoretically and practically speaking) in the development of the SAL model.

According to Kuhne and Quigley (Kuhne, Quigley 1997) there are "four core processes of action research" (Kuhne,

Quigley 1997: 25). These four stages include: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Kuhne, Quigley 1997: 25). In the development of the SAL model, Jensen (Jensen 2013) utilizes action research theory to frame a construction metaphor with explicit cognitive-behavioral analogues to the four steps of action research. In addition, twenty-one (Jensen 2013: 21) cognitive-behavioral sub-steps are included underneath the umbrellas of these four main steps. The author's organization of these sub-steps was derived from an interpretive synthesis of data collected from extensive literature reviews and a number of *self-action research* projects conducted in his own life as a self-action leader. Several of these projects have been carefully chronicled (Jensen 2013).

**Self-action research (SAR):** Action Research applied by, to, and for the self to gain self-awareness, aid self-improvement, and solve personal problems.

Given the recent emergence of the SAL Theory, no research has yet been formally conducted to empirically test the efficacy of its constructs in theoretical laboratories or practical organizational settings. Enormous anecdotal evidence exists, however, to corroborate both its validity and efficacy. This nascence, in concert with the comprehensiveness and depth of its concepts, translates into expansive potential for future research. Moreover, because strong connections exist between self-leadership and self-directed, or self-managing, work teams (Manz, Sims 2001) it is likely that such teams could derive a variety of theoretical and practical knowledge and value from SAL training.

Areas of practical research likely to be pursued in the future involve how an understanding of the SAL theory's nine stages of Existential Growth may positively inform human resource methodology and success as it relates to hiring, firing, training, retaining, and the promotion/demotion/termination of executives, managers and employees. This likelihood is based on implicit assumptions about the theory, such as: individuals on different levels of Existential Growth may be better suited to some roles than others (e.g. successful executives and other leaders will almost certainly possess characteristics of those who inhabit higher levels of Existential Growth).

To illustrate how SAL theory could specifically inform an executive's insight into hiring practices, consider the following advice about hiring from one leadership expert (Ellis 2012) – a former Vietnam POW imprisoned for five-and-a-half years at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton": "Because wisdom and maturity are forged in trials, I would think twice before hiring someone for an executive leadership role who has not been humbled through significant struggles. Leaders devoid of crucible experiences are

likely to be overly confident about their ideas, less sensitive to those of others, and surprisingly more susceptible to fears. Leaders motivated by fears and selfishness tend to make choices and cultivate attitudes that undermine the growth of the organization and its people” (Ellis 2012: 183).

Based on Ellis’ (Ellis 2012) advice, leaders and executives could screen applicants in part by determining who had demonstrated entrance in, and successful passage through, the Refining Stage, and who had not. Those who had not successfully passed through this phase of Existential Growth, and much less those who had not yet entered in, might then be readily identified as poor candidates for executive positions.

Another assumption of SAL theory is that individuals with an internal locus of control may rise higher and faster

in their Existential Growth than those with an external locus of control, and are therefore more likely to become highly skilled content experts and leaders over time than their externally motivated counterparts. Ample research opportunities exist in this and other components of SAL theory.

## 6. Conclusion

SAL training has the potential to provide executives, managers, and workers with a stronger foundation of character and integrity, and a greater vision of their capacity both as individuals and team-members. It may also empower individuals and organizations to set goals, define and cultivate visions, plan and prepare, and then follow through with the hard work, patience, and determination necessary to realize targeted objectives and steadily *earn* Existential Growth over time.

## References

- Alves, J. C., Lovelace, K. J., Manz, C. C., Matsypura, D., Toyasaki, F., and K., K. G. (2006). A Cross-Cultural Perspective of Self-Leadership. *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 21 (4): 338-359.
- Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic Autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 35 (4): 373-395.
- Beaulieu, R. J. (2013). Action research: Not Scholarly Research and Merely Professional Development for Teachers? *Canadian Journal of Action Research* 14 (2): 1-11.
- Cautela, J. R. (1969). Behavioral Therapy and Self-Control: Techniques and Applications. In C. M. Franks (Ed.), *Behavioral Therapy: Appraisal and Status* (pp. 323-340). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Cook, R. J. (Ed.). (1958/1997). *One Hundred and One Famous Poems: With a Prose Supplement* (rev. ed.). Lincolnwood (Chicago), IL: Contemporary Books.
- Covey, S. R. (2004). *The 8th habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Deci, E. L., and Ryan, R. M. (1980). The Empirical Exploration of Intrinsic Motivational Processes. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 13, pp. 39-80). New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Deci, E. L., and Ryan, R. M. (1987). The Support of Autonomy and the Control of Behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53 (6): 1024-1037.
- Driskell, J. E., Copper, C., and Moran, A. (1994). Does Mental Practice Enhance Performance? *Journal of Applied Psychology* 79 (4): 481-492.
- Ellis, L. (2012). *Leading with Honor: Leadership Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton*. FreedomStar Media.
- Forgas, J., Baumeister, R. F., and Tice, D. M. (2009). The Psychology of Self-Regulation: An Introductory Review. In J. Forgas, R. F. Baumeister and D. M. Tice (Eds.), *Psychology of Self-Regulation: Cognitive, affective, and motivational processes* (pp. 1-17). New York, NY: Psychology Press.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (2006). *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Georgianna, S. (2007). Self-leadership: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 22 (6): 569-589.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Houghton, J. D., and Neck, C. P. (2002). The Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire: Testing a Hierarchical Factor Structure for Self-Leadership. *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 17 (8): 672-691.
- Houghton, J. D., Bonham, T. W., Neck, C. P., and Singh, K. (2004). The Relationship Between Self-Leadership and Personality: A Comparison of Hierarchical Factor Structures. *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 19 (4): 427-441.
- Jensen, J. R. (2013). *Self-Action Leadership: An Autoethnographic Analysis of Self-Leadership Through Action Research in Support of a Pedagogy of Personal Leadership*. (Doctoral Dissertation). ProQuest (UMI No. 3592738). Fielding Graduate University, Santa Barbara, CA.
- Kant, I. (2002). Deontology: The Ethics of Duty. In *Ethics and Values: Basic Readings in Theory and Practice* (pp. 77-87). The Philosophy Department at Utah Valley State College (Keller, Managing Editor). Boston, MA: Pearson Custom.
- Kreitner, R., and Kinicki, A. (2004). *Organizational Behavior* (6th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- Kuhne, G. W., and Quigley, B. A. (1997). Understanding and Using Action Research in Practice Settings. In A. B. Quigley and G. W. Kuhne (Eds.), *Creating Practical Knowledge Through Action Research: Posing Problems, Solving Problems, and Improving Daily Practice* (Vol. 73, pp. 23-40). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Luthans, F., and Davis, T. (1979). Behavioral Self-Management (BSM): The Missing Link in Managerial Effectiveness. *Organizational Dynamics* 8 (1): 42-60.
- Lutgens, F. K., and Tarbuck, E. J. (2010). *The Atmosphere: An Introduction to Meteorology* (11th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Manz, C. C. (1983). Improving Performance Through Self-Leadership. *National Productivity Review* (pre-1986) 2 (3): 288-297.
- Manz, C. C. (1986). Self-leadership: Toward an Expanded Theory of Self-Influence Processes in Organizations. *Academy of Management Review* 11 (3): 585-600.
- Manz, C. C., and Sims, H. P., Jr. (1987). Leading Workers to Lead Themselves: The External Leadership of Self-Managing Work Teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 32 (1): 106-129.
- Manz, C. C. (1992). *Mastering Self-Leadership: Empowering Yourself for Personal Excellence*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Manz, C. C. and Sims, H. P., Jr. (2001). *The New Superleadership: Leading Others to Lead Themselves*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A Theory of Human Motivation. *Psychological Review* 50 (4): 370-396.
- Neck, C. P., and Manz, C. C. (1996). Thought Self-Leadership: The Impact of Mental Strategies Training on Employee Cognition, Behavior, and Affect. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 17 (5): 445-467.

- Neck, C. P., and Houghton, J. D. (2006). Two Decades of Self-Leadership Theory and Research: Past Developments, Present Trends, and Future Possibilities. *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 21 (4): 270-295.
- Neck, C. P., and Manz, C. C. (1999). *Mastering Self-Leadership: Empowering Yourself for Personal Excellence* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Neck, C. P., and Manz, C. C. (2004). *Mastering Self-Leadership: Empowering Yourself For Personal Excellence* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Neck, C. P., and Manz, C. C. (2006). *Mastering Self-Leadership: Empowering Yourself for Personal Excellence* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Neck, C. P., and Manz, C. C. (2010). *Mastering Self-Leadership: Empowering Yourself for Personal Excellence* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Neck, C. P., and Manz, C. C. (2012). *Mastering Self-Leadership: Empowering Yourself for Personal Excellence* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Neubert, M. J., and Wu, J. C. (2006). An Investigation of the Generalizability of the Houghton and Neck Revised Leadership Questionnaire to a Chinese Context. *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 21 (4): 360-373.
- Pattni, I., and Soutar, G. N. (2009). The Effectiveness of Self-Management Training in Organisations [sic] from Two Culturally Different Countries. *Journal of Management Development* 28 (7): 633-646.
- Roubiczek, P. (1964). *Existentialism: For and Against*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Schumacher, E. F. (1977). *A Guide for the Perplexed*. New York, NY: Perennial.
- Steers, R. M., Porter, L. W., and Bigley, G. A. (1996). *Motivation and Leadership at Work*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Tarback, E. J., and Lutgens, F. K. (2009). *Earth Science* (12th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Wigglesworth, C. (2012). *SQ21: The Twenty-One Skills of Spiritual Intelligence*. New York, NY: Select Books.
- Wilson, L. O. (2015). *The Ninth Intelligence – Existential or Cosmic Smarts. The Second Principle: The Work of Leslie Owen*, Ed.D.
- Zenger, J. H., and Folkman, J. (2002). *The Extraordinary Leader: Turning Good Managers into Great Leaders*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Zohar, D. and Marshall, I. (2000). *Spiritual Intelligence: The Ultimate Intelligence*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury.