LEADING FOR POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS

accounts of the political leader's experience

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INTRODUCTION

Political leadership is the ability to inspire collective action across diverse stakeholder groups to achieve a civic goal.

Being a political leader is an elite position of power with immense opportunity for positive social impact. It also comes with a unique set of challenges that are increasingly complex. Resource constraints are real. The gap between public expectations and service capabilities is widening. There is politicking. Trust is sparse. Technology is fast changing the way we live, work and play. Plus, being a political leader can be incredibly isolating.

According to the 2012 United States Census Bureau[*], there are 89,004 local governments. This includes 3,031 counties, 19,522 municipalities, 16,364 townships, 12,884 school districts and 37,203 other special districts. Local government bodies range in size and support. Additionally, there are 50 state legislatures and the federal level government, bringing the total to 89,055 governments in the United States alone.

Considering this expansive universe of leaders - whose decisions shape education, economic, health, transportation, housing, utilities, security and livability policies - political leadership is under-theorized and under-researched. Political leadership literature is largely comprised of mainstream, individual accounts in the form of biographies and autobiographies. Thematic accounts are emerging, with the United Kingdom leading the way. This nascent body of work addresses aspects of leadership development, power and political context, wellbeing and coaching.

Authenticity and political leadership study is further limited. The word "authenticity" originated from Greek narrative and lore with a root meaning of 'being true to oneself'. Over the past 80 years, the definition of authenticity has expanded to encompass philosophical (purpose) and psychological (identity) dimensions. Authentic leadership goes beyond just knowing oneself. Now, authentic leaders use self awareness as a tool to make decisions, visualize, engage and communicate effectively with others.

Political leadership is often interpreted as the embodiment of a specific individual. In reality, political leadership is a highly dynamic exchange between the leader and a variety of stakeholders. The leader is defined within this work as an elected official whose position is gained through a vote of legitimacy by the electorate. Stakeholders might include the public, colleagues, inter and intra-government agencies, the media and third parties. Once in office, the leader's legitimacy is challenged on a daily basis. Votes, appearances, media narratives, politicking, and actions and inactions can diminish legitimacy and political capital over night.

Within such complexity, how do political leaders perceive their experience, and what do they need to be effective?

RESEARCH AIM

This research began with the goal of understanding how elected political leaders perceive their experience, and how they navigate through complex, highly visible environments of competing interests of the leader and interests of others[†].

This document is based on 25 semi-structured interviews with elected political leaders of varying tenures, varying political persuasions and an extensive literature review that draws from

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[*] [n.a.], (2012), "2012 Census of Governments", *United States Census Bureau*. Accessed at http://www.census.gov/govs/cog/. Accessed on November 12, 2014.

[†] See Appendix A for methodology.

political leadership effectiveness, cross sector leadership development research and authentic leadership literature and practice. Interviews were analyzed using a hybrid approach to thematic analysis and coded into global and overarching themes[‡]. Themes were then juxtaposed with existing literature[§], from which conclusions are drawn.

THE RESULT recognizes the human challenges innate to political leadership: awareness of ego, the limits of control, vision, and resilience within contentious, public environments. It also offers specific recommendations for leading authentically and effectively. Recommendations are based on cross disciplinary leadership best practices and are reinforced by the experiences of the politicians we interviewed.

This research is designed as a practical guide for all political leaders, both aspiring and seasoned, who are seeking to further develop themselves and their skills. The research concludes that successful public servants use five key strategies:

1. Master the internal
2. Balance data
3. Visualize and direct strategically
4. Engage with integrity
5. Lead through change

We will discuss ways to manifest this in the ensuing pages.

[‡] See Appendix B for coding frame.
[§] See Appendix C for blended leadership theory.

REALITY POLITICAL LIFE

"Being a political leader is like swinging
from branches across a river."

Research was guided by the open-ended question of how political leaders describe their experience. Responses included external challenges, internal tensions and empowering rewards.

Consistently, key challenges related to people, places and things beyond a leader's direct control.

Interviewees said that external challenges came from politicking and "being thrown under the bus" by colleagues. They were frustrated by bureaucratic inefficiencies between departments and government levels. They felt that they were "reduced to a caricature" by the press, and were disappointed by having complex policies presented in inaccurate sound bites. Time management was referred to as a consistent challenge, with leaders having only finite time and staff to meet an unending flow of emails, calls, meetings and reading.

Political leaders shared internal tensions that included accepting: being disliked, not being able to do it all, winning and losing, and their loss of anonymity. In contrast, rewarding experiences were linked with tactical actions like "getting things done," in terms of policy and constituent services, as well as working collaboratively. Additionally, interviewees expressed feeling courageous when following personal values rather than submitting to peer pressure.

The more political leaders recognized the limitations of their own control, accepted the role they and others play within the political space, focused on their intention for running and their platform's desired impacts, the more they connected with the opportunities and rewards of being of public service. Universally, this shift was described as being willing to let go of ego. As one elected shared, "You need to be willing to let go of ego; it is a big deal. Once you get there, you are free."

IN SHORT, THE FOCUS OF
ATTENTION WENT FROM 'ME' TO
'WE'.

THE CHALLENGES

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fundraising
engaging stakeholders
bureaucracy
process
isolating
politicking
being "thrown under the bus"
misunderstanding
media shenanigans
sycophantic behavior
public expectations
crowded space
visibility and appearances
cannot do everything

>

trust
work life balance
privacy

=

hours in the day
control
only one you

"I cannot have the freedom that I was once used to, and having to decipher where to go and how to dress and act. Now I need to always be aware of my actions, my outfits, my language and who I'm with because I am no longer representing me. I'm representing [community]."

INSPIRING

"... Connecting to the reason I ran for office and the goals I had, on a policy level, to accomplish and seeing it build in that direction. I see how it is building. It takes time - a lot of time."

COURAGEOUS

"[You] have to be able to vote against something. The peer pressure is enormous to do something. I was a very pushy kid. I don't take 'no' for an answer. Some people have it and some don't."

IMPACTFUL

"The ability to accomplish things with people really fills my batteries. To be able to do something to help people..."

INTERESTING

"You get to be somewhat of a generalist."
"There is never a dull moment."

THE REWARDS

100%

of interviewees said what shifted them from challenge to reward was being willing to

LET GO OF EGO

> "You need to have a certain amount of ego to run for office – and then you need to be willing to give it away."

LETTING GO OF EGO what does it mean?

Researchers assert that a healthy relationship with ego (one's self) is the foundation of authenticity.

What happens when leaders are acting out of ego and against their authentic selves? A *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* article concludes that inauthentic leadership may manifest as perfectionism, micro-management, fear, isolation, addictive behaviors, reactivity, indecision, conflict avoidance, secrecy, stress and a lack of trust in self and others. The focus is on 'me' over 'we'. These tension-filled states of being have various references, in addition to inauthentic. Tim Gallewey, author of *Inner Game*, qualifies such challenging thinking as "interferences" to achieving our full potential. Galleway prescribes our "Potential – Interference = Performance".

The experiences of interviewed electeds show the challenges that result from being in the resistance of ego, inauthenticity, interference and/or stress.

In contrast, a *Journal of Organizational Behavior* study concludes that authentic leaders improve group-level trust, satisfaction, wellbeing and performance. A focus on collective impact, humility and certainty of purpose result in feelings of reward and empowerment: the 'We' over 'me'.

If we know that authenticity has positive personal and social impacts, this leads to a question:

How can political leaders lead through political realities authentically and effectively to address complex challenges?

The process is simple, though not easy.

For aspiring to seated politicians to be authentic takes courage, vulnerability, and an ongoing commitment to learning and resiliency. In order to effectively navigate the unique challenges of governance, public servants can benefit by leading from a place of service and foundational trust in themselves and the communities they have established. This process begins with a disciplined practice of getting to know oneself through awareness building, observation and self care.

Coded interview responses were juxtaposed with political effectiveness and authenticity leadership theories, resulting in the following five foundations for political leadership effectiveness[**].

ⓘ ASK YOURSELF:

- What is it that I can and cannot control?
- What is the impact on me? On my colleagues? On my constituents?
- How does it feel?
- How does the best possible version of myself respond?
- What is different?
- With this in mind, how do I choose to move forward?

[**] See Appendix C for a cross disciplinary leadership theories comparison.

LEAD
THROUGH
CHANGE

ENGAGE
WITH INTEGRITY
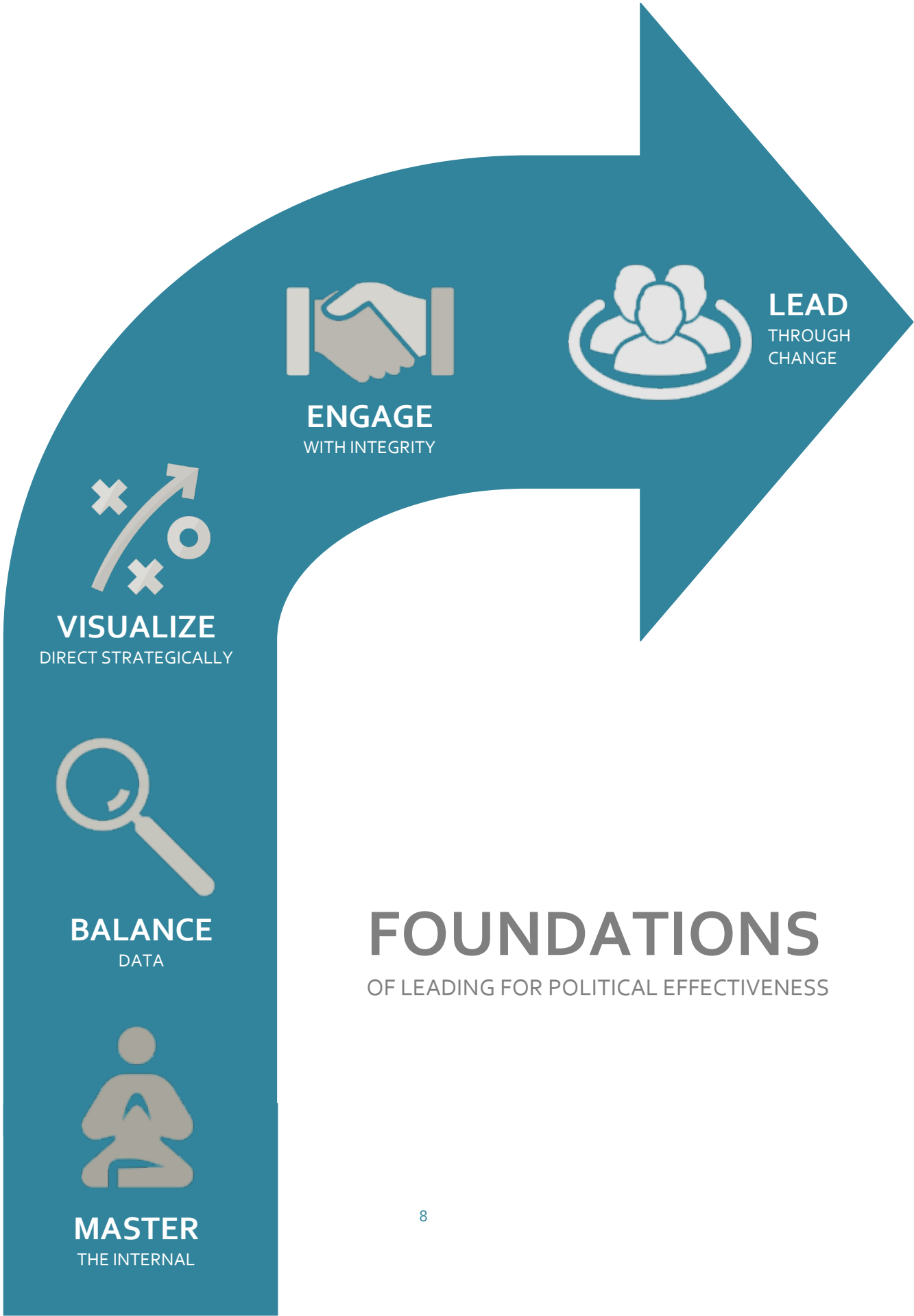
VISUALIZE
DIRECT STRATEGICALLY

BALANCE
DATA

FOUNDATIONS
OF LEADING FOR POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS

MASTER
THE INTERNAL

MASTER THE INTERNAL

TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE. Effective political leadership starts with the authentic self - honest, open and real. Mastering the internal is an in-depth process of exploration and identification. It is guided by self awareness (who am I), self management (how am I) and self care (what I need). Mastering the internal comes only through moments of honest reflection. In *The Speed of Trust*, Steven Covey writes that when we are real with ourselves, we build self trust. Self trust builds relational trust, which builds social trust. Below are questions intended to increase self awareness, to specify self management strategies and to commit to practices that support self care.

SELF AWARENESS who am I

Self awareness is shaped by our origin, identity, experiences, strengths, socialization and expertise. **Ask yourself:**

- What are my guiding values and principles?
- What are my strengths?
- What genuinely interests and excites me?
- What motivates me to lead my community?
- How have I come to believe the things I believe?

SELF MANAGEMENT how am I

Self management brings emotional regulation. Mastery comes from an honest appraisal of our triggers and the ways we address stress in our lives. The ongoing ability to engage stress in a healthy way, rather than allowing it to manifest in self and community destructive behaviors, often determines our level of performance. **Ask yourself:**

- What are my blind spots and triggers?
- What will I do, in the moment, when stressed?

SELF CARE what I need

However challenging the landscape, it takes conscious time, space and support to care for ourselves. Take ten minutes each day just for you: go on a walk, call a confidante or meditate. Reconnect with what inspired you to serve your community. **Ask yourself:**

- What do I need?
- What fulfills me?
- What do I commit to do daily that brings me balance?

FOLLOW THE DATA

Vital to leadership effectiveness is the ongoing commitment to our wellbeing. We achieve this by taking time, creating space and engaging support. Self care practices are accessible mental, physical and emotional pauses from the daily demands of political life. They are tools by which **we can perform as our best selves**.

Taking **time** makes time by putting people, places and things into perspective. This is time just for you. Stress and constant busyness increase cortisol levels in the brain. Cortisol (a stress inducer) impedes our thinking and judgment capabilities. Research suggests that moments of stillness reduce cortisol and increase functions that support evaluation and analysis of oneself and of others.

Creating **space** reestablishes balance and involves taking moments of pause. It can also involve physical movement. Electeds cite zumba, hiking, breaks from tech, meditation and yoga as healthy outlets of releasing stress. Time in green spaces also improves cognitive functioning that increases focus.

Engaging trusted, nonjudgmental **support** offers accountability and thought partnership. Political leadership can be insidiously isolating. We are social creatures built to connect. Asking for and accepting support reduces feelings of loneliness. Genuine connection increases oxytocin (the 'feel good' or 'trust' hormone). This shifts us into a place of psychological safety, in which we can learn and grow.

BALANCE DATA

Partiality is all too alive and well. Much information is slanted, as one elected official notes. As such, political leaders need be conscious with whom, what and how data is gathered. "It is like being a detective."

Effective political leaders analyze data from multiple perspectives to make informed decisions. Data is also used as a building block to foster partnerships, problem solve and mobilize support for a policy or cause. This process blends mind (e.g., statistics, policies, institutional knowledge, economics) and heart (e.g., people, context, power and influence) to gather a full spectrum of information and reduce the likelihood of bias.

ⓘ TRY IT.

Engage an alternate news source to gain a different perspective on an issue. Reach out to an 'opposing' stakeholder group. Follow your curiosity. Ask open-ended questions to better understand reasoning. What do you learn?

Read People	▪ Observe and intuit power dynamics, stakeholder agendas and emotions, and how they come together
Acquire Objective Knowledge	▪ Ask open-ended questions to gain understanding of differing perspectives ▪ Consult academics and issue experts ▪ Go on site visits ▪ Conduct stakeholder interviews ▪ Attend conferences and learn best practices
Think Analytically	▪ Actively question the merits and validity of information ▪ Process positive, negative and neutral messages ▪ Weigh what is not being said

VISUALIZE

DIRECT STRATEGICALLY

"You need to know what you want to get done. You need to have a vision of what you want the world to look like - a vision for shaping the world. Otherwise, you have your finger to the wind and are just looking to your next position."

Vision is "the lighthouse beacon pulling... in the desired direction" (Knorr, 1993: p. 18).

Authentic political leaders are driven by purpose and focus on achieving long-term goals that benefit the entire community. They translate vision into workable actions and ways of working. They think beyond the immediate context.

Moreover, they understand they have no power over things they have no control over. At times, success depends upon a willingness to let go of 'the plan', iterate and seek alternative pathways to goal achievement.

ℹ ASK YOURSELF:

When faced with a complex challenge, how do actions support or detract from achieving the long-term vision?

"It is not about 'in your face' tactics and showmanship. It is about working together. You are defined by how you relate to people you do not agree with and the level of civility with people you do not get along with versus those you do agree with."

Engaging with integrity is the conduit for sustaining legitimacy and building political capital. Authentic political leaders build trust by sharing experience, actively listening, recognizing, and voicing reliable communications. Both verbal and non-verbal communication modes send messages. Messages are sent through a variety of online and offline avenues – and repeatedly – to engage the largest universe of stakeholders. Inconsistency in words and actions challenge trust. Inconsistency in words and actions without explanation breaks trust. At the end of the day, as one elected notes, "You are only one person and need a majority" to make change. "All you have is your vote and your word."

Engagement avenues take three primary forms within the various political arenas: representation, advocacy and partnership building.

ⓘ ASK YOURSELF:

How do I "walk the talk" and "talk the walk"? How does this impact my ability to build partnerships or facilitate constructive dialogue across the political spectrum?

ENGAGE WITH INTEGRITY

REPRESENT
Respond to emails and calls.
Take meetings.
Attend events.
Listen to and understand needs.
Empathize with concerns.

ADVOCATE
Champion issues and people.
Influence.

PARTNER
Build alignment around goals.
Give and receive.
Be realistic about what others offer.
Create shared purpose.

LEAD
THROUGH CHANGE

"I understand that this is a process. Even now what we do, it can change. It is the whole of what you do and not specifics."

The ability to lead through change is a cross disciplinary best practice. It requires learning, entrepreneurism, mindfulness, systems, authenticity and transformation. These positive leadership approaches involve having a high tolerance for uncertainty. Effective leaders perceive complexity and resistance as functional tools for learning and growth. Willingness to engage uncertainty means evaluating your plan through honest questioning and being open to iteration when the status quo is not working. This involves acknowledging mistakes, which can feel vulnerable and humbling. Humility allows us to learn. We test new ideas through trial and error, keeping what works and letting go of what doesn't. Iterating, we test again. It is through trying again in spite of challenge, that we build resilience.

Leading through change involves holding our teams and communities through frequent and consistent communications. Communicate on what, how and when changes are occurring, along with their anticipated impacts. When ill equipped with information in times of uncertainty, it is human nature to forecast better or worse scenarios than what will likely occur. Communicating honestly about current circumstances and linking messages to vision creates a shared guide with the power to unite.

Finally, leading through change involves recognizing wins along the way. The policy-making process is long, unpredictable and tenuous. Re-energize yourself and others by celebrating contributions and progress. We are in it together, after all.

ⓘ ASK YOURSELF:

When circumstances change, how do you respond? Recognize that change is natural and be okay with not knowing. Try shifting focus from outcome to trusted process. Interviewees pointed to four helpful foundations:

- Pause. Manage stress. Ground.
- Access more data through observation and inquiry.
- Use 'big picture' vision as a strategic navigation tool.
- Reappraise and reframe.

Where are you now? How does this innovation support the goal?

ORIENT WITHIN POLITICAL REALITIES

- **Arenas:** There is a finite amount of time. Resources are limited. Technology is changing how we live, work and play. The gap between public expectation and service capacity is widening. Civic trust is strained. To maximize performance, understand the various political arenas, players and cycles of influence you are operating in (e.g., inter and intra-governmental relations, media, colleagues, third parties, constituents and grassroots, culture, communication avenues, policies, institutional knowledge).

- **Boundaries:** Establish what you know, what you don't know and what you need to know. Understand what you do and do not control. Clarify what you need for your own wellbeing to remain effective.

- **Choices:** Being a political leader can be deeply rewarding or disempowering. Quite often experience and performance are influenced by our state of mind. With arenas, realities and the limits of personal control in mind, how do you choose to lead? **The process is simple, though not easy.**

1. MASTER THE INTERNAL
- ground in self awareness: clarity comes with confidently understanding who you are, how you are and what you need.
- explore self management.
- prioritize self care.
- create achievable practices that enhance your wellbeing through time, space and support.

2. BALANCE DATA
- gather and analyze information from multiple perspectives to get a 'bigger picture', thus informing balanced decision making.
- be curious: ask open-ended questions, go on site visits, consult objective third parties (such as academics), reference trends and best practices.
- blend head (policies, economics, statistics, institutional structures) and heart (emotion, power dynamics, culture, context, intuition).

3. VISUALIZE + DIRECT
- orient strategy around desired civic impact.
- conceptualize and analyze long-term objectives, initiatives on and over the horizon.
- align decisions and actions with purpose.
- manage and direct across political arenas to achieve goals.

4. ENGAGE W/ INTEGRITY
- listen actively.
- match two-way engagement style with stakeholder types and needs.
- build partnerships and networks.
- recognize difference.
- advocate and represent.

5. LEAD THR/ CHANGE
- model the way.
- mobilize support around a clear vision across stakeholder groups.
- share credit and celebrate achievements.
- visibly demonstrate humility, resiliency, integrity, adaptability, patience – and hope.
- communicate, communicate, communicate.

+ YOUR WELLBEING
- take unprogrammed 'me' time.
- step out and move about.
- create safe spaces for reflection and learning.
- engage support from friends, family, spiritual communities and professionals.

SUMMARY | LEADING FOR POLITICAL EFFECTIVENESS

CONCLUSION

Literature on political leaders' experiences is under-theorized and under-represented across disciplines. Given the lack of both theoretical and practical literature on the political leader's perspective, the following exploratory study sought to build on this emergent field of study by gaining an understanding of how political leaders perceive their experience and how they navigate through complex, political environments. The researcher first reviewed literature on political leader effectiveness for data specific to the political leader's perceived experience and found an under-presentation, thematically, on the experience of political leadership, particularly specific to the United States.

To explore the research questions, a mixed methods qualitative approach for data collection was taken with a diverse set of political leaders within the greater San Francisco Bay Area (range of age, tenure, political identity, jurisdiction, government level) comprising the sample. Interviews were conducted, transcribed and coded using a hybrid approach to thematic analysis. Emergent phenomena and themes fell into the nexus of political effectiveness and authenticity leadership theory.

The political experience is described along a spectrum of challenging to rewarding. Sources of challenge pertain to components that are beyond one's immediate control, such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, politicking, sycophantic behavior, absence of civility, time and resource constraints, construed misrepresentation in the media and a loss of anonymity. In contrast, political leaders also perceive their experience as deeply fulfilling and generative when they reconnect to the purpose and original intent of pursing public service, and let go of ego. Learning to let go of one's ego is a defining shift in one's experience. Political leaders recognize that a certain level of ego is needed to run for office and then one must be willing to let it go. A healthy relationship with ego is developed through awareness and acceptance of political life's realities and focusing

attention and efforts toward vision, purpose and collective impact: the 'We' over 'me'.

Five foundations for leading for political effectiveness are identified and practical recommendations are presented:

1. Master the internal
2. Balance data
3. Visualize and direct strategically
4. Engage with integrity
5. Lead through change

Finally, political leaders share the need for more time and space to increase effectiveness, and impartial, safe environments for feedback, decision making, accountability, ongoing learning and release.

Coaching for political leaders and political teams may provide time and support in a psychologically safe and objective space for political leaders to reflect, learn, recharge and strategically focus. Political leadership and mindfulness coaching are emerging practices within the political arena with the United Kingdom leading the way.

This study contributes to the emerging field on political leadership, and political leadership effectiveness and development literature. Research examining political leadership can help build appreciation and understanding of the skills, experiences and complexities unique to politicians[††].

[††] See Appendix D for limitations and future research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY

Because of the research's experiential qualities and aim, a qualitative methodological approach (Alderfer, 2011; Bauer and Aarts, 2000) was used to gather and analyze data.

Research Design

Semi-structured interviewing (Gaskell, 2000) was the data collection method using a topic guide (Gaskell, 2000) comprised of open-ended questions (Willig, 2001). Interviews took place from 3 December 2012 through 12 November 2013, a year in which no participant was officially filed for re-election. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes to roughly two hours, averaging 60 minutes. Given the sensitive nature of the participants, interviews were not audio recorded. The researcher took detailed notes throughout the discussions and explained, with their consent, that quotes and themes may be included in the final report. Similarly, identifying attributions are omitted (Goldstein, 2002; Willig, 2001).

Participant Selection

Twenty-five local and state elected political leaders from the Greater San Francisco Bay Area (inclusive of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco and Santa Clara counties) comprise the sample of this study. Elected representatives vary in demographic characteristics (age, gender, tenure, geography, legislative body type). They ranged from nine months to more than 30 years of elected public service.

The Greater San Francisco Bay Area was selected as the target of focus based on the researcher's access to the participant pool and the region's demographic and geographic diversity. Although the political culture of the Bay Area is considered 'liberal', communities within the region, most notably parts of Contra Costa and Santa Clara counties, are considered more 'conservative' with higher rates of Republican voter registration[‡‡].

Forty-five political leaders were engaged for participation personally or through legislative staffers (Goldstein, 2002). Of the 45, four (8.9%) declined participation, ten (22.2%) responded with interest but never scheduled a formal interview, and six (13.3%) did not respond. Specific demographic breakdowns of the participating 25 (55.6%) are not included to respect anonymity.

Methodological Approach

A mixed methods approach of content and thematic analysis was used to review data. Interviews were first manually transcribed and reviewed by the researcher. Next, the researcher engaged in a manual, recursive coding process using Dedoose®, computer-based qualitative analysis software, to tag and organize themes by descriptive codes using a hybrid approach (Feredey and Cochrane, 2006). Descriptive code frequency was tabulated through a digitized content analysis, in which dominate themes emerged. Due to the research's aim of gaining an understanding of participant perceived experiences, data was first analyzed inductively (Braun and Clarke, 2006), from which latent themes emerged and were inputted into a developing coding frame, inclusive of names, definitions and sample excerpts (Boyatzis, 1998). Preliminary code counts resulted in 102 codes. Codes were clustered into organizing themes, reviewed, reclustered and renamed as deemed necessary. The researcher then went back through the corpus deductively with the research questions to further refine themes semantically where applicable, concluding with four global themes, 10 organizing themes and 36 basic themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

Finally, themes juxtaposed with the literature review results in the five recommended foundations for effective political leadership.

[‡‡] California Secretary of State. (2014). "Historic Registration Statistics." Accessed on December 1, 2014. Accessed at:

http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ror/ror-pages/15day-general-2014/hist-reg-stats.pdf.

APPENDIX B
CODING FRAME

Global Theme 1: Political Life

Descriptions and feelings of arenas and contexts in which political leaders operate

Organizing theme	Basic Theme	Examples of Basic Theme
Individually	**Loss of anonymity:** loss of privacy, public person, high visibility, always 'on'	"You are under the microscope, especially on the local level. People pay attention." (EL10)
		"I know after holding many different jobs, this is the only one where you are openly judged and criticized and have to be able to maintain your resilience and stability." (EL4)
		"Isolating... There is an initial honeymoon period and then people always think that you want something from them." (EL11)
	Off Balance: unpredictable and/or frenetic	"There is every day tension between family first and then work. There are a lot of evening commitments and it is hard to be there for [family]. It is what you make of it... There are inherent conflicts." (EL9)
		"I try to have an outside and personal life, but it is hard." (EL2)
	Misunderstood: public perception and/or media representation not consistent with experience	"You are reduced to a caricature. People do not hear more than 'progressive' or 'conservative'. You get a narrative attached to you that is affiliated with a side and it is perpetuated by the press." (EL2)
		"It is easy to personalize and people prescribe motivations to you and to who you are. It is easy for people to say 'X is a racist bitch' when, where I was coming from, is trying to make sure there are better opportunities." (EL5)
	Very busy: takes a lot of time, always more to do	"Scheduling is challenging because I may be in meetings all day. The [only] time I can get back to people is at midnight when they are not available." (EL12)
		"As a politician, people want to see you. You are an individual. In a normal work environment, you can send another person. In politics, you cannot replace yourself and you cannot be everywhere at once. You receive 1,000 emails a day." (EL9)
Externally	**Sycophantic:** using flattery to gain favor	"All of a sudden, I have friends I didn't know were friends." (EL10)
		"[You are] being surrounded by people for what they think you will be and their motivations and expectations of you. Are people really there in your best interest?" (EL3)
		"Really know who your friends are. Because in a position of influence, people want to be your friend. People take you to meals, to the ballgame. When times are tough and you are being bullied, you see who shows up to testify and stand up with you and those who do not because it is not politically favorable at the time." (EL1)
	Absence of civility: colleagues treating one another in a disrespectful manner	"The thing about being an elected body is kind of like being in a family. You don't choose who is a part [of the elected body]." (EL5)
		"People are not civil." (EL4)
		"Things that you just see that are common sense to get things done and seeing how people want to politick things instead of getting things done. There is more ego than substance there sometimes. That is disappointing. I see a lot of fluff and not a lot of substance. I wasn't prepared for all the politicking." (EL8)

	Bureaucracy: government decisions and systems beyond political leader's direct authority	"There are external forces that are always changing the rules - like the state eliminating redevelopment money, and there is nothing you can do about it." (EL12)	
		"Institutions do not move as quickly in the right direction." (EL20)	
		"The system is intrinsically cranky and a broken bureaucracy... Bad technology that does not speak to each other... People are far away from one another and so the distance shakes things up and it feels like beating things up the wall." (EL15)	
	Party pressure: efforts to exert power or influence one to vote a certain way based on political identity	"Voting 'no' could cost you a committee, money, others who are vying for leadership's attention and want leadership to like them will pressure you... The peer pressure is enormous to do something." (EL21)	
		"A [Political Party A] bill was introduced that contained things that already exist and it was, like, 'We can't let the [Political Party B] bill out,' so they won't let to the [Political Party A] one out." (EL20)	
		"The incumbent thought I would work on behalf of his interests." (EL8)	
	Lack of trust: doubting, suspicious of	"There is a divisiveness of politics in the city. Where is the unification?" (EL7)	
		"I was hung out to dry and thrown under the bus. My colleagues changed the plan at the meeting and didn't tell me. We had a plan and an understanding and they changed it at the meeting. (EL10)	
	Competitive: the desire to outdo one for acknowledgement or accomplishment	"There are a lot of egos. If you are working on an issue you feel passionate about, others will jump on it if they see it is getting traction." (EL11)	
		"What doesn't work is when egos and political agendas get in the way of making prudent decisions." (EL4)	
		"You need to protect yourself, make sure you get credit for things." (EL8)	
	External construction: projected expectations of others	"It is hard being surrounded by people who are in a role and want something. [They] have their own agenda for you." (EL3)	
		"People are career people and bring in outside agendas." (EL15)	
		"There are many minds of people telling you who you should be and what you should do." (EL7)	
Empowering	**Rewarding:** providing satisfaction or gratification	"[It's] been great for our marriage. It's added a new dimension to our lives." (EL19)	
		"[I] connect to the reason I ran for office and my goals I had on a policy level to accomplish, and see it is building in that direction. I see how it is building. It takes time - a lot of time." (EL12)	
		"When you get things done right, it is really exciting work." (EL5)	
	Interesting: absorbing, capturing attention	"There are so many areas: utilities, walking the Bay Bridge, [National Laboratories] and cutting edge technologies. You get to be somewhat of a generalist." (EL20)	
		"There is never a dull moment." (EL21)	
	Inspiring: the ability to make a difference	"The ability to accomplish things with people really fills my batteries. To be able to do something to help people." (EL8)	
		"We are not here to play youth government. We are here to do." (EL21)	
		"It is amazing how much my positive attitude had on other people. [State legislator] called and said to call her out of committee. I told her not to worry and it would all be okay." (EL5)	
		"You are in demand. You can do something or not do something." (EL10)	
	Courage: ability to do something that is frightening or fear inducing	"Have to be able to vote against something. The peer pressure is enormous to do something. I was a very pushy kid. I don't take 'no' for an answer. Some people have it and some don't. (EL21)	
		"It takes a thick skin and a lot of resiliency. You have to keep getting up and trying no matter what." (EL4)	
		"Step out no matter what. The road rose up every time I stepped up." (EL3)	
		"There is boldness. Often times... I say something no one else will." (EL6)	

Global Theme 2: Mastering the Internal
authenticity, personal effectiveness, self awareness, self management, purpose

Organizing theme	Basic Theme	Example of Basic Theme
Self Awareness	**Strengths:** positive or beneficial qualities	"Taking elected job and professional skills and putting them together." (EL4)
		"I am a people person." (EL8)
		"A lot of it is intuitive." (EL21)
	Guiding principles: personal truth that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior	"Be honest. Be respectful. Respect increases your effectiveness because people will work with you and you never know when/if you will need someone's support." (EL2)
		"If I commit to something, I do it with an intensity. I commit a lot of time and spend a lot of hours on things. Being thorough and gathering as much information as possible, attending meetings, policy meetings, substance meetings to gain an understanding and build a knowledge base. Some people think they are above it all. I can always get something out of a training even if I have attended it before. Nothing is above or below me." (EL12)
		"I think that when accepting funds, you have to be really clear with the organization that the funds will not change your vote if a particular item comes before the [body] and doesn't jive with your belief system. I always say that donating to me gets them an audience, and I will always be open to a meeting with them to hear their argument on the issue. They seem to be good with that." (EL4)
		"Your word is your governing bond. If you break your word, you will never go anywhere in politics... If you cannot adhere to that, you should not be an elected official." (EL10)
	Motivation/vision: clarity of intention	"You need to know what you want to get done. You need to have a vision of what the world is to look like, a vision for shaping the world. Otherwise, you have your finger to the wind and are just looking to your next position." (EL21)
		"My long term vision is to have community involvement and input into government level decisions. I want them to understand that their voice matters." (EL4)
		"What matters is not the glamour of it, but the subject area and the purpose of it... Answer the question of why are you doing this? What are your areas of interest? If not interested in policy or grounded within a policy level grounding, to do that is a disservice to the population to be represented. You have to know who you are. Get involved in activities, committees and boards within that policy area." (EL12)
	Experiences: previous encounters, observations, meetings and points of exposure or involvement	"Getting into politics wasn't something I planned on. There [are] some pointed reasons I got involved. It was kind of out of the blue. My priority has always been 'family first.'... Making my kids proud of me is really important." (EL9)
		"Humans are the measure, weight and success of people's lives. This is based on my upbringing." (EL21)
		"I was an advocate and activist, seeking to influence electeds... to do good things. I came to believe that the real ability to make the change one sought was to be the elected. If someone really wants to make change, in theory, you are more likely to make change when you are in office." (EL10)
Self Management	**Blind spots:** area where view is obstructed	"... hard time remembering names." (EL12)
		"I am someone who has a lot of energy. I have my fingerprints on a lot of initiatives and... I cannot do it all. It is about finding the staff to do it and not holding people to the standard I hold myself." (EL6)
	Personal practices: internal strategies to shift into a state of responding versus reacting	"Taking a step back and responding to myself versus reacting. Rather, thinking it through first. I don't want to be the one people vent about." (EL6)
		"[I] meditate and visualize elevating above the pettiness and focus on the goal... being of service." (EL11)

		"Taking deep breaths… and not sending reactionary text messages." (EL2)
		"If people are yelling at me, I take it in and get into a state of detached empathy. Show passion for your job. You cannot be completely Spock-like and know when to not engage and when to stand up at the end of the day. It is your neck and your reputation… Being detached with empathy comes with experience. At meetings, people are calling you an 'idiot'. They have that right. You listen and then make sure to counter where appropriate. It takes two, so stay polite and be very clear with your statements." (EL1)
Letting go	**Likeability:** can't please everyone	"You need to be your own self recognition." (EL5)
		"Don't take it personally." (EL11)
		"You need to be willing to let go of ego and not getting credit. You are working with people who are trying to undermine you - and you need to just let it go." (EL2)
	Recognition: acknowledging existence and validity	"If you take this job and think you are going to get accolades, you are going to be disappointed. There are people who run who want to serve, and there are those who do it to be noticed. For those who run to be noticed, they are higher maintenance folks. They want to be recognized and will never get enough… Really understand your motivations at all times. You have to be self energizing and supporting." (EL13)
		"You cannot please everybody. We each have to make decisions that people are not going to be happy with. Some people are playing to the crowd. There are those who are boisterous." (EL10)
	Humility: modest view of one's importance and role within a greater system	"You cannot be too attached to winning all the time and can't be too competitive all the time. People are trying to get the credit and outdrive you. [You] need to be humble. You lose a lot. You don't know a lot. There are always people who know more or raise more money or are better at strategy or with more relationships… You are one little cog in the chain." (EL21)
		"You are only as powerful as the majority to be useful… I play a role within a system. I try to figure out how I can be useful and [to] be a positive force without crossing a line." (EL5)
		"Institutions are bigger than one individual… People need to understand that politicians are forgotten in five years after being in office. It is probably less than that." (EL20)
		"Responsibilities are different. It is like being a parent. Everyone has an opinion. People who don't have kids are judging. You don't know anything, and you learn as you go." (EL13)
	Not doing it all: asking for and receiving help, delegation and/or prioritizing	"Letting go of control means not micromanaging." (EL21)
		"I am proud of the staff I have. You can't do the job without good staff. That would be impossible." (EL10)
		"Hire, train and work with good staff. There is never enough bandwidth… Trust is key." (EL2)
		"I've been the one, 'If you are not willing to do this, I will do it myself.' But I cannot do it at midnight. The hardest thing is giving up being the one doing everything. I'm not in charge." (EL6)
	Resiliency: adaptability, open to the unknown	"Let go of the plan. Adapt. Be nimble. There are no accidents." (EL3)
		"You need to move on. We need to move on otherwise we cannot move forward… You are building relationships for the long term, so holding onto grudges or ill feelings does not serve you. Those who hold on do not move on. If you hold onto your disagreements, they color the other issues and the public is not getting what it deserves. In reality, people like that are eliminated from the system or outlasted. Everyone is eliminated from the system - some faster than others. Those who do not stay true or act civil do not survive." (EL12)
		"It is kind of what people say in addiction programs, 'Progress not perfection.' This isn't a perfect bill but are we in the right direction? There are bills and you don't always get what you want. You need to build alliances and will to get the job done." (EL21)
		"I understand that this is a process. Even now what we do, it can change. It is the whole of what you do and not specifics." (EL8)

Global Theme 3: Technical Navigation

Using knowledge acquisition of people, situations, issues to inform decisions, actions and behaviors

Organizing theme	Basic Theme	Example of Basic Theme
Balancing Data	**Reading people:** analytically thinks and intuits power dynamics, stakeholder agendas and emotions, and how they come together	"Know who you are around and understand their motivations." (EL13)
		"Try to understand another person's point of view. Get language and don't make them feel bad. I will be a better decision maker if I can. Cultivate understanding by asking questions, reading, listening, eyeball to eyeball. I ask them, 'Who is going to disagree with you and why?' If there is value to the issue and impact, what can we do to change that?'" (EL8)
		"I am cognizant of power relations and power dynamics on the [elected body], as well as with community members at meetings." (EL11)
	Gathering data: technical approaches to gathering information to increase understanding and inform decision making	"Gathering experts who have expertise on an issue, working with their advisors... Do I have enough information?" (EL10)
		"The campaign allowed me to get to know the levers... get to know who the players are. Who are the opponents? There is an element of this to play the game and try not to create enemies. Get reliable information. You have to be like a detective. Your consultants cannot be your detectives." (EL13)
		"Read everything you can get your hands on, especially peer-reviewed, objective data. Talk to researchers and academic experts - not paid advocates. Talk to people experiencing the issue for their opinions and perspectives. Ask people experiencing the issue for their situations. They know the matter better than anybody. Make site visits. Read the people and the dynamics through observation." (EL21)
	Thinking analytically: actively questions merits and validity of information, balances and processes information	"Ask yourself: 'How can I serve? What is the best way? What is best for the city? How can I serve the most people?'" (EL3)
		"I have to take the political landscape into consideration when making decisions. This is an awareness of people mobilized around policy issues [and determining] how strong they are to have influence." (EL13)
		"I believe if you have done your homework and look at all sides of an issue, [you] can explain why you are voting the way you are voting and offer a perspective of why you are doing it." (EL20)
Engage with integrity	**Building partnerships and networks:** identifies commonalities amongst interests and fosters collaboration	"You are only one person and have to get a majority of people to agree with you. You need the ability to convince others." (EL20)
		"With the press, I work to keep them in the loop. I select reporters for key stories and scoops." (EL2)
		"I see everyone as a player. I am not going to define myself. If you are willing to help them, they are willing to help you." (EL13)
		"[I] work with community organizations." (EL11)
	Representation: engages stakeholder to understand needs and is responsive to them; factors in stakeholder needs when making decisions	"Take steps, even in a quiet way, to recognize people." (EL1)
		"Try to respond to everyone, such as emails, from people, including those who may disagree." (EL5)
		"Most of all, they want to know I am listening, engaging and empathetic to their issues." (EL2)
		"I meet with everyone who wants to meet in my district. I never say 'no' to a meeting. If I agree with people, I help them do whatever [they] want to do, and that is what we are there for." (EL9)

Global Theme 4: Ideal World

Needs and perfect scenarios for more effective performance personally and throughout political environments

Organizing theme	Basic Theme	Example of Basic Theme
Time and Space	**Reflection:** self evaluation and analysis free of interruptions	"When stresses, I separate myself and ask myself, 'What is important? What is not important?' Sometimes you are so blinded you need to take a step back and refocus. Stress makes it difficult to focus... After that, I am better. " (EL20)
		"When I am in action mode, I process myself internally. I write it down and reflect on what I've written. I download. Sometimes I get on the computer and get it out. Release energy. What was the reason - and taking the time to step back. I fire off an email and send it to myself first and then read it. I created a second email account to send to myself." (EL6)
	Grounding: uninhibited moments of pause	"Chanting and meditation... I block off time on my calendar for myself and keep it unprogrammed." (EL7)
		"Recognize when you need to carve out time for yourself... I go to the gym. Ideas or answers emerge during zumba class. It is a needed release." (EL5)
		"I go on hikes and put my phone aside, creating a physical barrier." (EL10)
		"Yoga." (EL2)
		"Quiet." (EL6)
	Logistics management: resources, structure and systems to increase effectiveness	"Someone to manage my calendar and schedule, manage my email and manage my paperwork." (EL12)
		There is a lack of public bodies communicating what they are doing... We need to spend a lot of time communicating to the public, and I am wanting to do more." (EL10)
		"Structuring the office more effectively - a Chief of Staff and creating better office management." (EL11)
Support	**Civility:** political environment that is respectful	"There is a willingness to work together and make decisions rather than obstructionism." (EL2)
		"There is a shared commitment to providing the greatest service." (EL3)
		"People put aside personal goals for the common good. How do we get past the Self 1 [with youth] so they believe in a future past 20 and don't need to go around killing people. Spread around the wealth, making it more equitable to combat the feelings of powerlessness around violence." (EL5)
		"What I expect from my colleagues [other elected officials] is a willingness to listen to the other side, to be respectful and to be civil." (EL12)
	Emotional reinforcement:	"Great therapist and being with spiritual friends." (EL7)
		"My husband is wonderful. He tells me to do the best I can. All you have is your vote so vote your conscious. They are going to need your vote again on some other issue." (EL21)
		"... Great people around me - and that is a great wife, great parents, great kids, great staff who understand my priorities and allow me to embrace them. If I didn't have that, nothing would work... And with the support of my family, I can do anything. I can sacrifice a lot." (EL9)
	Honesty: objective feedback and balanced assessment from others	"Having reliable and good friends [is important] because family will love you no matter what and will always be there. Friends across the spectrum to keep you grounded and help you understand your blind spots are very useful... Friends as advisors allowed me to show grace under fire." (EL1)
		"Most elected are married. I am single. I am lacking a personal confidant to process and vent, so I am lacking that nonjudgmental space." (EL8)

APPENDIX C
BLENDED THEORIES

Political effectiveness and authenticity leadership theories report common characteristics that outstanding leaders share. Table 1 presents Hartley and Fletchers' (2005) ten capabilities of political leadership effectiveness (Hartley and Pinder, 2010). The authors conducted a literature review (Hartley, 2002; Morrell and Hartley, 2006), held in excess of 110 interviews with political leaders, facilitated group discussions and interviewed third-party stakeholders from different political arenas for their perceptions of participating political leader's performance (Hartley and Morgan-Thomas, 2003). The capabilities were then further tested by Scottish local political leaders (Hartley and Fletcher, 2007) and operationalized.

Public Sector Values	Demonstrate ethical behaviors
Questioning Thinking	Challenge themselves and others in ideas and suggestions
Decision Making	Effectiveness at making decisions
Personal Effectiveness	Skillfully deals with others; strong self awareness and self management
Strategic Thinking and Action	Think and act strategically in their work
Advocacy and Representation	Skillfully represents others
Political Intelligence	Degree to which members show astuteness and political awareness
Communication	Skills in listening and talking
Organizational Mobilization	Ability to bring about major changes both inside the local authority organization and across partnerships
Systems and Tasks	Degree to which members are able to ensure the implementation of policies and practices

Table 1: Hartley and Fletcher (2005) Ten Capability Dimensions of Effective Political Leadership (Hartley, J. and Pinder, K. (2010). Coaching political leaders. In: Passmore, Jonathan ed. *Leadership Coaching: Working with Leaders to Develop Elite Performance.* London: Kogan Page, p. 164).

Table 2 reflects Avolio and Gardner's (2005) nine dimensions of authentic leadership and its development. The authors conducted a conceptual analysis on authenticity (e.g., Erickson, 1995; Kernis, 2003), authentic leadership (e.g., Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Shamir and Eilam, 2005) and authentic leadership development (e.g., Luthans and Avolio, 2003). They integrated these different perspectives and noted the variances. Through comparison and evaluation, nine authentic leadership dimensions emerged, as listed.

Positive psychological capital	Possesses capacities of confidence, optimism, hope and resilience
Positive moral perspective	Engages in a decision making process that draws from moral capacity, efficacy, courage and resiliency to address ethical issues and achieve consistent actions
Leader self awareness	Understand unique talents, strengths, purpose, core values, beliefs and motivations Includes having an awareness of one's knowledge, experience and capabilities
Leader self regulation	Align values with intentions and actions Exercises self control and internal monitoring
Leadership processes/behaviors	Influences followers through identification, "leading by example", emotional contagion, supporting self determination and positive social exchanges
Follower self awareness/regulation	Open and positive exchanges between leader and followers in pursuit of common goals that reflect shared values
Follower self development	Followers come to know who they are and become more transparent with the leader, whose own development also benefits from honest exchanges
Organizational context	Promotes an inclusive organizational climate that enables themselves and followers to continually learn and grow
Veritable and sustained performance beyond expectations	Draws from values and purpose to foster to achieve ongoing high performance and growth over the long term

Table 2. Authentic leadership sample items (Avolio and Gardner, 2005).

Following interview transcription and coding, results indicated significant overlap between political leadership capabilities and authenticity dimensions. Table 3 reflects the perceived conceptual similarities between political effectiveness and authenticity in Columns 1 and 2. Column 3 reflects the practical application as demonstrated by interviewed political leaders.

Political Effectiveness	Authenticity	Application
Personal Effectiveness Public Service Values	Leader Self Awareness Leader Self Regulation	Master the Internal
Questioning Thinking Decision Making	Positive Moral Perspective	Balance Data
Questioning Thinking Decision Making Strategic Focus and Direction Political Intelligence	Leadership Processes/Behaviors Veritable and Sustained Performance Beyond Expectations	Visualize and Direct Strategically
Communication Organizational Mobilization Advocacy Representation	Follower Self Awareness/Regulation Follower Self Development Organizational Context	Engage with Integrity
Communication Public Service Values Systems and Tasks	Positive Psychological Capital Leadership Processes/Behaviors Follower Self Development Organizational Context	Lead through Change

Table 3. Blended theories reinforced by coded interviewees' experience that translate into practical applications.

APPENDIX D
LIMITATIONS

The topics of political leadership, authenticity and effectiveness are complicated, contextual and subjective. As such, this white paper is not without limitations. As is often the case, such limitations present opportunities for future research.

First, such demographic factors as gender, political party, geography and socioeconomics were not explicitly explored for social construct and potential identity contributors.

Second, a critique within leadership literature (e.g., Yammamino et al., 2008) is an imbalance toward the individual leader versus the follower and or the leader-follower exchange, of which this white paper does not address. Experiences shared were from the political leader's perspective exclusively. Given both the exploratory nature of this study and intended focus of the political leader's perceived experience, this approach makes sense.

Third, and similarly, another limitation is that interviews capture how the political leaders felt at the time of the interview. Both authentic leadership and political leadership theories note that leadership is a dynamic social process and highly situational based on environment, people and context. Political leaders selected and shared testimonials and stories based on where they were on that given day, which is subject to vary given different circumstances. Additionally, without the leader-follower exchange and different periods of time to draw comparisons, the experiences are not measured and subject to further analysis. It is recommended for further research to conduct a longitudinal study with subjects over a term (estimated at four to six years) to track the development, patterns, tensions and consistencies within the respective political leader's navigation tactics and consistency with shared values, vision and intrinsic motivations.

Fourth, the researcher also recommends triangulating interview data with empirical 360 degree feedback from team members, family and friends, colleagues, partners, stakeholders from the various political arenas and opponents to provide context to how the political leader is feeling and perceiving their experience and how it is received from others as perceived effectiveness makers based on third parties. Engaging other stakeholders across political arenas in a triangulated approach would offer contextual factors and address another shortcoming of this report, which is a normative perspective.

Fifth, there is a greater need for empirical and measurable data to substantiate and grow the discipline's foundation (Möller and Shierenbeck, 2009). Additionally, expanding the sample to other regions throughout the United States amongst municipal, county, state and federal political leaders offers significant opportunity. Access remains a challenge given the sensitivity of the sample group.

Lastly, implications for the impacts of political leaders' well-being on the trust and sustained performance on a community also present opportunities for further research, particularly given the paradox and subjectivity of what connotes construed 'effectiveness' in today's new media age (Helms, 2012). There are implications that authentic political leadership is mutually advantageous for the individual leader and one's ability to influence, mobilize collective action toward legislative goals and secure elected authority because of stronger relationships, trust and follower action, though purely speculative at this stage and not addressed within the scope of this white paper. This is recommended as an area for additional research.

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Appendix C – Blended Theories

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