

**OPENNESS, TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP,
AND INDIVIDUAL CHANGE READINESS**

by

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A thesis

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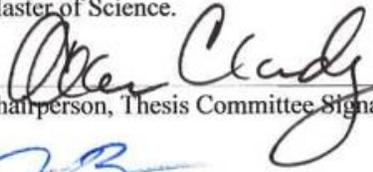
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December, 2015

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Jennifer Streb entitled Openness, Transformational Leadership, and Individual Change Readiness has been approved by the thesis committee as satisfactorily completing the thesis requirements for the degree Master of Science.



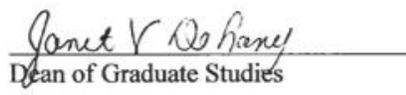
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Abstract

Openness, Transformational Leadership, and Individual Change Readiness

Jennifer Streb

This study tested the effects of openness and transformational leadership on individual change readiness. Undergraduate students (N = 84) were tested using an adaptation of Morizot's the Big Five Personality Trait Short Questionnaire (2014). Participants were given a change scenario on the day of the experiment, either with a condition of transformational leadership or no transformational leadership. Then participants completed an adaptation of the Work Preferences Index and Change Assessment survey in order to establish a readiness score. Multiple regression analysis found the overall model of predictors of openness, leadership condition, and the interaction of the two predicted individual change readiness. Openness scores positively predicted readiness scores, but there were no other significant main effects or interaction effects. Problems with the validity of the leadership variable could explain these outcomes.

Key words: openness, individual change readiness, transformational leadership

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Openness, Transformational Leadership, and Individual Change Readiness

During times of fast-paced changes, many organizations must adapt in order to maintain their competitive edge. While organizational change occurs more frequently, the majority of these organizational change efforts fail, with the current failure rate estimated around 70% (Burnes and Jackson, 2011). Recent research findings attribute failure to leadership mistakes and individual failure to accept and adjust (Burnes and Jackson, 2011; Chee, 2014). Furthermore, leader failure to properly prepare and execute the change may also hinder success (Kotter and Cohen, 2002).

Change readiness is a type of employee reaction to change that indicates a high level of commitment to helping change efforts succeed (Oreg, Vakola, and Armenakis, 2011; McKay, Kuntz, and Naswall, 2013). Change readiness is a construct that applies to both individuals and organizations (Vakola, 2013). However, this paper will primarily focus on assessing change readiness at the individual level.

Individual change readiness refers to the commitment of the change recipient for the organizational change effort(s), and is a phenomenon that is influenced by both individual differences and organizational factors (Oreg et al., 2011). Vakola (2013) claims that a person who displays change readiness will act in a way that encompasses support for the change. Armenakis and Harris (2009) determined that in order for individuals to be ready for change, they must think that the change is necessary and appropriate, believe in their leadership, trust that change will benefit them as individuals, and display belief that they can personally carry out the necessary actions to make the

change successful. Researchers have questioned whether readiness for change is dependent on individual difference factors, leadership practices, or some combination of the two (Holt and Vardaman, 2013; Oreg et al., 2011, Kotter and Cohen, 2002).

Personality

The Five-Factor Model is the accepted framework for identifying the personality traits openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Individuals who display a high score on the openness factor are said to be open-minded and creative. Those who display a high score on the conscientiousness factor tend to be responsible and dependable. Individuals receiving high scores in extraversion are generally more outgoing and friendly. Those who display a high level of agreeableness tend to be generous and kind, and those who score highly on neuroticism tend to have issues regulating emotion (Zacher, 2014).

Using the personality traits from the original Five-Factor Model, Alessandri and Vecchione (2012) developed a “higher-order” model of personality traits for the workplace. They divided the traits into the two sets of predictors for stability and plasticity. Conscientiousness, emotional stability, and agreeableness encompass the stability predictor, whereas openness and extraversion predict plasticity. In order to test the new model, Alessandri and Vecchione (2012) tested individuals working at an insurance company. The first study included 101 participants, and the second included 202 participants, all of whom completed a questionnaire on the personality traits from the Five-Factor Model. The researchers assessed job performance using HR files. The results

of both studies revealed that the stability predictors were a better predictor of job performance. Furthermore, Alessandri and Vecchione (2012) noted the importance of openness in organizational settings, citing that openness serves as a predictive trait. Thus, the role of openness in change readiness is further examined.

Openness. In a time of constant change in both individual career paths and organizational strategy, adaptability is necessary (Zacher, 2014). Zacher (2014) studied career adaptability and personality factors, including openness, in a survey of 659 full time employees. In order to test the hypothesis that openness is a predictor of individual adaptability within career, participants completed questionnaires on self-evaluations and personality traits. They also provided information about changes in career, and their exhibited ability to change in dimensions of confidence, curiosity, control, and concern. As expected, the findings included a moderately significant correlation between openness and adaptability. That is, the personality trait of openness predicted career adaptability.

Those who display high levels of openness typically tend to be open-minded and adaptable (Zacher, 2014). To develop a measure of resistance to change (arguably, the opposite to change readiness), Oreg (2003) tested aspects of openness and change reactions in 224 volunteers. Participants were 102 women and 122 men who participated in surveys rating individual levels of cognitive rigidity, short-term focus, and close-mindedness. The results showed that these traits were significantly negatively related to openness, and that the measure was reliable. Oreg's (2003) measure holds implications for practitioners in organizations. For example, high scores on cognitive rigidity, short-

term focus, and close-mindedness can be comparable to low scores in openness. This could be used as a tool for selection of personnel in the hiring phase, as well as discovering those who may benefit from training programs (Oreg, 2003).

Additionally, openness can be dissected further in order to find traits that act as predictors. Wanberg and Banas (2000) used a 7-item openness scale, reports of intention to quit, and reports of job satisfaction as part of a longitudinal study using 133 employees of the National Association of Housing Redevelopment. The results of the study found that predictors of openness included self-esteem, optimism, and perceived control. High levels of these predictors yielded an outcome of openness as a positive view of change and change acceptance. Those with low levels of change acceptance reported less job satisfaction and higher intention to quit.

Retaining employees who are committed to the organization is especially important during the potentially unstable times of change. In a study of 21 government agencies undergoing organizational change, McKay, Kuntz, and Naswall. (2013) gave participants questionnaires measuring affective commitment, leadership communication, readiness for change, and resistance to change. The researchers found a positive correlation between affective commitment and change readiness, emphasizing that those employees who are committed to the organization are going to be more likely to be more open-minded and ready to adjust (McKay et al., 2013).

Openness is a personality trait that is also connected to individual values (Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, and Knafo, 2002). In organizations, individual values influence

openness to change and organizational commitment behaviors exhibited during change (Seppala, Lipponen, Bardi, and Pirttia-Backman, 2010). Roccas et al. (2002) studied personality traits and personal values in an academic organization in Israel. Participants were 246 psychology students who completed a personality measure based on the Five-Factor Model, and then rated personality traits in order of personal importance. Roccas et al. (2002) found that openness values were negatively correlated with conformity values. Thus, those who value openness will be more open-minded. This finding holds implications for organizational change in conjunction with those findings of Seppala et al. (2010), as those who are more open will behave in manners that will be supportive of change.

As mentioned, Seppala et al. (2010) studied openness to change as a predictor of organizational citizenship behavior during organizational change. They hypothesized that values that define openness to change would be positively related to positive behaviors performed in the organization during change. In a study of 285 employees and supervisors of both a restaurant chain and a social service provider in Finland, employees rated their personal values, and supervisors rated their employees on organizational citizenship behavior performance during change. Seppala et al. (2010) found a significant interaction between openness and change-oriented behaviors. That is, those who valued openness to change displayed more organizational citizenship behaviors. Because change happens so often, knowing when employees will be willing to participate is beneficial, and can help organizations gain traction for upcoming change.

One criticism of openness as a predictor of change behavior is that openness may not be the best trait to use, because those people may be too extreme in openness, and not be able to follow through with tasks or change oriented behavior (Marinova, Peng, Lorinkova, Dyne, and Chiaburu, 2015). Instead, Marinova et al. (2015) carried out a meta-analysis focusing on a type of personality trait that they refer to as proactive, which encompasses openness, the ability to find and solve problems, and opportunity recognition. The researchers found that the proactive personality does predict change-oriented behaviors. This implies that change readiness involves a combination of factors, but the individual characteristics still play a crucial role.

Finally, openness can be used as a predictor of future behavior in an organization. Nieß and Zacher (2015) used The Household, Income and Labor Dynamics, a national Australian panelist study that surveys a representation of individuals as part of a longitudinal study about openness and job change. They found that over the course of time, individuals who measured as open to experiences tended to change jobs within their organizations by way of moving to managerial and leadership positions.

In summary, as one of the Big Five personality traits, openness has been studied in the context of change readiness. While some may argue that openness as a trait does not serve as a predictor (Marinova, et. al., 2015), there is evidence that openness is connected with individual change-oriented behaviors (Seppala et al., 2013). Additionally, openness is connected to career adaptability (Zacher, 2014) and can be used to indicate

those in an organization who will exhibit individual change readiness in a form of career development (Nieß and Zacher, 2015).

Leadership

According to Lutz Allen, Smith, and DaSilva (2013), organizations need to create a work environment that allows change. That is, although individuals play a large role in change success, it is organizational leadership that creates the climate that allows those individuals to develop in the direction of change readiness.

In particular, successful change has been linked to transformational leadership. In the *Heart of Change*, Kotter and Cohen (2002) advised leaders that in order to create successful change, they must exhibit the actions and practices associated with transformational leadership. These include “establishing a sense of urgency,” “creating a guiding team,” “creating a vision,” “communicating the vision effectively,” “remove obstacles,” “celebrate small victories,” “keep pushing,” and “implant the change into the new culture” (Kotter and Cohen, 2002, p. 2). These steps are quite often used to help define leadership, and play that role in many of the following mentioned studies.

For example, Inandi, Tunc and Gilic (2013) examined leadership in the education system in order to see which styles predict particular change reaction behaviors. In a study of 287 leaders in elementary, middle, and high schools, administrators completed questionnaire scales on both resistance to change and leadership style. The types of leadership styles assessed included autocratic, democratic, laissez-fair, transactional, and transformational leadership. The change scale included items assessing routine seeking,

emotional reaction to change, short-term focus, and cognitive rigidity. The results showed a significant negative correlation between transformational leadership style and routine-seeking and short-term focus. Transformational leaders exemplified visionary behaviors, embraced change, and allowed individual members of the organization to participate and engage in that change. In this way, transformational leaders aided in opening the door to new possibilities and assisted employees in being focused on the big picture.

Similarly, Lyons, Swindler, and Offner (2009) argued that visionary leadership affects how organizational members view change efforts. The researchers performed a web-based study, and recruited 395 members of the US Air Force as participants. The questionnaires contained scales that determined employee rating of senior leadership, rating of immediate supervisor, rating of the general Air Force leadership, and the employee intentions of engagement in an upcoming change. Their analysis found that leadership played a significant role in intention to engage in change. Most notably, the researchers found that the role of senior management was significant. Their study supports the idea that successful change projects depend upon the visible support of senior management.

Change efforts are also more effective when members are encouraged to be personally invested in the organization. Nordin (2011) studied leadership and change support in a Malaysian educational institution. The study involved 169 participants who completed a change assessment with questions about commitment and leadership. Findings included a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership,

employee commitment, and change readiness. In short, transformational leadership behaviors, like those identified by Kotter and Cohen (2002), as well as attention to individual employee development, can assist in helping employees feel connected to the organization, and be more ready for change (Nordin, 2011).

Additionally, organizational change projects are unique to some extent, and leadership qualities needed might also be distinctive, depending on the setting. For example, Hechanova and Cementina-Olpoc (2012) aimed to study leadership differences in higher education and business settings. Participants were 365 individuals at an institution of higher education, and 267 individuals working in business; they rated their leaders on transformational leader qualities, such as “inspiring a shared vision” and “modeling the way.” They also completed a 6 –item questionnaire, rating their commitment to organizational change. They found that there were significant differences between the higher education and business environments. Those working in higher education rated their leaders significantly higher in transformational qualities. They also displayed higher levels of change commitment. Thus, the researchers concluded that leadership mediated individual commitment to change, particularly in environments where leaders displayed higher transformational qualities.

Most notably, organizational change is dependent on the climate and interactions among individual members and leadership. In a study of 178 members of faith-based organizations, Lutz Allen et al. (2013) tested leadership style and psychological climate for change readiness. Parishioners completed a 36-item leadership style questionnaire,

rating their leaders on their leadership style qualities, particularly their transformational leader behaviors, such as whether leaders exemplified visionary qualities. Similarly, there were also questions rating transactional qualities, such as to what extent the leadership providing assistance in tasks, and questions about the leader demonstrating laissez-faire qualities, such as avoiding decision-making. The psychological climate for change readiness measure included asking participants to answer questions rating their personal extent of change readiness. Using a multiple regression analysis, they found a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership behaviors and change readiness. Interestingly, laissez-faire leadership was negatively related to change readiness. In their discussion, the researchers emphasized that leadership does play a role in individual change readiness, as leadership can contribute to the overall organizational environment, and individual psychological climate. Thus, leaders should work to inspire individuals in order to create a climate of change readiness.

In summary, leadership affects the change readiness of the employees in an organization (Lutz Allen et al., 2013). Particular leadership behaviors that take into consideration the individual qualities of employees in individual settings are connected to individual commitment (Hechanova and Cementina-Olpoc, 2012; Nordin, 2011). Finally, transformational leadership behaviors, such as acting as a visionary and exhibiting support for the change affect how individual employees view change (Lyons, Swindler, and Offner, 2009).

The Present Study

In general, then, due to the high failure rate of organizational change projects, it is constructive to observe why change fails, and how change can succeed. As mentioned, individual change readiness is linked to successful organizational change (Vakola, 2013; Oreg et al., 2011). Prior research points to several separate predictors of change readiness. However, there are no known studies that test the interactive effects of individual openness and transformational leadership support as variables that predict individual change readiness. The present exploratory study was designed in order to test these two specific predictors.

Individual openness predicts positive employee behaviors (Seppala et al., 2010), employee retention (Wanberg and Banas, 2000), and commitment during change (Zacher, 2014; McKay et al., 2013). Therefore, I hypothesized that high levels of openness would also predict individual change readiness. Transformational leadership creates a supportive climate for organizational change (Lyons et al., 2009), as well as affective commitment during change (Hechanova and Cementina-Olpoc, 2012). Thus, I hypothesized that transformational leadership would predict individual change readiness. Finally transformational leadership has been linked to the creation of a positive work environment (Lutz Allen et al., 2013), and those who are more open-minded remain committed during change (Zacher, 2014; McKay et al., 2013). Therefore, I hypothesized an interaction between openness and leadership. Specifically that openness scores and the leadership condition would predict individual change readiness.

Method

Participants. Participants were 84 psychology undergraduates, (age 18-22, $M = 19.3$, $SD = 2.31$), recruited using the research pool at Towson University. Twenty-two participants identified as male, 61 participants identified as female, and one participant identified as other. The majority of participants (65%) described their previous work experience as falling between one and five years while 20% described their work experience as less than one year. About a third of participants (32%) with work experience reported working in food and beverage organizations, though sales, hospitality, education, and government industries were also reported. Only 8% of participants reported they had never been employed. Those who completed the study received extra credit.

Procedure. The participants were told that this was a study about the personality trait of openness and its relationship with individual change readiness. When the participants accessed the research pool website to view the study, they were asked to complete a pretest before being allowed to enroll in this study. The pretest was a ten question measure on openness ($\alpha = .83$), adapted from Morizot's (2014) the Big Five Personality Trait Short Questionnaire (Appendix A). Participants were asked to rate how much they agreed with statements relating to themselves on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In this way, only those who scored in the high or low end of openness to sign up for the study. Because openness is normally distributed, screening for those who show either high or low scores on the test allowed the testing of openness.

The pretest also contained some questions involving age, gender, and employment experience (Appendix A).

Those who scored 30 or above, or 20 or below on the openness measure were allowed to continue to sign up for the study. A total of 66 participants had a high openness score, and 18 participants had a low openness score. On the day of the experiment, the participants met face to face and were randomly assigned into two groups. The randomly assigned experimental group, which was given the leadership intervention, was comprised of 41 participants, and the control group was made up of 43 participants. The groups were decided based on the randomly assigned packet, which included the informed consent form, the instructions, either the experimental scenario or the control scenario, and the readiness evaluation. The participants were not aware of the presence of a condition other than their own until the experiment was completed and the researcher debriefed them.

The experimental group received a scenario, asking them to imagine they work at the fictitious company undergoing an organizational change. They then read a transcript from the president of the company, discussing the change using transformational leadership qualities. The control group received the same scenario, except that the change was be discussed in a short memo style announcement, as opposed to the transcript from the transformational leader. The differences in the scenarios were meant exhibit the visionary and supportive behaviors that were tied to commitment in the studies reviewed

(Lyons, Swindler, and Offner, 2009) in contrast to no supportive or visionary behaviors (Appendix B).

Finally, both the experimental and control groups were asked to complete the change readiness assessment (Appendix C) adapted from Work Preferences Index and Change Assessment Survey (Clardy, 2013). This assessment is adapted to assess how ready for change participants will be after reading the scenarios by asking them to rate how they feel about the upcoming change by responding to ten questions using a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) Participants were be asked to notify the experimenter when they are finished at the end of the experiment.

Results

In order to test the effects of openness and transformational leadership on individual change readiness, a series of analyses were completed. It should be noted that when reviewing the Readiness measure, the researcher felt it necessary to remove question 1 “ I work best in stable conditions with clearly defied goals and rewards,” as the question did not appear to correctly quantify individual change readiness. Thus, the Readiness measure was reduced to nine items ($\alpha = .78$).

Additionally, it should be noted that the number of participants who had low openness scores was much lower than those who had high openness. There were only 18 participants with low openness scores, which was not significant enough to analyze openness as a dichotomy. Because of this, openness was analyzed on a continuum. Multiple regression analysis was performed to assess the predictors of openness and

leadership condition on individual change readiness. The R^2 was .18, which was significant as the results indicated an overall significant effect of openness, leadership condition, and the interaction of openness and leadership style on individual change readiness, $F(3,83) = 5.79, p < .05$. The R^2 indicated that the predictors accounted for 18% of the variance in the outcome measure.

Additional analysis of the individual predictors revealed a significant positive effect of openness ($M = 37.99, SD = 6.45$), $t(3, 83) = 4.07, p < .05$. Openness acted as a positive predictor of individual change readiness ($\beta = .413, p < .05$). However, the leadership condition was not a significant predictor ($M = 32.81, SD = 4.94$), as $t(3, 83) = .107, p > .05$, nor was the interaction as $t(3, 83) = .057, p > .05$ (See Table 1).

Table 1

Openness and Leadership Condition as Predictors of Individual Change Readiness

	Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	32.839	.499		65.855	.000
	Openness Average Score	2.041	.502	.413	4.068	.000
	Leadership Condition	.526	.499	.107	1.054	.295
	Openness * Leadership	.284	.502	.057	.566	.573

Discussion

The present study tested the effects of the personality trait of openness, and transformational leadership style on individual readiness for change using a quasi-

experimental post-test control group design. The overall model of openness, leadership condition, and the interaction of the two as predictors was significant. In accordance with previous research on openness, openness served as a predictor of readiness scores (Seppala et al., 2010). That is, the higher individual openness scores predicted the higher individual change readiness scores, and the lower openness score predicted the lower individual change readiness scores. However, the second hypothesis was not supported, as the transformational leadership intervention in the fictitious company played no noticeable role on the students' readiness for change. This is in contrast to previous research, which says that leadership plays a significant role in intention to engage in change (Lyons, et al., 2009). There was also no interaction effect between openness and transformational leadership, failing to support the third hypothesis. Thus, the strongest predictor of individual change readiness was the openness score.

Implications. Despite being a quasi-experimental study in a university setting, the results of this study have implications for organizations. Undergraduate students are presumably the next generation of the workforce. Organizations often use personality traits to gauge and predict employee future success. This connection between openness and individual change readiness can be informative to those who are working in industries that experience change on a regular basis and want to properly place employees in areas that experience the most change.

Furthermore, in the selection process, HR professionals often focus on providing applicants with a realistic job preview and job description in order to be sure they know

what the job will be like. It would be make sense that taking the time to get to know the employees strengths on a deeper level would be a way for the organization to get a realistic preview of the individual applicant or employee.

Finally, personality characteristics, such as openness, can be correlated with individual job change, particularly with promotion into management positions (Neil and Zacher, 2015). That being said, if openness is measured in the workplace, industries could potentially identify employees who are open and ready enough to make a change, and rise up to a higher position within the organization. Growth and development of the individual will potentially contribute to organizational commitment.

Limitations. There were no significant connections between leadership and change readiness, and this could be accounted for by the flawed implementation of transformational leadership as an independent variable. Participants simply read a message from a fictitious leader in a fictitious company that asked them to imagine they are part of that organization. Then, the participants are asked to read a message being delivered by the head of the organization. This requires imagination, and may not have created the same effect that a transformational leader would have in person, or in one's own organization.

Given more time and planning, it would have served as more effective to first do a pilot test of the independent variable of leadership and the manner in which it was manipulated. If this had occurred, it would have been obvious that the scenario did not properly reflect the difference in leadership that was desired.

Furthermore, there is also a threat of external validity in that the fact that the participants were undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 22 could have also played a role in the results. The participants generally did report some work experience, with 20% of participants reported working for 1 year or less. There is a possibility that some participants have never faced organizational change, or any real examples of leadership, and could not create the situation in their imagination, or answer the questions accurately. In short, the sample was not a very strong representation of the population.

If the study were to be repeated, it would be ideal to increase the sample size, and to do so with a sample of individuals with all ages and work experiences. In this manner, it may be possible that the participants would relate the leadership intervention to something in their own lives, in order to better understand. Perhaps a scenario using a script with actors being videotaped could bring a more realistic feel and create a stronger test of leadership.

Finally, the overall formula of predictors did prove significant in predicting individual change readiness. Therefore, it would be interesting in future research to test a larger range of various predictors of individual change readiness, and then to focus in on the few most significant.

Conclusion. Using a quasi-experimental design with 84 undergraduate students, three hypotheses were examined. The first hypothesis that openness would be associated with individual change readiness was supported, while the second hypothesis that leadership would be associated with individual change readiness, and the third that a

reaction between openness and leadership would be associated with individual change readiness were not. Problems with the leadership variable cast doubt as to the validity of those outcomes, though.

Despite the fact that a transformational leadership style appeared to have no significant effect on change readiness, it is still necessary to find a practical and reliable method for helping employees navigate change. There is still a need for more research in leadership, but it is possible to see that individual characteristics do play a role in organizations.

Appendix A IRB Approval**APPROVAL NUMBER: 15-A035**

To: Jennifer Streb
8000 York Road
Towson MD 21252

From: Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human
Subjects Beth Merryman, Member

Date: Monday, December 29, 2014

RE: Application for Approval of Research Involving the Use of
Human Participants

Office of Sponsored Programs
& Research

Towson University
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252-0001

t. 410 704-2236
f. 410 704-4494

Thank you for submitting an Application for Approval of Research Involving the Use of Human Participants to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants (IRB) at Towson University. The IRB hereby approves your proposal titled:

Openness, transformational leadership and individual change readiness

If you should encounter any new risks, reactions, or injuries while conducting your research, please notify the IRB. Should your research extend beyond one year in duration, or should there be substantive changes in your research protocol, you will need to submit another application for approval at that time.

We wish you every success in your research project. If you have any questions, please call me at (410) 704-2236.

CC: Alan Clardy
File



Date: Monday, December 29, 2014

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

TO: Jennifer Streb **DEPT:** PSYC

PROJECT TITLE: *Openness, transformational leadership and individual change readiness*

SPONSORING AGENCY: None

APPROVAL NUMBER: 15-A035

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants has approved the project described above. Approval was based on the descriptive material and procedures you submitted for review. Should any changes be made in your procedures, or if you should encounter any new risks, reactions, injuries, or deaths of persons as participants, you must notify the Board.

A consent form: is is not required of each participant

Assent: is is not required of each participant

This protocol was first approved on: 29-Dec-2014

This research will be reviewed every year from the date of first approval.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Beth Merryman", with the initials "(SOP)" written in parentheses to the right of the signature.

Beth Merryman, Member
Towson University Institutional Review Board

Appendix B Informed Consent

Principal Investigator: Jennifer Streb, HRD Master's Student, Towson University

I am examining the personality trait of openness and its relationship with individual change readiness. In this study, you will be asked to complete some demographic information, as well as a measure of the trait of openness. Next, you will be asked to read a prompt that describes a scenario. Finally, you will complete a measure of individual change readiness.

There are no known risks associated with participating in the study. Should you become distressed or uncomfortable, we will terminate the session immediately. The study should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete and you will receive 1 Research pool credit for your participation.

Participants must be at least 18 years old.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You do not have to participate in the study. If you choose to participate, you may discontinue your participation at any time. Your decision to participate or not to participate will not influence your grade or class standing.

All information about your responses will remain confidential. We will not show your information to anyone outside of our research team. Your responses will temporarily be linked to your name so that we can match your responses to the online prescreen survey to the data that you provide in the lab today. The link between your name and your data will be destroyed as soon as we match your responses.

If you have any questions, you may ask them now or at any time during the study. If you should have questions after today, you can call (410) 704-2236 for the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants at Towson University. You may also contact the researcher, Jennifer Streb at jstreb1@students.towson.edu or 443-827-3074. Finally, you may contact Dr. Alan Clardy at aclardy@towson.edu or by phone at 410-704-3069.

I, _____ affirm that I have read and understand the above statements and have had all of my questions answered.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY.

Appendix C
Openness Measure and Respondent Profile

Measure Adapted from Big Five Personality Trait Short Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: Please respond to each of the following statements by writing your answer using the scale from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "5 = Strongly agree."

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

- ___ 1. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.
- ___ 2. I take risks.
- ___ 3. I find myself challenging the way things are always done.
- ___ 4. I consider myself open-minded.
- ___ 5. I do not have a good imagination.
- ___ 6. I am quick to adapt.
- ___ 7. I appreciate complexity.
- ___ 8. I consider myself creative.
- ___ 9. I am curious.
- ___ 10. I prefer when work is routine.

Respondent Profile**1. What is your age?**

- A. 18-24
- B. 25-34
- C. 35- 44
- D. 45-54
- E. 55-64
- F. 65-74
- G. 75 or above
- H. Prefer not to answer

2. Gender

- A. Female
- B. Male
- C. Transgender
- D. Prefer not to answer

3. How many years work experience do you have?

- A. Less than 1 year
- B. 1 year to 5 years
- C. 6 years to 10 years
- D. More than 10 years

4. If you are currently employed, please specify in which industry.

- A. Finance
- B. Technology
- C. Food and beverage
- D. Education
- E. Sales
- F. Other, please specify _____
- G. Not currently employed

Appendix D

Experimental Change Scenario

Participant # _____

Smith and Maguire Services

Overview

For this section of the study, please pretend that you work for the fictional company Smith and Maguire Services. In order to remain successful and part of a competitive market, Smith and Maguire is facing some upcoming changes, which will affect the employees. The President of Smith and Maguire is meeting with groups of employees to explain the upcoming changes and what they mean. The following page explains the changes. After reading the scenario, please complete the questionnaire provided.

Please remember to keep in mind that for the purposes of this experiment, you are an employee at Smith and Maguire.

Please Read the Scenario Below, a Transcript of the President's discussion about the upcoming changes.

President: Good afternoon all. As you may have heard, our market is quickly changing. In order to remain as successful as we have been, we need to make efforts to continue to strive to be the best.

In the next few weeks, we will be upgrading our systems. I have already been working with the new system for the past week, processing data in a new way. I can tell you first hand that although it is different, the new system is just what we need to take our great company to the next level.

Our vision here at Smith and Maguire services has always been to provide the best for our customers. These new changes will help us to take our service to the next level. Please join me in taking the time to learn and improve, in order to provide the best service in the business.

Over the next few days, the new programs will be installed on your laptops. Training courses will be given between noon and 2 pm. I will be attending each course, and will personally answer any questions you may have. Let's make this our newest great feat!

We will go live by the end of the season, but we will work together to set small goals along the way.

I look forward to working with you.

Appendix E**Control Change Scenario**

Participant # _____

Smith and Maguire Services

Overview

For this section of the study, please pretend that you work for the fictional company Smith and Maguire Services. In order to remain successful and part of a competitive market, Smith and Maguire is facing some upcoming changes, which will affect the employees. After reading the scenario, please complete the questionnaire provided.

Please remember to keep in mind that for the purposes of this experiment, you are an employee at Smith and Maguire.

Please read the scenario below, a memo from the President of Smith and Maguire about the upcoming change.

Good afternoon:

New processing systems will be installed this week on all company computers. We will begin training courses next week. Please sign up for a course on the sign-up sheet posted on the door of the main conference room.

We expect to go live by the end of the season. If you have any questions, please direct them to 410-777-5125.

Thank you.

Appendix F

Change Readiness Measure

Adapted from Work Preferences Index and Change Assessment Survey

INSTRUCTIONS: Please respond to each of the following statements by writing your answer using the scale from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "5 = Strongly agree." Keep in mind that you are an employee at Smith and Maguire Services. Please refer to the provided scenario, and answer the questions regarding the change with the scenario in mind.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

- ___ 1. I work best in stable conditions with clearly defined goals and rewards.
- ___ 2. This change at work means doing activities that waste time.
- ___ 3. Generally, this change in the workplace is a good thing.
- ___ 4. This change makes me upset.
- ___ 5. The proposed change will be important to the future.
- ___ 6. I would be very willing to give the change a try.
- ___ 7. I like to do the same things in a job rather than try new ones.
- ___ 8. I like it when my job changes.
- ___ 9. I can find ways for the changes at this company to personally benefit me.
- ___ 10. The proposed changes will make the workplace more chaotic.

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CURRICULUM VITA

NAME: Jennifer Streb

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PROGRAM OF STUDY: Human Resources Development

DEGREE AND DATE TO BE CONFERRED: Master of Science, 2015

<u>Collegiate institutions</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Date of Degree</u>
Towson University	2012-2015	Master of Science	December, 2015
Towson University	2007-2015	Bachelor of Science	August, 2015

Major: Human Resources Development

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Arts Integration Institute Assistant **January 2013 present**
 Undergraduate first year academic advising assistance
 Undergraduate theatre course teaching assistant
 Administrative duties, including contract initiation, research, travel coordination, and organization of grants
 Assessment, data analysis, evaluation and assessment of Arts Integration Institute PBC Program

Towson University Financial Services

Student Financial Services ***September 2010 - present***
 Responsible for training and leading three to four student workers
 Provide assistance to student workers during new hire sessions in filling out tax forms, direct deposit, and explaining pay schedules
 Collaborate with Non Resident Alien Tax services to assist NRA’s in new hire positions and tax prep
 Process new hire paperwork and changes
 Knowledge and training in Financial Literacy

Communicate with on-campus student workers via social networks

Payroll

January 2008 - August 2010

Enter new hire information into PeopleSoft

Enter pay rate changes and terminations

Answer questions regarding payroll checks and job changes

Train new student workers

Communicate with Central Payroll Bureau for payroll and termination purposes

Accounts Payable

February 2012 - May 2012

Knowledge and understanding of miscellaneous expenses and consultant agreements

Help Line

Scan invoices into ImageNow

Verify Vendors and W9s

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

The Society of Industrial Organizational Psychology
