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# Positivity and Positive Reinforcement in Organizational Culture at Nazarene Higher Education Institutions

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POSITIVITY AND POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONAL  
CULTURE AT NAZARENE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

by

Brian W. Parker

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of

Olivet Nazarene University

School of Graduate and Continuing Studies

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Ethical Leadership


May 2011

POSITIVITY AND POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONAL  
CULTURE AT NAZARENE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS


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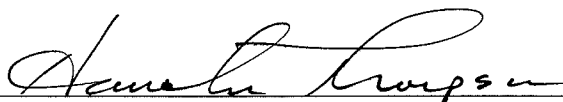
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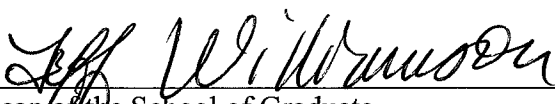
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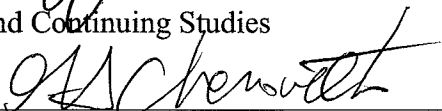
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## DEDICATION

This study and work is dedicated to my parents, Wayne and Judy Parker, and to my sister Gina Braschler, who have modeled grace-filled living and a positive, encouraging, and supportive manner of being throughout my entire life. I am and will always be profoundly grateful to the three of you for your love, generosity, and kindness. I am so blessed by our family and extremely proud to be a part of you.

## ABSTRACT

by

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Given the importance of employee motivation, satisfaction, productivity, and retention, as well as the support for positivity in the review of the literature, this study examined the effects of positivity and positive reinforcement in organizational culture, through the lens of admissions professionals, at the eight Nazarene Higher Education Institutions (NHEI) within the United States. The study also examined the effects of the perceived positivity of leaders in organizational culture, in the same context. The findings revealed some signs of positivity among NHEI admissions professionals, but no evidence was revealed regarding the consistent use of positive reinforcement in these settings. The perceived positivity of administrators was determined to be important to these NHEI admissions professionals.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

One need not look too deeply into the current canon of academic and popular literature regarding organizational culture and corporate communication to discover a growing affinity toward positivity and positive reinforcement in the workplace. In fact, positivity is not only espoused as an ideal management style for organizational achievement but also as an important step toward personal health and relational success.

With employee turnover rates in the United States at an all time high, it seemed necessary and urgent to explore theories for improving the productivity, effectiveness, retention and satisfaction of persons at work. According to Denzin, Lindesmith and Strauss (1999), employees are profoundly dissatisfied with their work environment and often they are not even sure why. Although many employers and managers still ascribe to a top down approach to management and may view the use of positivity as soft, unproductive or lacking necessary control, Mowday, Shapiro and Steers (2004) indicated that this authoritarian style of leadership is simply less than effective with the American workforce in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. People generally perform better when they are motivated rather than managed. An organic organizational culture, where all participants are encouraged to utilize their full giftedness, is the new emerging model for successful, thriving companies. This study attempted to address the problem of employee dissatisfaction and explored the connection between employee satisfaction and positivity

in organizational behavior. This study focused especially on the role of positivity concerning building small, effective teams within the context of higher education.

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to examine employee satisfaction, retention and productivity; to explore the connectivity between positivity and employee performance; and to assess the impact of positivity and positive reinforcement in organization behavior at selected Nazarene Higher Education Institutions. In summary, the specific purpose of this research was to answer the following question: Is there a relationship between positivity and positive reinforcement and job performance? The scope of this research attempted to address the research questions through research of employee motivation and incentive systems within the context of the nonprofit industry and more specifically Nazarene Higher Education Institutions (NHEI).

According to Scheer (2009), there is “scant information that this researcher could find regarding factors that motivate admissions office personnel charged with the task of recruiting new students to their schools” (p. 6). As such, this research intended to illuminate the general effect and the degrees of success of some of the factors and practices that are employed to motivate admissions recruiters. Again, according to Scheer:

Admissions recruiters at colleges and universities are specifically precluded by the code of ethical practices established by the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) from receiving incentive pay that is a function of the number of students recruited to their respective schools. (p. 7)

Therefore, many of the commonly used motivational tactics to incentivize and motivate the salespersons such as commissions or profit-sharing are not available to the admissions personnel of NHEI. This context provides a rich environment for this research because it “simultaneously confounds, countervails and controls for the impact of motivational forces on employees” (p. 7).

The code of conduct of admissions recruiters runs contrary to the conclusions of much of the research regarding motivational theory in organizational behavior because some of the most commonly used extrinsic motivational tools of incentives and gains-sharing are unavailable. Therefore, the research attempted to analyze the effects of positivity and positive reinforcement in the workplace as a way of compensate for the lack of these motivational tools.

### Background

Positivity is necessary for an effective leader. Buckingham and Clifton (2001) framed positivity in this way:

You are generous with praise, quick to smile, and always on the lookout for positive in the situation. Some call you lighthearted. Others just wish their glass were as full as yours seems to be. But either way, people want to be around you. Their world looks better around you because your enthusiasm is contagious. Lacking your energy and optimism, some find their world drab with repetition or, worse, heavy with pressure. You seem to find a way to lighten their spirit. You always inject drama into every project. You celebrate every achievement. You find ways to make everything more exciting and more vital. Some cynics may reject your energy, but you are rarely dragged down. Your positivity won't allow

it. Somehow you can't quite escape your conviction that it is good to be alive, one must never lose one's sense of humor. (p. 109)

Prager (1998) agreed with Buckingham and Clifton (2001) and equated positivity with the happiness of individuals, families, and organizations. In fact, Prager insisted that happiness and positivity are "moral obligations" (p. 3). Luthans and Church (2002) argued that positivity should not only have voice in the popular literature but also in academic studies as well and they contended that both arenas could benefit from one another. They wrote:

The time has come to begin to build bridges between the academic Organizational Behavior (OB) field and the popular business bestsellers. A great first step would be for OB to take a positive approach. The popular authors recognize its importance but generally fail to inform or guide managers regarding what to do and how to do it, for themselves or their people. This is where OB theories, research findings, and applications can make a needed, important contribution. My contention is not that the current OB field is wrong or even needs to be fixed. After all, this would be a negative approach in itself. Rather, I will make the case for a more proactive, positive approach on the part of both OB academics and practicing managers. (p. 58)

There is a growing body of research that equates personal health with an emphasis on positivity. For example, Lin, Lin and Raghubir (2003) contended:

We propose that self-positivity can result from three factors: an overall desire to feel happy, a reduction in anxiety about the uncertainty associated with future life

outcome, and the desire to maintain or enhance self-esteem, defined as confidence and satisfaction about oneself. (p. 465)

When people feel happy and optimistic they are healthier, therefore, more productive in every area of their lives. Woodstock (2005) illuminated the correlation between positive thinking, hope, and health:

As with the shift in the scientific realm from an emphasis on psychodynamic to biomedical arguments, the transition within the religious realm to spiritual arguments allowed the self-help genre to wed previously discordant concepts. Popular psychological explanatory mechanisms no longer were considered oppositional to positive thinking, in which what we think constructs reality. In both the scientific and spiritual spheres, the self, especially its inner dimension, came to be the source of knowledge and healing. Recognizing past hurts while visualizing wellness allowed the previously conflicting ideas of positive and negative thinking to holistically coexist. The temporal dimension in this New Thought structure was key, with negativity and pain dwelling in the past and positivity and hope living in the present and future. The body, in responding physically or biomedical to positive thinking, scientifically demonstrated innate knowledge. With the self endowed with such power of thought, institutional forces were said to be less influential in the construction of health and happiness. (p. 176)

Woodstock (2005) also stated that this emphasis on personal positivity and positive thinking in the various arenas of society has led to a greater aggregate degree of health among the persons of the United States:

In this article I chronicle the significant changes in the enlistment of varying conceptions of religion, science, medicine, and spirituality in self-help literature. In doing so, I expose important historical changes in concepts of how to live healthy and happy lives while demonstrating that notions of positive thinking have remained relatively unchanged despite sweeping historical transformation. Throughout the genre's history, the correlation between the quality of one's thoughts and wellness of one's body and mind had endured, but society's shifting reliance on various systems of ordering reality, specifically religious and scientific, prompted the reconceptualization of self-help's core concepts of thought and self. The self-help books of the 1890s had argued that the individual must align him or herself with a divine order to achieve health and happiness. In the 1950s, the social world and its commercial imperatives became the realm to which individuals should accommodate. By the 1990s, however, individuals were directed to find answers within themselves. Although "the self" had always been the genre's point of departure, earlier books had argued that the self must set itself in harmonious alignment with an institution, with something greater or outside itself. By contrast, contemporary self-help told the reader that not only health and happiness but also one's moral compass were to be directed internally, and one's sense of reality, similarly, sprang from an internal order. (p. 167)

Rimal and Morrison (2006) completed extensive work with cancer patients exploring the power of language, positivity, and positive thinking regarding the success of cancer treatments and recovery from cancer. Their research pointed to a dramatic link between the patients who regularly entertain positive thoughts and dwell on wellness



rather than sickness in the cancer recovery process and the increased likelihood of recovery in those patients as compared to patients who regularly entertain negative thoughts and dwell on sickness rather than the possibility of wellness. In a recent study involving patients with cancer they concluded:

The primary objective of Study 1 was to test the proposition that optimistic bias can be attributed to the fact that, when asked to make comparative risk assessments, individuals inevitably conjure up, as a frame of reference, an image of someone less fortunate than themselves. Based on our results on susceptibility, this appears to be a reasonable explanation of the underlying cognitive process. (p. 213)

Rimal and Morrison (2006) also emphasized the necessity of positive reinforcement for patients from family members who are involved in the process of cancer recovery as well.

Ramirez-Esperanza and Pennebaker (2006) agreed that positivity leads to increased health. They contended that great improvements in physical and mental health could be gained through the telling and retelling of positive stories. They wrote:

People are drawn to good stories. As evidenced in this selection of papers, narratives are viewed as ways individuals organize complex themes and convey them to others. There is also the sense that the ability to transform personally upsetting experiences into stories can result in improved physical and mental health. For the last two decades, our lab has been grappling with the narrative-health relationship. It is really true that constructing a story about emotional upheavals can improve health. (p. 211)

While positivity is widely believed to lead to greater physical, mental, and emotional health, there is a growing body of evidence that indicates that positivity can also increase relational health. Many of the existing studies first focus on the counterpoint to positivity – negativity as a means of delineating the benefits of positivity in the context of relationships. For example, Jing-Schmidt (2007) found that, “Generally, the negativity bias is an automatic tendency to pay significantly more attention to unpleasant than pleasant information. To put it otherwise, negative events have a greater impact on people’s behavior than positive events” (p. 418). Therefore, not only are positive interactions more productive. There is also a tremendous cost to negative interactions in that they are perceived as more consequential than positive events. Stafford and Canary (2006) touched on this idea of the consequences of negative relationships in the context of families and marital relationships. They established that:

Specifically, when people are equitably treated and when their partner exceeds their expectations regarding marital outcomes, they more likely engage in communicative behaviors to maintain their marriages than do people who are unfairly treated and whose marriage is disappointing in terms of outcomes. (p. 250)

Marital and familial relationships with benefits and reciprocity are much more successful and enduring.

Jones and Wirtz (2007) espoused the enormous benefits of positivity in relationships, especially in difficult circumstances:

Considerable research now documents the tremendous psychological and physiological benefits of emotional support, which consists of “specific lines of

communicative behavior enacted by one party with the intent of helping another cope effectively with emotional distress. When helpers provide emotional support skillfully (i.e., sensitively and helpfully), distraught people often gain better coping abilities, as well as improved mental and physical health; and of course, emotional support also makes people feel better. (p. 72)

Jones and Wirtz (2007) continued exploring the idea of reciprocity in relationships. They contended that there is a call and response element to relational communication and, in a sense; parties often mimic the other partner in communication patterns and tone:

Reciprocity is another more complex adaptation pattern (e.g., responding to a smile with a smile), but it must occur in sequence and is contingent upon the behavior of the conversational partner. Behavioral matching, on the other hand, is not contingent on partner behaviors and might therefore be a function of external (i.e., physical attraction) or internal stimuli (i.e., mood). People might match their partner's eye gaze, because they are in a good mood. (p. 74)

Wiegand and Geller (2004) agreed, taking great issue with a study that downplayed and minimized the effects of negativity. They stated:

It is surprising to learn of such strong support for negative reinforcement. Such a stance flies in the face of radical behaviorism and sends a potentially dangerous message about negative reinforcement that could cause serious societal harm. B. F. Skinner himself warned against the use of negative reinforcement, stating it interferes with one's sense of freedom. Skinner envisioned a utopian society where positive reinforcement is the most widely used method of control. This

perspective advocates the opposite approach, justifying the use of negative reinforcement in our homes, industry, and educational systems. (p. 6)

Wiegand and Geller (2004) also framed the vast difference between positivity and negativity in a study they conducted with university students. They explored these concepts in the context of the classroom and university life. They believed that the need for positive reinforcement stems from each person's need to be valued and to feel significant. Therefore, negativity is perceived as a direct affront to an individual's concept of self and self worth. They stated:

According to self-worth theory, the greatest concern for students is the need for self-acceptance or protection of self-esteem. Failure holds implications for individuals' self-esteem because it is often perceived to be indicative of low ability, which is often considered the cornerstone of low self-esteem. Therefore, students go to great lengths to protect their sense of personal value, even if it means sacrificing good grades to do so. Two strategies for protecting one's perception of ability have been examined in the achievement literature, namely, self-handicapping and defensive pessimism. (p. 9)

In other words, with a lack of positivity and in the event of increased negativity, one begins to enact coping mechanisms in the interest of preservation of self and self-interests. The core of one's being is at risk when negative reinforcement is enacted.

Afifi, Anderson and Guerrero (2007) espoused the benefits of positivity and began to define it in this way:

Positivity, which includes being cheerful and optimistic, and complimenting and encouraging the partner is likely to enhance the atmosphere in the relationship.

No one likes to be around someone who is always complaining and never has anything nice to say. People like to be around others who make them feel good about themselves. (p. 192)

The benefits of positivity are very apparent in romantic relationships and are easily illustrated through the laws of attraction. Human beings tend to gravitate towards others who regularly practice a reciprocal bend towards positivity or negativity. Levine, Aune and Park (2006) made these observations after multiple studies involving romantic partners with varying degrees of satisfaction in their relationships:

People possess preferences for certain characteristics in romantic partners. Such preferences are likely to guide choices in relational initiation and intensification. Simply put, what we look for in a partner should affect attraction and subsequent relational development (or the lack thereof). Attraction has been conceptualized as attitude positivity. Such factors as proximity, similarity, physical attractiveness, complementarity, and possession of resources are widely accepted as antecedents of attraction. The quality of communication too affects attraction. Attraction, in turn, is an important predictor of relational initiation, intensification, and maintenance. (p. 467)

While physical and relational health have seemingly obvious connectivity to the success and happiness of human beings, why is organizational health important and what role does positivity play? Given the fact that the vast majority of people invest at least 40 hours each week at a place of employment, the answer to this question seems apparent as well. Geertz (1973) proposed the following enduring framework for examining culture:

The concept of Culture I espouse is essentially a semiotic one. Believing with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is the implication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical. But this pronouncement, a doctrine in a clause, demands itself some explication. (p. 13)

Therefore, because almost everyone is suspended in webs of significance called jobs, it must be prudent to apply the positivity test to the workplace as well.

It seems that positivity as a means for enhancing organizational behavior began to become popular as a reaction to the industrial revolution. Luthans and Church (2002) observed:

Since the very beginnings of the academic field of organizational behavior (OB) at the Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company, a clear relationship between the positive feelings of employees and their performance has been recognized. Over the years, OB researchers found that constructs such as positive reinforcement and positive effect, positively oriented employee attitudes, and even humor have a significant impact on performance. However, in spite of the positive OB perspective having such an auspicious beginning, a fair amount of research support, and considerable face validity (i.e., it makes sense that confident, happy, optimistic employees at all levels are more productive), the OB field has arguably given relatively more attention to managerial and employee dysfunctions and problems in the workplace. Representative examples would

include the search for better ways to motivate and lead marginal, inert employees; correct deficient styles, skills and abilities; improve dysfunctional attitudes and behaviors such as resistance to change; and more effectively manage conflict and cope with stress and burnout. (p. 57)

Hineline (2004) delineated between the forms of positivity when he wrote:

First, we must note that the meaning of ‘positive’ in ‘positive reinforcement’ is not the same as the meaning of ‘positive’ in ‘positive’ psychology.’ Positive reinforcement is a technical term, denoting that some behavior increased as a result of its having produced the appearance, or *addition* (and thus “positive” in the logical, algebraic sense), of some object or event, that is reinforcing or permits access to a situation that typically affords an opportunity to behave in ways that are reinforcing. (p. 57)

However, Wiegand (2004) argued for the diminution of semantics in favor of the person. He contended that people innately understand positive and negative through the ways that they feel and he found support with Crowell (2004). Crowell stated:

Given a choice, most reasonable people, and certainly most performers, would opt to work within an organization that held an asset rather than commodity perspective of their people. Such a perspective likely would go a long way toward helping to create a positive environment in which the quality of work life would be enhanced for each and every performer or as Wiegand has described it, an environment “in which productivity and quality are high and workers are generally satisfied, happy, healthy, and safe.” Wiegand suggests that creating such an enhanced work environment should be a major focus of OBM. (p. 197)

According to Bolman and Deal (1997), the ideal way to influence an organizational culture is to build a human resources philosophy and to “Invest in people. An effective human resource philosophy provides overall guidance and direction. Principles come alive through activities and practices that make the commitment to investing in people a reality: hiring the right people and rewarding them” (p. 123). Another concept illuminated by Bolman and Deal is the concept of “sharing the wealth” with employees as a means of positive motivation. They stated:

Many employees feel little responsibility for an organization’s success. They expect any gains in efficiency and profitability to benefit only executives and shareholders. Organizations have devised a variety of ways to link employee rewards more directly to corporate productivity, including gain sharing, profit sharing and employee stock ownership. Scanlon plans, first introduced in the 1930s, gave workers an incentive to reduce costs and improve efficiency by offering a share of any gains. Profit sharing plans gave employees a bonus commensurate with the overall profitability of the firm or of their local unit. A review of research in the area found that both gain-sharing and profit-sharing plans generally had a positive impact on organizational performance and profitability. (p. 126)

Not only do employees need to feel invested in the positive and forward movement of the organization, the style of communication as well as the tone of an organization are also essential. Lewis (2007) spoke to the importance of effective, positive communication in an organization, “Communication matters in the processes involved in implementing planned organizational change. The outcomes that are achieved



in the implementation of planned organizational changes depend in part on the interactions of implementers and other important stakeholders” (p. 187).

Lewis also indicated:

In considering the positivity or the balanced nature of the communication messages, implementers decide whether positive aspects of the change should be emphasized or whether emphasis of positives should be balanced with acknowledgment of negative aspects of the change or the change process (p. 187).

Positivity in an organizational culture matters to both internal and external stakeholders. Kenman (2007) agreed that “Communicators in business and academia at all levels need to send messages that are understood pleasantly and effortlessly” (p. 305).

Kenman (2007) further explored the concept of successful organizational communications in this same article regarding the teaching of effective communication to college freshmen in a first year English course. Kenman emphasized the feel and tone of a student’s writing in addition to simply correct grammar. Kenman stated:

I call this material Tone & Style (T&S). I use tone to refer to politeness, positivity, friendliness, and the *you*-attitude. Good style includes succinctness, active voice, conversational register, and personal constructions. I reinforce the exercises when reviewing my students’ memos, letters, and reports—meticulously pointing out infractions and requesting that they rewrite their papers. (p. 306)

Brecher (2006) also addressed feedback and tone in addressing team members of an organization, “Feedback is about coaching or consulting, not criticizing or giving advice. It helps employees learn from their performance—good or bad—on a continuous basis. Invest the time to inspire your employees and their success will become yours” (p.

16). Brecher also indicated that individualized, positive feedback is especially essential in encouraging employees:

When an employee performs well, discuss his or her performance immediately.

Don't just offer up a pat on the back or an 'atta-boy.' The discussion must be specific and pointed, providing comprehensive reasons why the performance was good, in order for learning to occur. (p.16)

Lantos (2004) encouraged managers to:

Support and reward your employees. This kind of fundamental transformation is rigorous, intense, and sometimes threatening and unsettling. Yet it is gratifying to see how many people rise to the occasion and even exceed the expectations of managers and coworkers. Organizations must give their employees every opportunity to succeed by providing them with individual training, ongoing support and encouragement, and rewards and recognition for accomplishments to ensure that the new, results-oriented approach to revenue-cycle function takes hold. (p. 68)

Feng and MacGeorge (2006) contended that tone is also important when giving advice to employees and that the manner of a manager greatly affects the receptivity of the employee. They argued that:

Receptiveness to advice may be defined as the extent to which a distressed individual is willing or ready to receive advice from others with respect to a problematic situation. This concept is distinct from evaluations of advice already received (e.g., whether an advised action is feasible), and from advice outcomes (e.g., implementation of the advice) because it focuses on the individual's

openness to advice prior to, and during, the interaction that contains the advice.

Receptiveness to advice should vary from person to person and situation to situation. For example, some individuals who experience emotional distress may turn to others for comfort without wanting or being willing to be advised about what they should do with respect to the problem. In other words, these individuals have low receptiveness to advice. Conversely, some individuals may have a strong interest in receiving advice from another person, with or without comforting. Such individuals would be described as having high receptiveness to advice. (p. 68)

They also identified “expertise,” “closeness” and “influence history” as indicators of receptivity (p. 68).

In addition to an internal organizational culture, there is abundant research that indicates that positivity matters when dealing with customers as well. According to Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol (2002):

Consumer trust, value and loyalty can be greatly enhanced by positivity if a fundamental competence exists especially in regards to solving problems.

Problem-solving orientation has a dominant “positivity” effect (i.e., a unit positive performance has a stronger effect than a unit negative performance). (p. 16)

Ofir and Simonson (2007) agreed. They stated that, “It is now widely accepted that exceeding customer expectations is key to customer satisfaction, delight, and loyalty” (p. 164). Ofir and Simonson surveyed consumers entering and exiting grocery stores. They concluded:

Customers' expectations are key determinants of their consumption experiences, satisfaction, and loyalty. Therefore, knowing in advance what customers expect is critical for the success of marketing strategies. However, the current research suggests that measuring expectations can backfire, particularly if the stated expectations are still accessible during the consumption experience. Specifically, contrary to the standard assumption that expectations are either confirmed or disconfirmed on the basis of any discrepancy between expectations and actual experience, our research reveals a tendency for negative disconfirmation of stated expectations. (p. 171)

Nadler (2007) believed that customers must somehow feel connected to salespersons and "rapport can be thought of as a state of positive mutual attention marked by harmony and affinity" (p. 9), while Foikes and Patrick (2003) emphasized "friendliness" (p. 128) as a cardinal tenet to positivity in sales. In research involving affinity towards various insurance salespersons, they concluded that:

Friendliness is "symmetrical with regard to how easily different trait expectancies are disconfirmed by behavior. For example, if someone believes a target to be friendly, occasional unfriendly behaviors are still tolerated. Similarly, an unfriendly person may be expected to act friendly at times. That symmetry in perceptions of friendliness was anticipated to facilitate detection of any biases in generalization to the firm subgroup. (p. 128)

Feng and MacGeorge (2006) made the following observation about positivity:

Classic persuasion research has not been concerned with the domain of personal or social relationships but has identified persuader trustworthiness, likeability, and

similarity as influences that typically increase the likelihood of persuasive success. Close relationships are typically characterized by higher levels of trust, liking, and similarity between relational partners than relationships that are less close. (p. 69)

Offering a contrary viewpoint, van Doorn and Verhoef (2008) offered research in favor of positivity as the antecedent to negativity when they stated:

However, in some circumstances, long-term relationships can destabilize, especially when negative critical incidents (Cis) occur. Negative Cis can be defined as out-of-the-ordinary events during an interaction that customers perceive or recall as unusually negative. Furthermore, a negative CI can trigger a decline in customer satisfaction and alter customer purchasing behavior. (p. 123)

The assumptions and conclusions in the aforementioned research illuminated significant gaps and lines of inquiry that guided further research.

### Research Questions

The research was guided by the following questions:

1. To what degree is positivity in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees in selected Nazarene Higher Education Institutions?
2. To what degree is positive reinforcement in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees?
3. To what degree is the perceived positivity of an administrator related to the satisfaction, retention and productivity of employees?

## Description of Terms

*Nazarene Higher Education Institutions.* This term referred to the colleges and universities within the United States that had a Nazarene denominational affiliation.

*Organizational Behavior.* According to Drucker (1999), organizational behavior describes the ways that individual employees behave within the context of a particular organization.

*Organizational Culture.* According to Drucker (1999), an organizational culture describes the tone and style of a given organization. *Organizational Culture* is a set of beliefs and assumptions that are commonly believed to be true throughout an organization and for the vast majority of the individuals who comprise an organization.

*Positivity.* Afifi, Anderson and Guerrero (2007) define positivity as a demeanor, attitude and style of leadership which emphasizes positive reinforcement, support encouragement and empowerment and is supported by regular and consistent actions that reinforce this proactive, constructive, encouraging, optimistic, helpful manner of being.

*Positive Reinforcement.* According to Afifi, Anderson and Guerrero (2007) positive reinforcement rewards individuals and groups of individuals for good action.

## Significance of Study

This study was significant in that it illuminated certain reasons for employee dissatisfaction and flight and gave organizations and managers insights about how to improve the satisfaction, retention and productivity of their employees. More specifically, the study addressed these issues in the context of selected Nazarene Higher Education Institutions, outlined nuances, and addressed challenges specific to organizational behavior on a college or university campus.

### Process to Accomplish

Scheer (2009), who delved deeply into the effects of positive reinforcement, resource munificence and worker motivation in the context of higher education at the community college level, suggested that “research at four-year colleges and universities is a logical extension” (p. 158) of his research. He encourages further inquiry into these topics in those settings. The process to accomplish this research mirrored the methodology outlined by Scheer to address and answer the previously stated research questions. Because a reliable and valid survey mechanism was established by Scheer in this line of inquiry, the same survey mechanism was used for this research project to build on his recommendations for further examination and discovery.

To address the three research questions, the researcher utilized an online self-report survey mechanism, compiled from five different scales listed below, that was collected from a sufficient sample of more than 100 NHEI admissions professionals throughout the United States. Because the NHEI institutions are located in various regions throughout the United States, the survey was distributed geographically without preference to various regional nuances, in order to be more generalizable to the entire NHEI population of admissions professionals than a local distribution would be. The survey collected data using an itemized rating scale methodology that incorporated a combination of valid and reliable scales that were utilized by Scheer (2009) that measured the effects of positivity, the effects of positive reinforcement, job satisfaction, and job performance of admissions professionals. Five scales were utilized: the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1985); the Shortened Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979); the General Perceived Self-Efficacy

Scale (Jerusalem & Schwarzer, 1995); the On-the-Job Behaviors: Positive work behaviors and psychological withdrawal behaviors subscales (Lehman & Simpson, 1992); and a rating and ranking scale intended to assess the resources specific to NHEI recruiting activities.

Cohen's *d* analysis was conducted to measure the extent of correlation of positivity in organizational behavior to enhance satisfaction, retention and productivity of NHEI recruitment employees, the correlation of positive reinforcement in organizational behavior to enhance satisfaction, retention and productivity of NHEI recruitment employees, and the correlation of the perceived positivity of an administrator impact the satisfaction, retention, and productivity of NHEI recruitment employees. Once the variables of positivity and positive reinforcement were shown to sufficiently correlate with the variables of satisfaction, retention and productivity the extent of the correlation could then be established and analyzed.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The topics of positivity and positive reinforcement are embedded in much of the leadership and motivational literature. There is a real movement toward the confirmation that a positive manner of being is not only essential for effective leadership but also prudent for productive work. This literature review explored the extent to which positivity and positive reinforcement were central tenets to many of the primary approaches to leadership and leadership theories. The review then proceeded to explore positivity and positive reinforcement in regards to the current trends in organizational culture and organizational change. The review concluded by examining the ethical nature of positivity and positive reinforcement as it pertains to creating a thriving, productive and profitable organization, while at the same time greatly enhancing the lives and work of all persons involved.

#### The Trait Approach

According to Bass (1990a), Bennis and Nannis (1985), Nadler and Tushman (1989), Zaccaro, Kemp and Bader (2007), and Zaleznik (1977), the Trait Approach to leadership addresses one of the primary tenets of the age-old debate around leadership. Are leaders born or made? The Trait Approach attempts to build a list of traits that all successful and effective leaders would possess and have in common. This theory would tend to reinforce the concept that leaders are innately gifted individuals who naturally possess a certain cadre of talents; consequently, leaders are primarily born. For example, intelligence, determination or confidence would be among the various traits that would

routinely be attributed to great leaders and the assumption is often made that an individual would have to possess these traits in order to be an effective leader. This is a foundational concept in the study of leadership in that it lays the groundwork for a leader-centric style of management. The Trait Approach is not so much measured according to the outcomes or outputs of employees, teams or organizations. Rather, this approach is measured by the personal characteristics of the leader.

The Trait Approach is valid and foundational in that it is effective in identifying commonalities, tendencies, characteristics and personality traits of various individuals who have held positions of leadership, both historically and currently. It also purports an efficient system for codifying these various traits and drawing correlations between groups of leaders and non-leaders. However, the theory is insufficient in that it does not adequately address the exceptions to the hard and fast premises that it outlines and fails to account for leaders who have led successfully even in the absence of some of the essential traits. For example, arguably, Mother Teresa had a profound impact for the good on the nation of India, the Catholic Church, as well as the world at large, but she did not fit neatly into the typical categories of traits that were routinely believed as being essential to lead. Even with that being said, positivity and a general optimism are raised as common core traits that are routinely present in successful and effective leaders.

### The Skills Approach

Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, and Fleishman (2000) and Yammarino (2000) described the difference between the Skills Approach to leadership to the Trait Approach. In that, it does not focus on the traits that an individual naturally possesses. Rather, this premise is focused on the skill set of an individual leader and her or his

ability to accomplish certain tasks regularly and routinely. According to Bass (1990a), The Skills Approach is valuable in the canon of leadership theory in that it isolates and identifies the core competencies that are necessary to lead a group or organization. This approach also allows for a gradation to individual skill levels, therefore, making room for a leader to improve her or his skill set and continually become more effective as a leader. For example, if an individual leader is weak in the area of human resource management because of inexperience or youth, this approach allows that young leader to develop skills and competencies over time that would add to her or his effectiveness and strengthen her or his ability to lead. This theory does not assume that the ability to lead is somehow superimposed on an individual leader. Rather, this ability is learned and mastered through experience. In this regard, positivity and the ability to motivate others through positive, proactive means are illuminated as requisite skills for capable leadership.

According to Katz (1955), this theory is somewhat limited in that it does not readily recognize or identify the circumstances that lead to the lack of skill in a particular area of an unproductive or underproductive leader. It much more ably identifies areas of strengths rather than the causes of weaknesses and is therefore limited in producing desired results and increased outcomes. Overall, the Skills Approach is useful in making sense of the needed skills one needs to be a successful leader in a particular field and role.

### The Style Approach

Blake and Mouton (1964, 1978, 1985) described the Style Approach as an interesting departure from both the Traits Approach and Skills Approach in that it deals with actions rather than being, as do the previously mentioned approaches. The Style Approach is exceptionally useful for understanding effective leadership in that it

categorizes the daily work of a leader into the two categories of task and relationship. This theory rightly identifies the items that comprise the daily agenda of a leader or manager as the tasks that one is expected to accomplish and the relationships that one is expected to manage as the primary work of every leader. Additionally, the Style Approach addresses the manner and personal style of dealing with those issues in tandem on a daily basis. Through a system of measuring the relationship between task and relationship, the Style Approach takes into account the demeanor of an individual leader and scrutinizes her or his success through these two lenses. A balance of high performance in both of these leadership frames is the ideal for Style Leadership and results in effective team management.

According to Blake and McCanse (1991), this approach is also useful for embodying positivity and operationalizing positive reinforcement in that it takes into account the individual nature of leadership. For example, some leaders handle and tackle the daily tasks of organizational leadership with great ease. These individuals are focused and driven to accomplish much on daily basis in a steady, progressive, results-oriented manner. In other cases, managers and leaders are more effective at dealing with people and managing the relationships of their teams, employees, superiors and clients in a seemingly effortless manner that makes everyone feel comfortable and affirmed. Where the Style Approach is especially useful is in measuring and analyzing the combination of attention to tasks and relationships and in training managers to succeed in leadership by specifically addressing each of these leadership frames each day and growing in intentionality and competency in each of these areas. Again, a warm, positive and inspiring style is elevated as an ideal demeanor for a thriving leader.

## The Situational Approach

The Situational Approach to leadership also emphasizes a preference for the effects and outcomes of positive rather than negative leadership even though it is a departure from the previous approaches in that it addresses leadership situationally, or in a particular context (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Nelson, 1993; Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi, 1985; Hersey & Blanchard 1997, 1988). The Situational Approach is similar to a case study approach to solving problems in that it looks very specifically and intentionally at the variables and nuances that exist within various environments and circumstances. This approach is ideal for training young and emerging managers to act and react in a variety of situations. This theory underscores the fact that all leadership happens in real time and learning how to lead effectively is often the result of effectively dealing with seemingly innumerable midcourse corrections in the context of a week, month or year. There is also a common belief in modern leadership theory that all leadership is contextual and that there really is no effective way to understand leadership thoroughly devoid of context. The Situational Approach tends to reinforce that increasingly presented notion. It is also valuable in developing the rapid cognition needed to lead and the requisite ability to read situations and people in aspiring leaders. This approach allows for an on the job training approach to leadership development. The ability to remain calm and positive, independent of specific circumstances is stated as a fundamental prerequisite for effective critical thinking and relevant problem solving.

Graeff (1997) along with and Fernandez and Vecchio (1997) stated that the Situational Approach does have some limitations in that there is a limited amount of solid evidence to support the primary claims of the theory. In addition, a prevailing limitation

is that contexts are continually evolving and there is no way to be exhaustive in describing the type of contexts that one might encounter. These leadership opportunities are as varied as the number of people and problems within any organization. With that being said, the Situational Approach is still understood to be a valid approach in leadership training and valuable for schooling leaders in the art of problem solving.

### The Contingency Theory

The Contingency Theory, authored by Fiedler (1964, 1967, 1995), and Fiedler and Garcia (1987) builds effectively on the Situational Approach in that it attempts to pair a particular leadership style with an opportunity or situation that requires the skills that a particular leader possesses. In addition, the positive disposition and the ability to manage in positive ways are elevated as central tenets for this approach. This theory is especially useful in managing and supporting hiring practices as an organization strives to hire individuals who are ideally suited to succeed at their jobs. Contingency Theory draws upon research that correlates a particular style of leadership with a particular organizational situation. For example, if the board of a particular company is looking to quell a decline in profitability; in effect, turn the organizational around, then this situational truism would require a certain type of leader with keen decision-making ability who works quickly and swiftly to engineer organizational health. Whereas, a university with a 100-year history that is in solid shape fiscally and is searching for a new president or CEO might require a leader who is more visionary and adept at building consensus. The Contingency Theory attempts to merge the specific needs of a particular situation with the specific giftedness of a particular leader toward the end of creating a synergistic environment where both the leader and the organization will thrive. Even so,

there is a clear preference toward proactive, rather than reactive leadership that motivates rather than dominates team members.

Feidler (1995) stated that the primary limitations around this theory revolve around the issues of validity and reliability. The Contingency Theory also has limitations around the generalizability of its primary conclusions, given that no two individuals and no two contexts are identical in constitution or scope. Nevertheless, these limitations do not diminish the large impact that this theory has had on the evolving understanding of leadership and the contribution of this theory in the world of situational management and human resource development.

### The Path-Goal Theory

The Path-Goal Theory, created by Evans (1970), House (1971), House and Dressler (1974), as well as House and Mitchell (1974) involves the motivation, satisfaction, and productivity of employees in the workplace and is intended to assist managers as they attempt to motivate team members toward increased levels of efficiency and effectiveness. This theory was built on many of the motivational, psycho-social and industrial psychological theories that formed the more modern day approach of positivity and positive reinforcement in the workplace. The theory attempts to provide the leader with the requisite skills and techniques to articulate what success means for an organization and the individual employees and provides the expertise to chart the path from the present to the desired outcome. The ideal skill set in this theory is built on the ability of the leader to inspire and motivate employees in positive ways. The theory does not stop short of simply setting a goal and articulating a plan; it encourages the leader in the practice of working in tandem with her or his employees toward a mutually beneficial

experience and a shared success for all involved. The Path-Goal Theory is unique from other prevailing leadership theories in that it focuses primarily on the relationship that exists between manager and team member and encourages a collaborative approach to daily problem solving and achievement.

Implementing the Path-Goal Theory is somewhat complicated and varied because specific employees might not immediately or readily respond to the particular style of a manager and may tend to embrace more autonomy in the workplace instead of a communal approach to work. However, the Path-Goal Theory allows and encourages the leader to adapt motivational tactics to fit with the needs and preferences of the employee, with the end of productivity and satisfaction as the primary concerns. This theory elevates the concept of communication style, individualized motivational techniques, and positivity in the workplace. It is a sharp departure from the one-size-fits-all, assembly-line approach to management.

#### The Leader-Member Exchange Theory

According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1991), Liden, Wayne, and Stilwell (1993), and Atwater and Carmeli (2009), the Leader-Member Exchange Theory is unique in that it seems to stand alone in the canon of leadership theories and practices. It exists in the space between employer and employee, leader and follower, and attempts to understand the complexity and importance of all of the various interactions and exchanges between the various players in an organizational culture. This theory contends that leadership actually takes place in the day-to-day, moment-by-moment interactions in the workplace and further attempts to formulate a thick description of the various effects caused by the effective or ineffective use of these regular exchanges accordingly, toward a more- or



less-productive work environment. Leader-Member Exchange Theory assumes that all leadership is interactive and dynamic, to a degree, and that real progress is made by implementing and exploring an organic organizational style. This theory is especially useful for team building, articulating effective organizational communication patterns and mobilizing an entire organization around a particular goal. The Apple/Mac Culture would be an excellent modern day example of the Leader-Member Exchange Theory permeating an entire organizational culture, where managers are encouraged and even required to roll up their sleeves and lead with a mutuality and accessibility uncommon in many organizations. According to Arthur (1996), Steve Jobs has effectively created an organic, positive organizational model that is companywide, where creativity reigns and mutuality is at its peak.

This leadership theory is limited in that it is not suitable for all situations and is not amenable to all managers or employees. Some individuals simply enjoy a much greater degree of individuality and singular goals in the workplace and therefore would not thrive under this conception of leadership. But that limitation does not negate the importance or effectiveness of this theory. According to Atwater and Carmeli (2009), the Leader-Member Exchange Theory is indeed becoming more widely recognized as a significant path toward organizational health and effectiveness.

#### Transformational Leadership Theory

Northouse (2004), Bryman (1992), Bass and Riggio (2006), and Downton (1973), contended that the Transformational Leadership Theory is a very important movement in the area of leadership theory that has surfaced and become popular in the last 40 years and it is the primary theoretical foundation of positivity and positive reinforcement as the

most effective leadership and managerial path. With a person-centric approach values each individual both as a human being and as a team member and seeks to transform an organization by transforming the individuals who comprise the organization.

Transformational Leadership Theory requires the leader to possess the unusual ability to articulate a compelling organizational vision as well as inspire his or her team to enact and embody the vision through charisma and inspiring communication. Transformational leadership seeks to build into every team member a sense of ownership of the company mission and future and to encourage employees to participate fully in the daily realization and fulfillment of the vision. This theory promotes the transfer of passion from the president to the board of directors, to the executive team, through middle management, to every individual in the organization. It takes the mantra of personal development very seriously and seeks to foster an organizational culture where every employee is cultivated, supported and encouraged to thrive. It is antithetical to the prescriptive, Machiavellian leadership paradigm of the past and is intentionally participatory, collaborative, positive and inspirational. This approach also emphasizes the internal motivation of team members to become personally invested in the ongoing success of the organization.

A great example of this current theme in leading was the transformational presidential campaign of Barack Obama. Then-candidate Obama inspired the masses with his call for change and his charismatic, inspirational ascent to the Presidency of the United States. President Obama was able to move people to envision themselves and the future of their nation in a new way and to many of his followers his election signaled a new day in this country and in the world. Later in this review of the literature, further

review of the composition of Transformational Leadership in much greater detail will be provided, as it is enormously important to the cause of positivity and positive reinforcement as a managerial and leadership style.

### Authentic Leadership

The Authentic Leadership model, according to Bass (1990b), Bass and Steidlmeier (1999), Howell and Avolio (1993), and Chan (2005), is one of the most recent strains of leadership theory that reflects many of the current trends in society today that places a strong value on transparency, veracity and authenticity, especially in regard to leadership. This theory supports the ideology that trust in leadership and loyalty to an organization is predicated on the belief in the fundamental honesty and authentic nature of those involved. This assertion is especially true of the latest generations in that they are routinely skeptical of individuals whom they perceive as less than forthright and who somehow shade or alter the truth. These generations place a high value on genuine, authentic communication, disclosure and clarity from organizations and individuals. They are naturally more open and accepting than future generations but they also require more in the area of full-disclosure. This cultural swing toward a commitment to truth is likely a societal reaction to the scandals that have plagued government, business, education, the church and virtually all levels of modern day society. With this societal cognitive shift in mind, the Authentic Leadership Theory attempts to build on this trend and builds authenticity into the fabric of an organization. This theory stands in opposition to old traditional organizational politics and values a new sense of openness, transparency, and accountability at every level. While positivity is emphasized concerning respecting and

including all individual team members, it is tempered by a quest for a balance between idealism and realism.

Because this push for authenticity and openness in the workplace is a rather dramatic paradigm shift, it is sometimes difficult for more seasoned employees or managers to fit into and thrive in this kind of an open environment. The conventions and boundaries of the past may have been predictably comfortable to some and therefore this new framework might prove to be problematic. With that potential tension in mind, it is essential for leadership to clearly articulate accepted organizational norms and carefully advance this quest for authenticity at every level of the organizational structure.

### Team Leadership

The Team Leadership concept is very interesting and somewhat of an enigma in the options for organizational leadership (McGrath, Arrow & Berdahl, 2000; Kinlaw, 1998; Porter & Beyerlein, 2000). In this paradigm, a group of individuals, or an executive team, is charged with providing oversight and giving leadership to a specific organization and the authority and the responsibility are shared among this group of people. A high value is placed on consensus building and collaboration in this team approach to leadership; therefore, positivity is invoked toward a high degree of collegiality. An excellent example of the Team Leadership model is the leadership of the International Church of the Nazarene. There are six serving General Superintendents in the Church of the Nazarene who act in tandem with one another and speak with one voice. All are equally charged with leading the church as well as guarding and advancing the Church's mission. All of these individuals were elected by the General Assembly of the Church and they share equal authority and responsibility for leading and managing the affairs of

the General Church. Although they each have individual regional jurisdictions, these regional assignments rotate every other year. A strong emphasis is placed on unanimity and collaboration in handling the affairs of the church. They are all equally supported by the Office of the General Secretary of the Church of the Nazarene.

According to Barge (1996) and Nadler (2007), while this model has its advantages in leveraging the collective wisdom, experience, capacities, and abilities of the members of the group, this model is not without challenges. There are certainly philosophical and operational disagreements sometimes, and the ability to solve problems expeditiously and swiftly is often diminished in favor of mutual consent and consensus seeking. The effectiveness and capacity of individual leaders is also sometimes stunted in deference to the enacting the will and prevailing sentiment of the group. Overall, this interesting paradigm is only effective in certain situations. Shared leadership can often lead to organizational confusion and stifle the growth pattern of the company. However, in certain circumstances, this model can work as it promotes shared responsibility, energy and increased capacity to effect change and advance the Church's mission. Regarding positivity, the collective and public personality of the leadership team must embody this optimistic and forward-thinking ideal to utilize this strategic form of leadership. It is not sufficient for only certain members to embrace this manner of being.

#### Psychodynamic Approach

The Psychodynamic Approach, as described by Zaleznik (1977), Hummel (1975), Schiffer (1973), and more recently Maccoby (2003), combines various alternate leadership theories in an attempt to discover the unique nature, or personality, of an organization and of its leadership. With this approach as the guiding principle of an

organization, the personality of the organization and the personality of the leader are often inseparable. In fact, the persona and behavior of such an organization often emulates the leader's manner of being. In other cases, however, the organization develops a personality of its own and the entire organizational culture is marked by certain characteristics and normative behavior.

This approach to leadership is also often marked by the chameleon quality of the organization and the ability to adapt to a dynamic and ever-evolving marketplace. This is not to say that this approach to leadership promotes a kind of bland or innocuous brand. In fact, it is often quite to the contrary. However, this model does insist on a nimble organizational culture that is not afraid to reinvent itself routinely. Additionally, the Psychodynamic Approach allows an organizational culture to seek its logical end without forcing the existence of a pre-existing conception of organizational culture and feel. Rather, the organizational customs expand and contract according to the current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of both the organization as a whole as well as the individuals who comprise that organization.

#### Positivity, Positive Reinforcement and Organization Culture

An in-depth inquiry into the most prevalent leadership theories flowed into a study of organization culture and practices. The theories, observations, and conclusions purported by Schein (2004) appear to be foundational for much of the current dialogue regarding analyzing and transcribing organization culture. Schein intentionally and prescriptively identified positivity and positive reinforcement in his quest to describe successful organizational cultures. The following is a detailed introduction to

organization change theory and its dependence upon positivity and positive reinforcement.

Geertz (1973) proposed the following framework for examining culture:

The concept of Culture I espouse is essentially a semiotic one. Believing with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is the implication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical. But this pronouncement, a doctrine in a clause, demands itself some explication. (p. 11)

Schein (2004) built on this understanding of webs of significance as he articulated his case for understanding and interpreting organizational culture and leadership. He offered a measured, logical, pragmatic and infinitely useful framework and instrument for analyzing the layers of organizational culture and identifying the tools for leading in various contexts. His thoughtful and thorough understanding of the various aspects of culture was especially useful in operationalizing a workable and effective leadership style for maximum impact. It was clear that while Schein viewed certain aspects as transferable, he also was completely convinced that effective leaders are fully cognizant of the cultural landscape of an individual organization and that vast majority of effective leadership is indeed contextual.

Schein (2004) began by defining culture and leadership as dependent variables that are inexorable, as if they were two sides of the same coin. He continued, offering a classic definition of analyzing culture as observing and defining a “series of group

norms” or “observed behavioral regularities” (p. 14) that are definitive to a specific group of people. While this definition is broad and somewhat general, it is useful in that it lays the groundwork for the analysis of patterns and the establishment of a normative state in which activity and interactivity is observed. Culture is, by definition, a team sport. Nevertheless, Schein did not stop there; he continued in his quest to define the tenets of organizational culture by fusing the study of culture to the definition of leadership, which “creates and changes culture” (p. 21). With this construct of an interdependent organizational culture and organizational leadership, one can begin to comprehend the complex nature and infinite challenge of shaping culture and leading an organization or group.

Schein (2004) articulated a series of assumptions as he endeavored to build a systematic approach to interpreting organizational culture. These assumptions are significant insofar as they outline the parameters in which a leader would *mine for meaning* and subsequently discover the cultural norms of his or her organization. He first addressed the issue of managing the connectivity of external realities and pressures in conjunction with managing internal practices and integration. When a leader is cognizant of the cultural nuances of the community in which his or her team members live, then he or she is one step closer to being able to manage or lead those individuals effectively. For example, if a CEO was managing a factory in a town that was economically depressed, this reality might temper certain motivational tactics, therefore, alter the level of connectivity that he or she might have with his or her workforce. In another example, the team members of a small private firm might have different external pressures during a time of recession than a group of individuals who work for a government agency that is



funded by tax dollars and might be more recession-proof. Thus, the employees at the private company might require certain assurances and support that they might not ordinarily need in more prosperous and stable times. In this example, the leader serves as an interpreter of external cultural nuances and strives to mitigate complicating circumstances to the benefit of his or her employees and ultimately to the benefit of the entire organization.

Schein (2004) proceeded, commenting about assumptions that encompass the topics of the “nature of time and space” (p. 14) as well as “human nature, activities and relationships” (p. 17). He drew from Burke and conceded the truisms commonly associated with the concepts of time and space, but he challenged leaders not to underestimate the gravity and weight of these concepts. Even though time and space are assumed to be inalterable constants in organizational culture, they also serve to define boundaries, organize daily activity and even operate as a sort of organizational currency. For example, when dealing with individual team members at the management or executive level, the placement and size of office space is routinely viewed as a defining factor for levels of importance and influence. As another example, if an employee has small children at home and is the primary person concerned with their wellbeing, then a more flexible approach to time might be viewed as a significant benefit and motivating factor. Burke addressed the issue of human nature, activities, and relationships by focusing primarily on human agency and the innate inclination toward self-preservation. He rightly observed that all human beings are ego-centric in the broadest understanding of that concept; whereby, the role of leadership is to mobilize team members toward an

organizational culture where the desires of the individuals are advanced in tandem with the success of the organization, in a *win, win* scenario.

Schein (2004) drew upon the work of Wilkins to address the need for a “shared vision” and “motivational faith” (Wilkins, as cited in Schein, p. 37) in a leader to be able to decipher and effectively utilize the individual and collected giftedness of their team. This concept is predicated on the talents of a leader who is both intuitive and able to utilize this knowledge to build an organizational culture where people thrive. One must possess the ability to understand, articulate, and operationalize a compelling vision in order to build a system that ensures corporate buy-in and fidelity with that vision. This is certainly no small task, but Schein stated that it is essential in building an enduring, positive and proactive organizational culture.

For creating and advancing a specific organizational culture, Schein (2004) outlined a system he articulated the “leadership role in culture building, embedding and evolving” (p. 42). He insisted that the role of creating culture should be an essential portion of the job description of a leader. He cited multiple examples, including Apple, IBM and Hewlett-Packard. With these examples, he imagined an organizational culture led by a visionary leader and transferred to employees to form a unique organizational culture. In these cases, the attitudes and actions of the founders formed and reinforced an enduring and daily corporate culture with a singularity of focus that both employees and customers could and often did embrace.

Schein (2004) continued by offering a methodology for “how leaders embed and transmit culture” (p. 50). According to Schein, the transmission of culture begins with a clarion personal vision for the organizational culture and a good dose of charisma and

positivity for communicating that vision. The vision must be believable, compelling, and exciting if it is to evoke the requisite emotions and elicit the desired internalization. A leader must also routinely and regularly revisit the vision and keep the fulfillment of the vision at the forefront of his or her agenda when communicating with individuals at all levels of an organization. In a sense, the leader must embody the vision to the degree that the two become inseparable in the minds of team members and constituents.

For example, one would be hard pressed to consider the success of the UCLA men's basketball team without immediately thinking of the impact of the longtime head coach, John Wooden. Wooden embodied the success of that team and there was no question that he was in charge and intimately involved with and responsible for the team's success. According to Schein, this is the mark of a leader: one who is able to create, transfer, and embed organizational culture. Schein also pointed out that leaders reinforce their values and embed their beliefs by the things that they measure and control. Wooden, for example, was directly involved in the recruitment of new players. He did not leave the enlistment of new team members solely to assistant coaches. To Wooden, personnel mattered and the future results of the team were directly correlated with the capacities, skills, and character of the individuals he recruited.

The allocation of resources is another way to reinforce organizational culture and elevate vision. According to Schein (2004), there is a sense among employees that leaders resource the people and practices that are most closely aligned with the organization's success.

Schein (2004) made an excellent point regarding the necessity of a consistent positivity and emotional equilibrium in leaders. He argued that effective leaders do not

have the luxury of indulging in emotional outbursts or angry tirades. If one is to lead by example, one must maintain a level of consistency of demeanor so that employees and co-workers will know what to expect when they encounter her or him on a daily basis. In other words, persistent negativity does not work as a management style and is indeed destructive, de-motivating and unbecoming. Schein also maintained that a leader must teach his organization how to react in the wake of difficulty and crisis. The demeanor and character of the organization will mirror that of the leader; therefore, the actions and reactions of the leader in times of stress are especially crucial. Again, Schein emphasized consistent and sustained positivity as the ideal mantra for leadership and effective organization culture.

Schein (2004) underscored the difficulties endemic in altering an organizational culture at various points in its development, but he also gave concrete steps for moving an organization forward while maintaining a sense of continuity and optimism. And in conclusion, Schein reiterated that the quest for an outstanding, thriving and productive organizational culture was something to be led and not managed. With culture as a given and change inevitable, a leader must proceed with clarity and courage.

#### Positivity and Organization Change

Theories of positivity in organization culture led directly to theories of positivity and organization change and the work of Burke (2008). Burke offered a thick description of the most common theories and successful practices around the concept of changing and improving an organization, as he set forth an anthology of sorts to assist in building a blueprint for change. Burke's work was very useful in that it illuminated the historical origins of change theory and followed the trajectory of those concepts to their present day

implications. Organization change theory is certainly dynamic at its core as it interacts with the real-time state of the economy, the current cultural trends, the increased or diminished capacity of human resources and the ever-expanding and contracting global knowledge base. Organization change theory and practice is indeed as varied and evolutionary as the individuals who comprise an organization and the external factors that influence an organization.

Burke (2004) began by building on the work of Gladwell (2000) as he described how change occurs and highlighted organizational tipping points. A tipping point is an urban flight, sociological and anthropological term coined on the 1950's when a specific ethnic group began to inhabit a particular neighborhood or area of a city by moving in and buying or renting houses or apartments. This population shift would, therefore, alter the sociodemographic consistency of that particular urban or suburban area. Once a critical mass of the new people group was reached then the neighborhood would *tip*, and the former majority population would quickly leave, a new majority population would be established, and a new normative would become the alternate reality. Gladwell suggested that there was a series of levers within each communal and organizational context that, when moved, caused a context to tip, altering circumstances and therefore engineering rapid change. Gladwell's example of reading a city and scrutinizing mass movement was the ideal predicate and metaphor for the study of organization change. In tandem with the Tipping Point theory, Burke continued by illuminating the theory of the Law of the Few where the power to alter an organizational culture and influence organization change existed, with a few key individuals with inordinate power and sway over the corporate circumstances and the people who comprised a specific organization. This locus of power

was often contained with an elite group of connectors who, for various reasons, possessed the inertia for change because of their relational currency. This persuasive group often did not derive their power from an organizational hierarchy or the corporate flow chart. Rather, this group gathered power more organically from their connectivity, attitudinal posturing, and unique contribution to the organizational landscape. This construct of corporate culture was important to consider when seeking understanding of organization change theory and practice, because the ultimate ability to effect rapid and sustainable change depends on the mobilization of this key and influential group of the few.

Burke (2008) turned quickly to the several common paradigms that had historically guided the prevailing thinking around influencing organization change in corporations and governmental agencies as well as in higher education institutions and nonprofit organizations. He challenged the reader to invoke the metaphor of an organism as the metaphor of choice that Geertz (1973) most preferred for understanding the complex and thoroughly human consistency of every organization. This metaphor unmasked a necessary practical understanding for all organization change in that it illuminated the fact that all organizations were populated by people and therefore a fundamental and constant person-centric approach to change was necessary. On the contrary, a de-emphasis on individual rights and contribution toward a more top-down approach failed to produce the change in the corporate DNA, which is essential for permanent change. Burke also touched on the idea that change was an organizational constant and that if positive change was not intentionally enacted then negative changes were possible and even probable in the absence of positive impetus and organic change.

Burke (2004) highlighted the history of organization change and the genesis of industrial engineering in the work of Frederick Taylor, as well as Taylor's Hawthorne Studies from 1924 to 1933 at the Western Electric Company, sponsored by the Harvard Business School. Burke touted Taylor's work as foundational in understanding the psychological and sociological norms and the impact of the industrial revolution on the American industrial workforce. Burke moved on to illuminate the Open System Theory, which postulates that no system of management and motivation exists in a vacuum. Rather, all work and action by human beings must be considered and mitigated in context. According to Capra (as stated in Burke) (1996) Three Criteria for Understanding Life: Pattern, Structure and Process, as this theory proved to be enormously formative in the quest to understand why people do what they do, thereby, comprehend and mitigate the cognitive patterns and impulses that make organization change possible.

Burke (2004) then tackled the topics of nature and levels of organization change and drew upon the Behaviorists to measure the actual movement and altered state of human subjects, thus observing the levels of the individual, group, and systemic change. These levels of change are in many ways interconnected and even inexorable in most cases, but that is not categorically true. For example, for the activity of a group to change, the activities of the individuals who comprise the group, or at least the majority of the individuals of that group, would have to alter their actions in some way. However, the inverse idea is not necessarily equivocal, in that, an individual could change her or his patterns of activity for the positive but the activity of the group might still be unaffected unless a level of critical mass movement is reached. Therefore, this theory is essential in comprehending the fluid and communal nature of organization change. Again, Burke

expounded on this deeper, more humanistic approach to the understanding of organization change by posing the question of “what to change?” (p. 78). He cited various research theories that point to changes in human activity as measured against the backdrop of the normative state of an organization. His basic premise was that one must have a full and complete understanding of what actually *is* to be able to measure either positive or negative change.

Burke (2008) then turned his attention to the tenets of leading, managing and engineering organization change. Burke drew heavily on Wisebord’s Six-Box Model (1976), The Nadler-Tushman Congruence Model (1977) and Tichy’s Technical, Political and Cultural Framework (1983). Burke argued for the integration of multiple models within an *open system* approach to change. He again pointed to the value of such a system in measuring change and controlling for internal and external realities. Burke’s belief in a limited number of categorical truisms and the necessity of constant contextualization, framed leadership as the ability to read and persuade people in such a manner that was commonsensical and pragmatic, but not in a utilitarian or exploitative way. His conception of leading organization change relies on the ability of the leader to enact a thousand mid-course corrections effectively and in a positive, dynamic and compelling manner, in consort with a deep understanding of the people who comprise the organization that she or he is leading.

Burke (2008), not surprisingly, drew heavily upon the Burke-Litwin Model of Organizational Performance and Change (1992) as he looked deeply into an outcomes-based approach to measuring and implementing organization change. This construct relies heavily and primarily on the deconstruction of organizational functions and



practices, a thorough understanding of the daily operational aspects of each unit, a sober estimate of the effectiveness of each individual, working group and department, and a re-engineering approach to affecting change based on radical positivity and constant positive reinforcement. This approach is collaborative, organic, dynamic and inclusive. It seeks to maximize the strengths of individuals and therefore escalates the productivity and effectiveness of the working groups. This theory implements a series of qualitative measurements so that change is not solely analyzed according to qualitative outputs. A strong emphasis is placed on a progressive approach to leading organizational change, where sufficient preparatory work is done so as to explore options for change thoroughly. The implementation of change is measured and manageable, and a plan for sustainability is implemented after the various specific tenets of change take place to ensure a long-term impact and true shift in organizational culture and practice.

Finally, Burke (2008) elevated and promoted the Transformational Leadership theory, which underscores the paramount importance of an effective leader as the primary impetus for organization change. Burke argued for a new generation of leaders who are inspirational and visionary, who lead by example and adopt a posture of humility and service. Transformational leaders raise the level of play for the entire organization by investing in people and encouraging individual team members to make a contribution on a daily basis and to maximize their own potential. Transformational leadership depends on a management team who listens well and seeks the input of all team members. In this model, the organizational culture is organic and collaborative, focusing heavily on team work and the sum total of individual contributions. Transformational leaders understand that all of us are smarter than one of us and they tend to hire and not be threatened by

gifted team members who compliment their giftedness and compensate for their weaknesses. A transformational leader seeks to transform the organization by making a significant, daily and consistent investment in the lives of the individuals who comprise the team that they lead.

### Positivity and Transformational Leadership

Northouse (2004) defined Transformational Leadership as a “process that changes and transforms people” (p. 67). The ultimate goal is to change and to transform organizations. The focus is a leader-centric approach examining the ability of the leader to both inspire and motivate at the same time. It focuses on the ability of the leader to build confidence in the hearts and minds of team members and therefore raise their sights to new and expanded personal and corporate possibilities. It is a positive and proactive approach built on enthusiasm and encouragement. Northouse framed Transformational Leadership as an approach that “is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards and long-term goals. It includes assessing followers’ motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings” (p.74). It is a system built on influence that leans heavily on the charismatic style of the leader and is utterly dependent upon his or her ability to transfer a given vision to the other team members in positive, proactive ways.

Bass and Riggio (2006) argued that the reason that this style of leadership might be such a popular theoretical and managerial strain might be due to the pressing need for certainty and positivity in the midst of uncertain times. Therefore, this more open and affirming approach to navigating and mitigating the stresses of work would seem comforting and stable in the midst of a rapidly changing cultural and economic climate. Nielsen, Yarker, Brenner, Randall, and Borg (2008) affirmed this notion and focused on

the necessity of a consistently reassuring demeanor on the part of the leader for inspiring confidence and enhancing the well-being of employees. They argued that there are significant emotional and often debilitating stresses that ensue when a leader acts in erratic or negative way. The authors focused most specifically on the needs of older workers in the workplace and concluded that a tenuous and overly critical environment is not only detrimental to the health and psyche of employees but this kind of vitriolic environment is also exceptionally counter-productive.

#### Transformational Leadership – A Person-centric Leadership Style

This focus on the fundamental tenets of motivating people led to one of the primary values of transformational leadership. This concept of leadership is a person-centric approach and it focuses on truly knowing the individuals who comprise a given team. Transformational leadership really is antithetical to a top-down, heavy-handed, authoritarian leadership style that inspires fear and holds individual team members at arm's length. Transformational Leadership, on the contrary, by definition, is participatory and interactive with a high degree of connectivity. It aspires to be inclusive rather than territorial, affirming rather than autocratic. According to Nielsen, Randall, Yarker, and Brenner, (2008):

Transformational leaders employ a visionary and creative style of leadership that inspires employees to broaden their interest in their work and to be innovative and creative. There is some evidence that transformational leadership style is linked to employee psychological well-being. (p. 13)

This supportive approach to leading, which recognizes and affirms the unique nature and potential contribution of each individual employee, is at the core of this philosophy. The

transformative leader does not see people as means unto ends but as ends in and of themselves. This humanizing recognition of each person's place and inclusion on the team makes supports the presupposition that all individuals have inherent value.

This style of leadership also strives to maximize the strengths of individuals and minimize their weaknesses. Watson (2009) argued that the job satisfaction of employees is directly linked to the ability of the leader to mobilize individuals toward tasks where they succeed and thrive. Watson believed that this feeling of significance is essential to productivity and longevity in the workplace. Watson continued, noting that, according to her research, when a person feels successful and vital at work, his or her physical health is improved and time off for illness diminishes. Watson believed that there is a severe price to pay in both employee job satisfaction and productivity when work environments are negative and overly stressful. Nielsen, Randall, Yarker, and Brenner, (2008) affirmed this bent toward positive reinforcement and inspiration in the workplace as they also focused on the concept of employee participation and inclusion. They contended that if individuals perceive themselves as an integral part of team or an insider at work and they feel viscerally connected to the vision and mission of an organization, then they become increasingly invested in the company's success. Nevertheless, if they feel somehow marginalized or redundant, these same employees will have difficulty focusing and will ultimately function at a diminished intensity. The transformational leader therefore inspires consensus and seeks to build community and a high level of inclusion at all levels of the organization.

## Transformational Leadership and Emotional Intelligence

Yung-Shui and Tung-Chun (2009) drew on the necessity of emotional intelligence in the transformational leader. They contended that the ability to read people and ascertain their own personal emotional, motivational and relational grammar effectively is critical to the ability of a leader to mobilize individuals to make a daily, positive contribution at work. They also argued for a less prescriptive and more collaborative approach to solving problems, strategic planning and organizational assessment. They were convinced that utilizing the sum total of the collected giftedness of a team almost certainly produces better results than the isolated musings of one individual. Moreover, in this context the role of the transformational leader is to bring people together and create space for innovation and creativity. The culture of the transformational environment is empowering and organic. This compelling notion of being chosen, valued, and included is critical to the chemistry of this atmosphere. The role of the transformational leader is to eliminate obstacles that would undermine this sense of community, while simultaneously reminding everyone continually of a vision that is greater than just one person. Concurrently, a transformational leader must be a member and the leader of the pack and she or he must possess the ability to understand people beyond just a cursory or functional level. The philosopher Goethe (1999) stated:

I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. I possess tremendous power to make life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis is escalated

or de-escalated, and a person is humanized or de-humanized. If we treat people as they are, we make them worse. If we treat people as they ought to be, we help them become what they are capable of becoming. (p. 59)

### Charisma and The Transformational Leader

According to Northouse (2004), it is insufficient for a leader to understand people only. Rather, the transformational leader must also possess the keen ability to inspire and motivate others to action. The ability to communicate effectively, the capacity to articulate a compelling vision, the aptitude to lead in a seemingly effortless and confident manner, the propensity to accomplish extraordinary things, the aptitude to solve complex problems and the knack for connecting with people are the fundamental tenets of charisma. Northouse was convinced that charisma is a primary attribute of the transformational leader. Chung-Kia and Chia-Hung (2009) were in agreement, as they espoused the necessity of charisma to effect change. They contended that the level of charisma exhibited by the leader must be sufficient as to elicit trust in the minds of the stakeholders of an organization. They placed a high value on confidence in leadership as the predicate for the loyal and engaged allegiance of team members across the organization. They also illuminated the need for consistent contact and interaction between team members and the transformational leader in an effort to sustain the energy and connectivity necessary in a thriving, progressive organization.

Resick, Whitman, Weingarden, and Hiller (2009) found consensus and synthesis with this understanding of the essential nature of charisma in the personality of the transformational leader and they affirmed the essential nature of an attractive and energized style for motivating colleagues and employees. But they cautioned against an

overreliance on the persona and giftedness of a charismatic leader. They encouraged organizations to build a strong and capable leadership team around the transformational leader as both a contingency as well as a check-and-balance measure against rogue behavior. They also argued for well-thought-out succession and transition plans at the end of the tenure of a transformational leader. They illuminated the risks of relying too heavily on a transformational leader to embody an organizational vision and encouraged organizations to diversify to guard against mission creep and the moral failure of a transformational leader. Given the historical perspective of transformational leaders who have strayed from an organizational vision or abused the power of an office or the trust of a people, it is prudent to consider these objections and account for the possible downside of the transformational construct. Northouse (2004) also listed limitations to this theory and illuminates the egocentric and antidemocratic tendencies of charismatic, transformational leaders. He also argued that the preponderance of the evidentiary proof around transformational leadership focuses too heavily on the role and personality of the leader and fails to explore the outcomes and performance of the followers sufficiently.

#### Transformational Leadership, Education and Diversity

Even while conceding the endemic and obvious limitations of the model for Transformational Leadership, it was obvious that this approach to leadership was gaining popularity. For example, Bolkan and Goodboy (2009) outlined the benefits of transformational leadership in an educational context and emphasize the need in the classroom, which results in “fostering student learning, student participation, and teacher credibility” (p. 6). For classroom purposes, their contention was that Transformational Leadership, which is engaging, positive, upbeat, proactive, empowering, and even fun

increased the ability of grade school children to participate, learn, and excel. In fact, they argued that the capacity for comprehension and cognition is dramatically expanded as the level of comfort and confidence, which is engendered by the transformational leader, also increases. Bolkan and Goodboy also illuminated the profoundly negative consequences associated with a strict, rigid and unimaginative approach to teaching and learning, especially in the early stages of cognitive development as well as in the volatile years at the beginning of adolescence and puberty. They also made an interesting point about the credibility of teachers who are transformational in their approach with both parents and students. They asserted that a tenuous learning environment is the byproduct of the presence educators who are non-transformational that in turn leads to students who are consumed by fear or anxiety. They went as far as to argue that a hyper-strict, autocratic, dictatorial style of teaching might actually cause enduring psychological harm to the learner and produce long-term learning disabilities.

Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen (2006) expanded on the theme of teacher effectiveness in relationship to positivity and the Transformational Leadership model by discovering that along with increased benefits for the students, the motivation, longevity, and effectiveness of teachers is dramatically increased through this leadership paradigm. This research effectively probed the essence of this theory in that there is a possibility of a total organizational evolution when both the students and the teachers are transformed. Schaubroeck, Lam, and Cha (2007) affirmed this notion that individual team members can indeed be transformed through increased agency, a commitment to positivity and positive reinforcement in the workplace, and a shared value system that is daily infused with energy and emphasizes collaboration and mutual respect. This approach to leading



requires the regular affirmation of the contribution of individual employees by a supportive and attentive transformational leader. However, with a mutual commitment to positive change and intentionality around the issue of empowerment, Schaubroeck et al. contended that total organizational change is possible through transformational leadership.

Kezar and Eckel (2008) concurred with the notion of the power of transformational leadership in education but they framed the benefits in the context of higher education rather than at the elementary and secondary school level. They began by highlighting a number of historic, negative trends around the issues of diversity, inclusion, and the less-than-ideal academic performance of certain minority groups in higher education. They explored the need for rapid and holistic change around these issues and emphasized the need for transformational leaders who will champion these causes and build a university-wide consensus, specifically at the presidential level. In essence, they argued that the primary way to engineer true and sustainable change was to rely on the influence of a transformational leader at the highest levels of the organizational structure, who would insist that change was enacted and progress made. Kezar and Eckel also emphasized the importance of well-placed coalition connectors who were transformational in various key areas of the college or university, but they placed the mantle for transformation squarely on the shoulders of the president. While this particular example of transformational leadership did build on the charismatic and collaborative nature of transformational model, it might be said that there was an overemphasis on consolidated power, and therefore a lack of shared agency and mutuality. In effect, if the transformational leader was too prescriptive, then the

fundamental tenets of this theory broke down and trended toward a more authoritarian approach. Nevertheless, Kezar and Eckel were successful in building the case for transformational presidents in colleges and universities.

Kearney and Gebert (2009) took a slightly different tact in the dialogue surrounding diversity, team performance and transformational leadership. They contended that in the presence of a high-performing transformational leader, the difficulties around certain issues of diversity could be successfully mitigated and even permanently quelled. Their research pointed to cases when transformational leaders were able to combat discrimination from the perspectives of ethnicity, gender, and age proactively in various organizational contexts; in effect, these transformational leaders were able to move organizations to embrace higher degrees of diversity and inclusion by advocating for the benefits of ethnic, gender, and age-related participation, and by simultaneously embracing positivity. While the rule of the transformational leader was to ultimately transform the fabric of the organization, the transformation really took place in the lives of individuals who comprised smaller working groups. Thus, as the transformational leader was able to effect change in these small units around the issue of diversity, the chemistry of the organization as a whole also evolved concurrently. According to Kearney and Gebert, the role of the transformational leader should not be underestimated or diminished in the context of orchestrating organization change around complex and systemic difficulties. Indeed, they believed that categorical change would not exist without the intervention of a positive, transformational leader.

## Transformational Leadership and the Church

Rowold (2008) approached transformational leadership from the context of religion and the church. Rowold examined the relationship between the ministerial transformational leader and his or her congregants. He asserted transformational leadership and a positive disposition was the most effective mode of leadership in a religious context. He aptly illuminated the need for further inquiry in this area because of the centuries of patriarchal and authoritarian tactics to religious leadership. Even so, his work was an appropriate entrée into discovering fundamental tenets of positivity and transformational leadership in this context. He argued effectively for the promotion of positivity and the transformational leadership model as the prevailing ideal since the overarching mission of the church was, indeed, to transform individuals and society. While he conceded that the church, both historically and currently, was less inclusive, diverse, tolerant, and communal, than transformational leadership required, he did also outline instances that were antithetical to this normative state of the church and sensibility among the clergy. In all of the exceptional cases that he cited, the transformations of the individual churches were led by a consistently positive transformative leader who articulated and embodied a new doctrine of expansion, inclusion, and growth.

Rowold (2008) also underscored the increased satisfaction of the congregants while participating with a more progressive and transformative approach to building an organizational culture and receiving consistent positive reinforcement. This new openness and inclusion, as well as an increased emphasis on heartening the strengths of individuals toward the end of serving others, rather than focusing insistently on the

weaknesses and failures of congregants served to encourage, embolden, and inspire congregations to increased mission fulfillment, enlarged faith, and more regular church attendance. Rowold asserted that this conversion was especially difficult to ensure due to the deeply entrenched belief system of congregants and clergy. The clerical necessity of biblical authority and the congregational comfort level with a more prescriptive creed, served as significant impediments to transformational leadership and real organizational change. However, with a decade-long, declining national trend in church attendance and religious involvement, Rowold framed the Transformational Leadership Model as the primary hope for the future of the Church.

Even though Rowold's (2008) study was contextual and rather narrow in scope, it did serve to clarify a fundamental objective around the model of Transformational Leadership. The purpose of the Transformational Model is to lead individuals toward personal transformation, which in turn prompts a positive organization transformation. While the transformational construct is certainly interested in the abilities, personality, and performance of the leader, the success or failure of Transformational Leadership is ultimately measured in the transformation, ingenuity, creativity, inspiration, and productivity of transformed people. To that end, Transformational Leadership seems to be one of the most affirming and effective forms of leadership.

#### Positivity and Ethics

This focus on positivity and positive reinforcement in Transformational Leadership led naturally to the ethical treatment of human beings and the ethical nature of a positive organizational culture. Tannsjo (2008) set out to offer an introduction to moral theory and frame the current "practical problems" in consort with the "normative ethics"

of today (p. 1). He raised a series of modern moral questions and asked the reader to engage those current moral conundrums at the personal, familial, corporate, and societal levels. He drew upon the sensibilities of the global citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and assumed that those who encounter his work are of some means and not in abject poverty, and therefore bear some responsibility for acting morally and applying moral principles for affecting the common good of humankind and the earth. His intention was clear. He stated a hope to raise issues and ask questions that influence the way that the reader “decide(s) to live (his or her) life” (p. 3). He also made the assumption that the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was an epoch of intense decline in moral and ethical activity globally and that the moral state of societies and nations around the world was in need of great repair. He touched briefly on the relationship between morality and religion as he drew on the work of Aquinas to make a case for a good God who influences human beings toward good action.

Tannsjo (2008) addressed the moral theories of egoism and contractualism as he contrasted those theories with utilitarianism. While egoism views the world through a self-centric lens and concludes that the only moral obligation of human beings is to care for oneself, contractualism purports the idea of a mutual exchange of good action, positivity and positive reinforcement and the avoidance of bad action for the common benefit of all parties. In this way, contractualism differed from utilitarianism in that it promotes the idea of mutuality, but merely in the most perfunctory of ways rather than the more intrinsically motivated tenets of utilitarianism. Tannsjo also explored the concept of good action for the sake of good action, and not for beneficial consequences, whether egocentric or advantageous to the majority population. Deontological ethics, as

articulated by Kant (as stated in Tannsjo) are in essence, “the only thing good in all circumstances is good will” (p. 57). This conception of ethics stands in opposition to the moral and ethical theories that promote good action as a means unto an end and underscores the value of good action without regard to consequence. And with that in mind, Kant’s Categorical Imperative was a way of measuring the value of good action for its own sake rather than against the utilitarian backdrop of the benefit of the whole.

Tannsjo (2008) explored the concepts of the moral rights of human beings and the corresponding moral laws that are true for all people at all times. If one supposes that there are no intrinsic and mutually applicable moral rights, then this assumption would likely lead to the devaluing of human life and a moral ethic dictated primarily by the possession of power and wealth. If there are no basic moral rights for human beings, then there is no regard for the value of each individual, regardless of status, to those who possess the most power. He argued that in a way, those in power and authority are morally obligated to act in positive, mutually beneficial ways toward those over whom they have authority. Tannsjo also explored the concept of virtue ethics and therefore turned an ideological corner away from the meaning and consequences of right or wrong actions, instead moving toward the composition of a person’s character. Value ethics centers on the question, “what kind of person ought I to be?” (p. 90). This intriguing strain of the ethical and moral discourse is important as it emphasizes the moral obligation and agency of every individual in society. It also does not suppose that one’s station in life is permanent or innate. Rather, this theory explores the idea that human beings can evolve and change for the better regardless of one’s place or status in life; in that, virtue ethics promotes the idea that all human beings, with the proper positive

influences, can be good and perform good actions regardless of race, creed, and level of intellect or socio-economic status, which is a radical departure from classic moral theories that reserved good actions solely for the learned and elite.

In a similar way, Cooper (2004) set out to write an ethical field manual of sorts to assist professionals in understanding moral philosophies and navigating ethical issues in the context of a varied and diverse world. He insisted on the predicate of positivity and good actions as he built on the work of classic moral philosophers such as Aristotle, Aquinas, Rousseau, Kant, and Hume to track the trajectory of moral philosophy from ancient understandings to present day interpretations. His intent was to assist the reader in developing a working and robust “Moral Point of View” for real-world use that is dynamic, current, informed and prescient (p. 5). For Cooper, moral philosophy and the corresponding study of ethics was seemingly banal if left to the theoretical alone. Instead, the ethical constructs that Cooper purported were person-centric, contextual, and consequential to all involved.

Cooper (2004) built on the adage that “the background shapes the foreground” (p. 2) as he began to construct a means for understanding morality, philosophy, and ethics. He raised the human cognitive tendency of “projection” (p. 2) as a common trap for viewing and understanding the world. Projection is the inclination to view the entire world devoid of context and through the lens of one’s own personal experience and biases. For example, if one were to analyze the ethical nature of family relationships or the normative moral practices of a corporate culture in Beijing through the lens of the culture and customs of Chicago, one would likely misinterpret the cultural causes and effects of this Chinese city. And if the reverse analysis were to take place from Beijing to

Chicago, then this same kind of cognitive chasm would likely exist. This insight of the central role of self-interest was indeed assumed to be a cardinal tenet of all of humankind. The concept of projection illuminates the fact that as human beings we cannot understand human activity, interactions, or reactions, devoid of our own historical understanding and experiences. The sum total of our individual experiences shapes who we are and the corresponding way that we viewed the world and all that lies therein. We cannot be a third party to our own cognition and perception. shaped He raised this point to encourage an individual corrective if in fact one is not naturally inclined toward positive, ethical action and does not naturally possess a positive disposition.

Cooper (2004) explored the topics of “moral agency” and “situational control” (p. 12). He argued that moral agency was unique to the human animal and was endemic to human beings’ ability to reason. Moreover, with this moral agency came moral responsibility for superintending creation and human relationships with an increased degree of moral and ethical certitude and care. He used examples of “moral dilemmas” to establish a framework for a “model decision procedure” (pp. 42-43). He emphasized the concept that moral agents are those who are “held responsible” for their actions because they “know the difference between right and wrong” (p. 46). Therefore, by definition, there would be a gradation of moral agency within the human experience and among humankind because certain human beings would either not have the experience, breadth of knowledge, or mental capacity to be held responsible for their own actions. For example, young children may not have developed the cognitive skills to delineate right from wrong, therefore, not be fully accountable for their own actions or the same may be true for a person suffering from Alzheimer’s Disease, where an individual’s



understanding may have diminished to the degree that she or he cannot formulate cogent moral or ethical arguments and would therefore lack the sufficient moral agency to be responsible for her or his own actions.

Cooper (2004) did draw the important distinction between moral agency and “situational control” (p. 48) that is a commonly-invoked psychological term to describe the weight of external and situational pressures that come to bear and alter a person’s ability to reason and act according to certain moral or ethical standards. Whereas moral agency might apply to a physiological condition, situational control is more of a psycho-social description. For example, an individual might lack situational control if they were homeless and without sufficient food or shelter for an extended time period, so that his or her capacity for reason was diminished to the degree that moral reasoning was sufficiently impaired. Both moral agency and situational control have implications for applied ethics in various contexts. It was around this point where Cooper argued most definitively for positivity and consistent positive actions for those who possess power and therefore have an increased moral obligation to affect good in an organization.

Cooper (2004) also extensively explored the arena of “professionalism” (p. 57) and ethical conduct as he made the case for a common ethical and moral demeanor for the treatment of other human beings in a professional setting. He argued for a *normative* understanding of professionalism rather than a more prescriptive approach to professional ethics. He contended that a shared ethical understanding with a prevailing mutuality and emphasis on the common good was more likely to result in an environment that honors all human beings rather than a list of rules by which all must abide. There was connectivity between motive and action, intrinsic motivations, and person-centric

outcomes that was superior to a rote moral litany of simply following ethical rules. This is not to say that there was not a place for ethical and moral absolutes without emotive overtones, but Cooper's ideal for professionalism rested on a common commitment of those in power to wield their influence in positive ways for the common benefit and edification of all involved. He appropriately illuminated topics such as bigotry, evil, and even "skepticism" (p. 77) as the results of insufficient or impotent moral and ethical philosophies that did not reshape the normative state of a society and therefore did not advance the common good. Cooper further argued that the failure to advance and embrace ethical and moral practices that honor and promote the dignity of all of humankind was the essence of the historical trends that have ruined nations and caused worldwide calamity, genocide, and unrest.

Cooper (2004) turned the corner from the more theoretical to more current trends in "cognitive and moral development" (p. 104). He first touted the progressing of true understanding of an increased awareness, to a cognitive shift both in individual people and then in groups of people. Cognitive development leads to behavioral changes that are the actualization of ethical and moral theories and the beginning of true societal change. Therefore, moral development builds successful cognitive development, as Cooper embraced the idea that women and men become what they ponder. He argued that for this reason, the imperative for invoking positivity in the workplace is especially consequential. He also raised the issue of "voice" as he attempted to explain some of the current trends in regards to agency (p. 112). Voice pertains to an individual's ability and moral authority to represent his or herself in the context of the current moral or ethical discourse or even in the midst of moral or ethical conundrums. For example, if an

employee is routinely demeaned by a superior or marginalized from the locus of power, their voice and agency are diminished, and this lack of positive reinforcement is therefore unethical.

Cooper (2004) also elevated the current emphasis on gender and ethnic differences in moral and cognitive development. He spoke to the issues of gender and ethnic-specific derivations in moral philosophy that derive from gender and ethnic-specific understandings of the world, shaded by the historical treatment of women, children and minority populations and the emerging and continued push for equality in all of these arenas. Cooper aptly framed these ethical issues around the juxtaposition of power and marginalization as he calls on the stakeholders in these debates who possess the power and influence to limit their own power voluntarily and relinquish agency in favor of a more positive, affirming, and equitable moral and ethical construct and to again advance the common good of all of those who comprise an organization.

### Conclusion

There was a clear dialogical path toward the benefits of positivity and positive reinforcement for effective ethical leadership. The major leadership theories all emphasized positivity to various degrees. The case for this transformational style of leadership was clear and compelling and a worthy basis for both qualitative and qualitative inquiry. The trends in the canons of literature around the topics of leadership and ethics required the further explication of positivity as both an effective way to lead and an ethical way to live. Applying this methodology and lens to the line of discovery outlined in the research questions for this study appeared to be logical and prudent.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

After a thorough review of the leadership, motivational, ethical, organizational change, and organizational culture literature, there was sufficient evidence for further exploration of the impact of positivity and positive reinforcement on organizational culture, employee satisfaction, employee retention, and employee productivity. Clearly, dialogical patterns and trends were apparent in the literature for the support of the execution and utilization of the theoretical principles surrounding the liberal use of positivity and positive reinforcement and for a proactive and productive style of management and leadership. In addition, Scheer (2009), who delved deeply into the effects of positive reinforcement, resource munificence, and worker motivation in the context of higher education at the community college level, suggested that “research at four-year colleges and universities is a logical extension” of his research (p. 158). He encouraged further inquiry into these topics in those settings. This prompting and the gap in the existing canon of leadership research on the topic of positivity and employee motivation, as outlined by Schein (2004), prompted the researcher to explore the effects of positivity and positive reinforcement with admissions professionals at Nazarene Higher Education Institutions (NHEI).

Mirroring Scheer’s (2009) research, the following questions guided the methodology of this investigation

1. To what degree is positivity in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees in selected Nazarene Higher Education Institutions?
2. To what degree is positive reinforcement in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees?
3. To what degree is the perceived positivity of an administrator related to the satisfaction, retention and productivity of employees?

Because Scheer established a reliable and valid qualitative survey mechanism in this line of inquiry, the same survey mechanism (See Attachment A) was used for this research project to build on his recommendations for further examination and discovery. The design of the research followed the lines of the inquiry that emerged from the literature review and to test the practice and implications of the use of positivity and positive reinforcement in the arena of college and university recruitment.

This research also followed the research findings of Locke and Latham (1990), and of Seijts, Latham, Tasa, and Latham (2004), as they suggested further research among various sales forces in a variety of sectors. They asserted that positivity and positive reinforcement were positively correlated to increased employee satisfaction, retention and productivity. They also asserted that the attitudinal disposition and practices of the supervisor of individuals involved in sales as a profession was of great importance concerning employee motivation and satisfaction. Their research did not attempt to test the use of positivity and positive reinforcement in the area of higher education recruitment and therefore a gap existed in their line of inquiry. The current study was

built on their findings and examined the effects of positivity and positive reinforcement in for admissions professionals in NHEI.

### Research Design

The research project was a quantitative study and the research data were collected via an online survey mechanism. Once the data were collected, the researcher began by analyzing frequencies, for each value of each variable, to determine the number of times that a particular score occurred in a data set (Argyrous, 2005). Descriptive statistics were utilized to organize, separate, codify and deliver the data using a numeric and tabular methodology (Argyrous). The descriptive statistics that were analyzed for each survey question were the range, standard deviation, mean, and standard error of the mean. The range is the difference between the highest and lowest scores of a data set. If the range is small, the scores will be close together and if the range is large the gap in the scores will be wider. The standard deviation is the most frequently used measure of variability because of its stability and the fact that it includes every score in its calculation. A small standard deviation indicates that scores are close together and a large standard deviation indicates that the scores are more widely spread apart. The mean is the most preferred measure of central tendency and is calculated by adding all of the scores together and dividing that total by the number of scores. The mean represents the average score among a group of scores. Also, the standard error of the mean describes how much one can expect the sample means to differentiate if other samples are used from the same population. A small standard error of the mean indicates less sampling error (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). One sample  $t$  tests for a mean were used. A  $t$  test for a mean is utilized

to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between two means (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Effect sizes determine the size of the statistically significant differences (Thalheimer & Cook, 2002). Cohen's  $d$  was used to analyze the effect size and was calculated by taking the mean difference divided by the standard deviation for each question that was deemed to have statistical significance. The effect sizes of .2 to .49 were interpreted as small, .5 to .79 were interpreted as medium, and .8 and above were interpreted as large (Cohen, 1992).

### Population

The population for the study was comprised of admissions professionals from the eight NHEI within the United States, who were currently employed at a NHEI, at the time of the study. Through a series of thorough internet searches and many conversations with admissions professionals at the eight NHEI within the United States, 98 NHEI admissions professionals were identified and invited to participate in the study. Seventy-three professionals responded to the invitation by completing an online survey (See Appendix A) via the internet survey provider, *Survey Monkey*. Seventy-one of the surveys were valid and two were invalid. This response rate of 73% far exceeded the 30% survey response rate deemed satisfactory by Cooper and Schindler (2003) in order to achieve reliable results.

To analyze the demographics of the population, the researcher began by analyzing frequencies, for each value of each variable, to determine the number of times a particular score occurred in a data set (Argyrous, 2005). (See Table 1)

Table 1

*Population Demographics*


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	<u>n</u>	<u>percentages</u>
Gender		
Male	41	57.7
Female	30	42.3
Age		
< 30	39	54.9
30 – 39	23	32.4
40 – 49	6	8.5
50 – 59	3	4.2
Highest Academic Achievement		
Bachelor's degree	46	64.8
Master's degree	25	35.2
Years of Service		
< 5	36	50.7
< 10 but > 5	26	36.6
10 – 15	6	8.5
> 15	3	4.2
Regional Accreditation		
North Central	39	54.9
Southern	5	7.0



Northwest	2	2.8
Western	15	21.6
New England	3	4.2
Do Not Know	7	9.9
Student Recruitment Involvement Job Title	71	100
Recruiter	3	4.2
Admissions Counselor	48	67.6
Admissions/Enrollment Director, Manager, or Associate Director	12	16.9
Other	8	11.3

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#### Data collection

The population was identified and a list was compiled over a 28-day period and the data were collected over a period of 45 days. After the population for the study was identified, the researcher e-mailed an invitation to the study and a link to the online survey on three separate occasions, with e-mailed descriptions of the survey and invitations to participate. The researcher utilized an online self-report survey mechanism to collect the data, compiled from five different scales listed below, from a sufficient sample of 73 NHEI admissions professionals throughout the United States. Because the eight NHEI institutions are located in various regions throughout the United States, the survey was distributed geographically without preference to various regional nuances, in order to be more generalizable to the entire NHEI population of admissions professionals

than a local distribution would be. The survey collected data using an itemized rating scale methodology that incorporated a combination of valid and reliable scales that were utilized by Scheer (2009) that measured the effects of positivity, the effects of positive reinforcement, job satisfaction and job performance of admissions professionals. Five scales were utilized: the Job Satisfaction Survey by Spector (1985); the Shortened Organizational Commitment Questionnaire by Mowday, et al. (1979); the General Perceived Self-Efficacy Scale by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1995); the On-the-Job Behaviors: Positive work behaviors and psychological withdrawal behaviors subscales by Lehman and Simpson (1992); and a rating and ranking scale intended to assess the resources specific to NHEI recruiting activities.

The chronology and sequence of the process to collect the data were as follows: The researcher began by identifying and selecting the reliable survey mechanism mentioned in the previous paragraphs, which would adequately address the research questions. Next, the researcher identified the research population through a thorough search of the Internet websites of the eight NHEI in the United States and began to compile a list of admissions professionals at each of those institutions. Because a high degree of contact with admissions professionals and prospective students is desirable and necessary in the admissions process, the e-mail addresses of the admissions professionals were readily available and published on each of the college and university websites. The duration of the process of identifying the research population and compiling an e-mail distribution list was approximately four weeks, or 28 days. Again, 98 NHEI admissions professionals were identified at that time.

When the research population was established and an e-mail distribution list was compiled, the researcher then e-mailed an invitation to the study and an embedded link to the online survey to all of the admissions professionals on the distribution list on three separate occasions. The three separate outreaches were separated by five business days and took place over the course of 15 business days. The researcher purchased and utilized a function of Survey Monkey that both distributed the survey each time and ensured that each admissions professional was only able to respond once. After 45 calendar days, the researcher disabled the online survey mechanism and ended the data collection process. At the end of that period, 73 NHEI admissions professionals had responded and completed the survey. Seventy-one of the 73 completed surveys were deemed acceptable and usable by the researcher. Two surveys were disqualified due to significant abnormalities in the answers to the survey items, such as zero variation in the answers to all items throughout the entire survey and only responding to one item on the entire survey.

Through the survey mechanism and to address the first research question, the researcher gathered information from NHEI admissions professionals regarding their attitudes towards positivity in the workplace. A Likert-type scale was utilized in the online survey to measure the attitudes of the NHEI admissions professionals in the office of admissions and in the overall atmosphere of the colleges and universities represented. Numbers were assigned to the Likert-type scale responses for coding and analysis. The choice of disagree very much received a 1; the option of disagree moderately received a 2; the choice of disagree slightly received a 3; the option agree slightly received a 4; the choice of agree moderately received a 5; and a 6 was assigned to the rating of agree very

much. This question strived to examine whether or not the central tenets of positivity were evident in the organizational culture of NHEI according to NHEI admissions professionals.

Through the survey mechanism and to address the second research question, the researcher gathered information from NHEI admissions professionals regarding their attitudes towards positive reinforcement in the workplace. Again, a Likert-type scale was utilized in the online survey to measure the attitudes of the NHEI admissions professionals in the office of admissions and in the overall atmosphere of the colleges and universities represented. Numbers were assigned to the Likert-type scale responses for coding and analysis. The choice of does not apply, not used, or do not know received a 1; the choice of disagree very much received a 2; the option of disagree moderately received a 3; the choice of disagree slightly received a 4; the option agree slightly received a 5; the choice of agree moderately received a 6; and a 7 was assigned to the rating of agree very much.

Through the survey mechanism and to address the third research question, the researcher gathered information from NHEI admissions professionals regarding their attitudes towards the perceived positivity of an administrator in the workplace. Once more, a Likert-type scale was also utilized in the online survey to measure the attitudes of the NHEI admissions professionals in the office of admissions and in the overall atmosphere of the colleges and universities represented. Numbers were assigned to the Likert-type scale responses for coding and analysis. The choice of high motivating power received a 1; the choice of medium/moderate motivating power received a 2; and the option of low motivating power received a 3. This question sought to examine the degree

to which the positivity of an administrator and the use of the central tenets of positivity would serve as a moderate or high motivating factor in the organizational culture of NHEI, according to NHEI admissions professionals.

### Analytical Methods

Utilizing a portion of the analytical methodology outlined by Scheer (2009), once the data were collected, the researcher began by analyzing frequencies, for each value of each variable, to determine the number of times that a particular score occurred in a data set (Argyrous, 2005). Descriptive statistics were utilized to organize, separate, codify and deliver the data using a numeric and tabular methodology (Argyrous). The descriptive statistics that were analyzed for each survey question were the range, standard deviation, mean, and standard error of the mean. The range is the difference between the highest and lowest scores of a data set. If the range is small, the scores will be close together and if the range is large the gap in the scores will be wider. The standard deviation is the most frequently used measure of variability because of its stability and the fact that it includes every score in its calculation. A small standard deviation indicates that scores are close together and a large standard deviation indicates that the scores are more widely spread apart. The mean is the most preferred measure of central tendency and is calculated by adding all of the scores together and dividing that total by the number of scores. The mean represents the average score among a group of scores. Also, the standard error of the mean describes how much one can expect the sample means to differentiate if other samples are used from the same population. A small standard error of the mean indicates less sampling error (Gay et al., 2006). One sample *t* tests for a mean

were used. A  $t$  test for a mean is utilized to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between two means (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

Effect sizes determine the size of the statistically significant differences (Thalheimer & Cook, 2002). Cohen's  $d$  was used to analyze the effect size and was calculated by taking the mean difference divided by the standard deviation for each question that was deemed to have statistical significance. The effect sizes of .2 to .49 were interpreted as small, .5 to .79 were interpreted as medium, and .8 and above were interpreted as large (Cohen, 1992). All of the aforementioned methodologies were used to measure the extent of correlation of positivity in organizational behavior to enhance satisfaction, retention and productivity of NHEI recruitment employees, the correlation of positive reinforcement in organizational behavior to enhance satisfaction, retention and productivity of NHEI recruitment employees, and the correlation of the perceived positivity of an administrator impact the satisfaction, retention, and productivity of NHEI recruitment employees. Once the variables of positivity and positive reinforcement were shown to correlate sufficiently with the variables of satisfaction, retention and productivity, then the extent of the correlation could be established and analyzed.

### Limitations

As with any research investigation, there are issues that prevent the investigation to be without flaws or deficits. This particular study was limited by time and a limited population. The results of the survey would likely have been more detailed and enhanced by an extended time period for discovery and a larger population of respondents. The study was also limited by a lack of clarity and specificity in regards to the specific extent of the use of positivity and positive reinforcement in the various settings that were

surveyed. A more thorough understanding of the leadership styles and methods utilized in various contexts would have offered a more complete understanding of the various tenets and benefits of positivity and positive reinforcement in NHEI. The study was also limited to the NHEI in the United States and would have likely benefited from a more international understanding of the use and benefits of positivity and positive reinforcement in a variety of nations and cultures.

The study was also limited to NHEI admissions professionals who were currently employed at NHEI the time of the study. The results of the study would have likely been enhanced by identifying and surveying employees who are no longer employed by NHEI. This historical perspective would likely have illuminated the effects of the utilization or lack of utilization of positivity and positive reinforcement in NHEI in a more comprehensive and multi-valent manner. The study was also limited specifically to admissions professionals and did not include members of the support staff in the admissions offices at NHEI. Again, the inclusion of support staff persons would likely have led to a more complete understanding of the effects of positivity and positive reinforcement on organizational culture.

## CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

### Introduction

The previous chapter outlined and described the detailed methodology and process to accomplish this research and to address the research questions. This final chapter, Chapter Four, will focus on the findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations of the study. After analyzing the data and determining the significance of the findings, recommendations for further inquiry and additional research will be made.

The study examined the effects of positivity, positive reinforcement and the perceived positivity of the leader on employee satisfaction, productivity and retention in the context of admissions professionals at Nazarene Higher Education Institutions (NHEI). The research was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what degree is positivity in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees in selected Nazarene Higher Education Institutions?
2. To what degree is positive reinforcement in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees in selected NHEI?
3. To what degree is the perceived positivity of an administrator related to the satisfaction, retention and productivity of employees in selected NHEI?



## Findings

### Positivity in NHEI Organizational Culture

The first research question addressed in this study was, “To what degree is positivity in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees in selected Nazarene Higher Education Institutions?” Through the survey mechanism, the researcher gathered information from NHEI admissions professionals regarding their attitudes towards positivity in the workplace. A Likert-type scale was utilized in the online survey to measure the attitudes of the NHEI admissions professionals about the office of admissions and about the overall atmosphere of the colleges and universities represented. Numbers were assigned to the Likert-type scale responses for coding and analysis. The choice of disagree very much received a 1; the option of disagree moderately received a 2; the choice of disagree slightly received a 3; the option agree slightly received a 4; the choice of agree moderately received a 5; and a 6 was assigned to the rating of agree very much. This question strived to examine whether or not the central tenets of positivity were evident in the organizational culture of NHEI, according to NHEI admissions professionals.

The researcher began by analyzing frequencies, for each value of each variable, in order to determine the number of times that a particular score occurred in a data set (Argyrous, 2005). Appendix C contains all of the frequency tables associated with the data set intended to address the first research question and includes the responses of the 71 NHEI admissions professionals who responded in a valid way. The following discussion highlights various important aspects of the frequencies of ratings regarding positivity in organizational culture by NHEI admissions professionals: The question, “I

like my supervisor” was rated as “agree very much” 47 times (66.2%) and “agree moderately” 11 times (15.5%); the question, “I believe my supervisor likes me” was rated as “agree very much” 45 times (63.4%) and “agree moderately” 16 times (22.5%); the question, “I like the people I work with” was rated as “agree very much” 52 times (73.2%) and “agree moderately” 17 times (23.9%); the question, “I enjoy my co-workers” was rated as “agree very much” 38 times (53.5%) and “agree moderately” 28 times (39.4%); the question, “my supervisor encourages me often” was rated “agree very much” 32 times (45.1%) and “agree moderately” 18 times (25.4%); the question, “my job is enjoyable” was rated “agree very much” 26 times (36.6%) and “agree moderately” 32 times (45.1%); the question, “I feel a sense of pride in doing my work” was rated “agree very much” 22 times (31.0%) and “agree moderately” 41 times (57.7%); the question, “I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do” was rated “agree moderately” 21 times (29.6%) and “disagree moderately” 13 times (18.3%); the question, “I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases” was rated “agree slightly” 16 times (22.5%) and “disagree very much” 19 times (26.8%); the question, “I am satisfied with my chances for promotion” was rated “agree slightly” 25 times (35.2%) and “disagree slightly” 12 times (16.9%); and the question, “I am satisfied with the benefits I receive” was rated “agree moderately” 20 times (28.2%), “agree slightly” 17 times (23.9%), and “disagree slightly” 13 times (18.3%).

Descriptive statistics were utilized to organize, separate, codify and deliver the data using a numeric and tabular methodology (Argyrous, 2005). The descriptive statistics that were analyzed in Table 1 were the range, standard deviation, mean, and standard error of the mean. The range is the difference between the highest and lowest

scores of a data set. If the range is small, the scores will be close together and if the range is large the gap in the scores will be wider. The standard deviation is the most frequently used measure of variability because of its stability and the fact that it includes every score in its calculation. A small standard deviation indicates that scores are close together and a large standard deviation indicates that the scores are more widely spread apart. The mean is the most preferred measure of central tendency and is calculated by adding all of the scores together and dividing that total by the number of scores. The mean represents the average score among a group of scores. Also, the standard error of the mean describes how much one can expect the sample means to differentiate if other samples are used from the same population. A small standard error of the mean indicates less sampling error (Gay et al., 2006).

Table 1 indicated that 71 respondents answered all of the survey questions regarding positivity in organizational culture at NHEI in a valid way. The range of scores for the rating of each question was 5. The range is important to analyze because it measures the variability and spread of a data set (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The highest rated question was “I like the people I work with,” with a mean score of 5.62, while the lowest rated question was “I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases,” with a mean score of 3.23. While 14 of the questions had a mean of “agree slightly” or higher, seven questions had a mean of “disagree slightly” or lower. The question with the lowest standard error of the mean was “I like the people I work with,” with a standard error of .107, while the question with the highest standard error of the mean was “I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases,” with a standard error of the mean of .204. Additionally, the question with the lowest standard deviation was “I like the people I

work with,” at .900 and the question with the highest standard deviation was “I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases,” at 1.717.

Table 1

*Descriptive statistics for questions regarding positivity*

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
I like the people I work with.	71	5	1	6	5.62	.107	.900
I enjoy my co-workers.	71	5	1	6	5.38	.112	.947
I believe my supervisor likes me.	71	5	1	6	5.34	.136	1.146
I like my supervisor.	71	5	1	6	5.31	.147	1.237
I feel a sense of pride in doing my work.	71	5	1	6	5.11	.109	.919
My job is enjoyable.	71	5	1	6	5.01	.137	1.153
My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	71	5	1	6	4.85	.195	1.644
My supervisor encourages me often.	71	5	1	6	4.79	.178	1.502
I like the things I do at work.	71	5	1	6	4.51	.170	1.433
The benefits package we have is equitable.	71	5	1	6	4.37	.156	1.312
When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	71	5	1	6	4.28	.149	1.256

My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	71	5	1	6	4.28	.146	1.233
I am satisfied with the benefits I receive.	71	5	1	6	4.04	.160	1.346
Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	71	5	1	6	3.83	.163	1.373
The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	71	5	1	6	3.80	.193	1.627
Communications seem good within the organization.	71	5	1	6	3.75	.185	1.556
I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	71	5	1	6	3.56	.178	1.500
I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	71	5	1	6	3.44	.191	1.610
People get ahead as fast as they do at other places.	71	5	1	6	3.25	.176	1.481
I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	71	5	1	6	3.23	.204	1.717
Valid N (listwise)	71						

Table 2 displays one-sample  $t$  tests for a mean. A  $t$  test for a mean is utilized to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between two means (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). One-sample  $t$  tests for means were computed for the responses given to each survey question answered by the NHEI admissions professional respondents for the rating of each question in order to compare the means obtained by the sample of scores to a hypothesized mean (Robson, 2002). The hypothesized population mean for the one-sample  $t$  test was a middle rating of 3.5 between the choices of “agree slightly” and “disagree slightly.”

The significance of the results of the research questions were established by analyzing the mean response value of the sample population for each survey question. The findings were deemed significant if the mean of the sample population was statistically significant, at the following level, while utilizing the following methodology. A two-tailed  $t$  test was conducted, with the alpha level established at .025. The critical  $t$  value was 2.00, with 70 degrees of freedom, at the .025 level. In order to establish significance, the  $p$  value had to be below .025, the  $t$  value had to be greater than 2.00, and the confidence interval could not contain zero.

After analyzing the data in Table 2, the totality of the evidence was inconclusive in determining whether or not the central tenets of positivity were being utilized in NHEI, according to the NHEI the admissions professionals surveyed. However, in the case of 11 of the 20 total survey questions, the  $p$  value was below .025, the  $t$  value was greater than 2.00, and the confidence level did not contain zero. Therefore, in these 11 cases, the questions had a statistically significant  $t$  score and  $p$  value.

Table 2

*One-Sample t Test for means concerning positivity*

	Test Value = 3.5					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	-.332	70	.741	-.063	-.44	.32
I like my supervisor.	12.324*	70	.000*	1.810	1.52	2.10
I believe my supervisor likes me.	13.518*	70	.000*	1.838	1.57	2.11
Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	2.031*	70	.046	.331	.01	.66
I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	-1.348	70	.182	-.275	-.68	.13
My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	6.892*	70	.000*	1.345	.96	1.73
People get ahead as fast as they do at other places.	-1.403	70	.165	-.246	-.60	.10
My supervisor encourages me often.	7.232*	70	.000*	1.289	.93	1.64
I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	.356	70	.723	.063	-.29	.42
I am satisfied with the benefits I receive.	3.394*	70	.001*	.542	.22	.86

When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	5.246*	70	.000*	.782	.48	1.08
The benefits package we have is equitable.	5.563*	70	.000*	.866	.56	1.18
The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1.569	70	.121	.303	-.08	.69
My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	5.343*	70	.000*	.782	.49	1.07
I like the people I work with.	19.840*	70	.000*	2.120	1.91	2.33
I enjoy my co-workers.	16.736*	70	.000*	1.880	1.66	2.10
I like the things I do at work.	5.921*	70	.000*	1.007	.67	1.35
I feel a sense of pride in doing my work.	14.789*	70	.000*	1.613	1.40	1.83
My job is enjoyable.	11.069*	70	.000*	1.514	1.24	1.79
Communications seem good within the organization.	1.335	70	.186	.246	-.12	.61

\* $t > 2.00$ , \* $p < .025$

Even though the answers to 11 of the questions regarding positivity revealed statistically significant results, the researcher still had to account for effect sizes. Effect sizes determine the size of the statistically significant differences (Thalheimer & Cook, 2002). Cohen's  $d$  was used to analyze the effect size and was calculated by taking the



mean difference divided by the standard deviation for each question that was deemed to have statistical significance. The effect sizes of .2 to .49 were interpreted as small, .5 to .79 were interpreted as medium, and .8 and above were interpreted as large (Cohen, 1992). The question, “I like the people I work with” had a Cohen’s *d* of 2.35 (large effect size); the question, “I enjoy my co-workers” had a Cohen’s *d* of 1.98 (large effect size); the question, “I feel a sense of pride in doing my work” had a Cohen’s *d* of 1.75 (large effect size); the question, “I like my supervisor” had a Cohen’s *d* of 1.46 (large effect size); the question, “My job is enjoyable” had a Cohen’s *d* of 1.31 (large effect size); the question, “I believe my supervisor likes me” had a Cohen’s *d* of 1.25 (large effect size); the question, “My supervisor encourages me often” had a Cohen’s *d* of .85 (large effect size); the question, “The benefits package we have is equitable” had a Cohen’s *d* of .66 (medium effect size); the question, “My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape” had a Cohen’s *d* of .63 (medium effect size); the question, “When I do a good job I receive the recognition that I should receive” had a Cohen’s *d* of .62 (medium effect size); and the question, “I like the things I do at work” had a Cohen’s *d* of .46 (medium effect size).

#### Positive Reinforcement in NHEI Organizational Culture

The second research question addressed in this study was, “To what degree is positive reinforcement in organizational behavior related to satisfaction, retention, and productivity of employees in selected Nazarene Higher Education Institutions?” Through the survey mechanism, the researcher gathered information from NHEI admissions professionals regarding their attitudes towards positive reinforcement in the workplace. A Likert-type scale was utilized in the online survey to measure the attitudes of the NHEI

admissions professionals about the office of admissions and about the overall atmosphere of the colleges and universities represented. Numbers were assigned to the Likert-type scale responses for coding and analysis. The choice of *does not apply*, not used, or do not know received a 1; the choice of disagree very much received a 2; the option of disagree moderately received a 3; the choice of disagree slightly received a 4; the option agree slightly received a 5; the choice of agree moderately received a 6; and a 7 was assigned to the rating of agree very much. This question strived to examine whether or not the central tenets of positive reinforcement were evident in the organizational culture of NHEI according to NHEI admissions professionals.

The researcher began by analyzing frequencies for each value of each variable, in order to determine the number of times that a particular score occurred in a data set (Argyrous, 2005). Appendix D contains all of the frequency tables associated with the data set intended to address the second research question and includes the responses of the 71 NHEI admissions professionals who responded in a valid way. The following discussion highlights various important aspects of the frequencies of ratings regarding positive reinforcement in organizational culture by NHEI admissions professionals: The question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor” was rated “disagree very much” 21 times (29.6%) and “agree very much” 18 times (25.4%); the question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a less geographically dispersed territory” was rated “disagree very much” 20 times (28.2%) and “disagree moderately” 16 times (22.5%); the question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn awards and recognition” was rated “agree

slightly” 16 times (22.5%) and “disagree moderately” 19 times (26.8%); the question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn appointments to committees that help influence college policy” was rated “disagree moderately” 19 times (26.8%) and “agree slightly” 16 times (22.5%); the question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory closer to home” was rated “disagree moderately” 24 times (33.8%) and “disagree very much” 12 times (16.9%); the question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory richer in prospects” was rated “disagree slightly” 15 times (21.1%) and “disagree moderately” 31 times (43.7%); the question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn job promotions” was rated “agree moderately” 13 times (18.3%) and “disagree moderately” 27 times (38.0%); and the question, “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn pay raises” was rated “disagree moderately” 29 times (40.8%) and “disagree very much” 20 times (28.2%).

Descriptive statistics were utilized to organize, separate, codify and deliver the data using a numeric and tabular methodology (Argyrous, 2005). The descriptive statistics that were analyzed in Table 3 were the range, standard deviation, mean, and standard error of the mean. The range is the difference between the highest and lowest scores of a data set. If the range is small, the scores will be close together and if the range is large the gap in the scores will be wider. The standard deviation is the most frequently used measure of variability because of its stability and the fact that it includes every score in its calculation. A small standard deviation indicates that scores are close together and a

large standard deviation indicates that the scores are more widely spread apart. The mean is the most preferred measure of central tendency and is calculated by adding all of the scores together and dividing that total by the number of scores. The mean represents the average score among a group of scores. Also, the standard error of the mean describes how much one can expect the sample means to differentiate if other samples are used from the same population. A small standard error of the mean indicates less sampling error (Gay et al., 2006).

Table 3

*Descriptive statistics for questions regarding positive reinforcement*

	N	Range	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor.	71	6	4.58	.258	2.176
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn job promotions.	71	5	4.11	.198	1.669
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn awards and recognition.	71	6	4.08	.211	1.779
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn appointments to committees that help influence college policy.	71	5	3.76	.182	1.535

Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn pay raises.	71	5	3.24	.166	1.399
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory closer to home.	71	6	3.04	.196	1.651
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory richer in prospects.	71	3	2.69	.118	.994
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a less geographically dispersed territory.	71	4	2.62	.157	1.324
Valid N (listwise)	71				

Table 3 indicated that 71 respondents answered all of the survey questions in a valid way regarding positive reinforcement in organizational culture at NHEI. The range of scores for the rating of each question was 3, 4, 5 or 5. The range is important to analyze because it measures the variability and spread of a data set (Leedy & Ormrod,

2005). The highest rated question was “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor,” with a mean score of 4.58, while the lowest rated question was “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a less geographically dispersed territory,” with a mean score of 2.62. While three of the questions had a mean of “agree slightly” or higher, five questions had a mean of “disagree slightly” or lower. The question with the lowest standard error of the mean was “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory richer in prospects,” with a standard error of .118, while the question with the highest standard error of the mean was “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor,” with a standard error of the mean of .258. Additionally, the question with the lowest standard deviation was “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory richer in prospects,” at .994 and the question with the highest standard deviation was “Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor,” at 2.176.

Table 4 displays one-sample *t* tests for a mean. A *t* test for a mean is utilized to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between two means (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). One-sample *t* tests for means were computed for the responses given to each survey question answered by the NHEI admissions professional respondents for the rating of each question in order to compare the means obtained by the sample of scores.(Robson, 2002). The hypothesized population mean for the one-sample *t* test was a middle rating score of 4, which was the choice of “disagree slightly.”

The significance of the results of the research questions were established by analyzing the mean response value of the sample population for each survey question. The findings were deemed significant, if the mean of the sample population was *statistically significant*, at the following level, while utilizing the following methodology. A two-tailed  $t$  test was conducted, with the alpha level established at .025. The critical  $t$  value was 2.00, with 70 degrees of freedom, at the .025 level. In order to establish significance, the  $p$  value had to be below .025, the  $t$  value had to be greater than 2.00, and the confidence interval could not contain zero.

After analyzing the data in Table 4, the totality of the evidence was inconclusive in determining whether or not the central tenets of positive reinforcement were being utilized in NHEI, according to NHEI the admissions professionals surveyed. In the case of all eight questions, the ratings all failed to meet all of the requirements simultaneously for significance of 13 with a  $p$  value below .025, a  $t$  value greater than 2.00, and a confidence level that did not contain zero. As a result, in these eight cases, there was no clear evidence of the use of positive reinforcement with NHEI admissions professionals. Additionally, because no statistically significant results were found it was not necessary to explore effect sizes with through the use of Cohen's  $d$  (Cohen, 1992).



Table 4

*One-Sample Test for means concerning positive reinforcement*

	Test Value = 4					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor.	2.237*	70	.029	.577	.06	1.09
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a less geographically dispersed territory.	-8.783	70	.000*	-1.380	-1.69	-1.07
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn awards and recognition.	.400	70	.690	.085	-.34	.51

Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn appointments to committees that help influence college policy.	-1.314	70	.193	-.239	-.60	.12
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory closer to home.	-4.887	70	.000*	-.958	-1.35	-.57
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory richer in prospects.	- 11.102	70	.000*	-1.310	-1.55	-1.07
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn job promotions.	.569	70	.571	.113	-.28	.51
Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn pay raises.	-4.582	70	.000*	-.761	-1.09	-.43

\* $t > 2.00$ , \* $p < .025$

## The Effects of the Perceived Positivity of an Administrator in Organizational Culture

The third research question addressed in this study was, “To what degree is the perceived positivity of an administrator related to the satisfaction, retention and productivity of employees in selected NHEI?” Through the survey mechanism, the researcher gathered information from NHEI admissions professionals regarding their attitudes towards the perceived positivity of administrators in the workplace. A Likert-type scale was utilized in the online survey to measure the attitudes of the NHEI admissions professionals about the office of admissions and about the overall atmosphere of the colleges and universities represented. Numbers were assigned to the Likert-type scale responses for coding and analysis. The choice of high motivating power received a 1; the choice of medium/moderate motivating power received a 2; and the option of low motivating power received a 3. This question sought to examine the degree to which the positivity of an administrator and the use of the central tenets of positivity would serve as a moderate or high motivating factor in the organizational culture of NHEI, according to NHEI admissions professionals.

The researcher began by analyzing frequencies for each value of each variable, to determine the number of times that a particular score occurred in a data set (Argyrous, 2005). Appendix E contains all of the frequency tables associated with the data set intended to address the third research question and includes the responses of the 71 NHEI admissions professionals who responded in a valid way. The following discussion highlights various important aspects of the frequencies of ratings regarding the perceived positivity of an administrator in organizational culture by NHEI admissions

professionals. The survey respondents were asked to select the response that best described their perception of the motivating power of the following variables if offered by an NHEI administrator: “Telecounselors to assist in recruiting new students” was rated as “high motivating power” 22 times (31.0%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 37 times (52.1%); “College autos issued to recruiters” was rated as “high motivating power” 17 times (23.9%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 42 times (59.2%); “Appointments to committees that help influence college policy” was rated as “medium/moderate motivating power” 46 times (64.8%) and as “low motivating power” 16 times (22.5%); “laptop computers issued to admissions professional” was rated as “high motivating power” 27 times (38.0%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 38 times (53.5%); “college issued cell phones” was rated as “high motivating factor” 36 times (50.7%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 19 times (26.8%); “pay raises” was rated as “high motivating power” 64 times (90.1%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 7 times (9.9%); “awards and recognitions” was rated as “high motivating factor” 43 times (60.6%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 25 times (35.2%); “alumni and faculty assistance in new student recruitment” was rated as “high motivating factor” 33 times (46.5%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 38 times (53.5%); “access to supervisor” was rated as “high motivating factor” 49 times (69.0%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 19 times (26.8%); and “job promotions” was rated as “high motivating factor” 63 times (88.7%) and as “medium/moderate motivating power” 8 times (11.3%).

Descriptive statistics were utilized to organize, separate, codify and deliver the data using a numeric and tabular methodology (Argyrous, 2005). The descriptive

statistics that were analyzed in Table 5 were the range, standard deviation, mean, and standard error of the mean. The range is the difference between the highest and lowest scores of a data set. If the range is small, the scores will be close together and if the range is large the gap in the scores will be wider. The standard deviation is the most frequently used measure of variability because of its stability and the fact that it includes every score in its calculation. A small standard deviation indicates that scores are close together and a large standard deviation indicates that the scores are more widely spread apart. The mean is the most preferred measure of central tendency and is calculated by adding all of the scores together and dividing that total by the number of scores. The mean represents the average score among a group of scores. Also, the standard error of the mean describes how much one can expect the sample means to differentiate if other samples are used from the same population. A small standard error of the mean indicates less sampling error (Gay et al., 2006). For the purpose of compiling the descriptive statistics as well as running the one-sample *t* tests, the responses to the survey questions that addressed the third research questions were reverse coded so that the results would trend in a positive direction rather than a negative direction. This was important and prudent so that the results from this section of the study would trend in the same direction as the data addressing the previous two research questions. This also allowed for the thresholds to be framed in a positive direction. In these new reassigned variables, “high motivating power” received a 3; “medium/moderate motivating power” received a 2; and “low motivating factor” was given a 1.

Table 5 indicated that 71 respondents answered all of the survey questions in a valid way regarding positive reinforcement in organizational culture at NHEI. The range

of scores for the rating of each question was either 1 or 2. The range is important to analyze because it measures the variability and spread of a data set (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The highest rated response was “pay raises” with a mean score of 2.90, while the lowest rated question was “Assignment of a less geographically dispersed territory,” with a mean score of .080. While 10 of the responses had a mean of higher than “medium/moderate motivating power,” three questions had a mean of less than “medium/moderate motivating power.” The response with the lowest standard error of the mean was “pay raises,” with a standard error of .036, while the question with the highest standard error of the mean was “college issued cell phones,” with a standard error of the mean of .097. Additionally, the response with the lowest standard deviation was “pay raises,” at .300 and the response with the highest standard deviation was “college issued cell phones,” at .814.

Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics regarding the perceived positivity of an administrator*

	N	Range	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Pay raises	71	1	2.90	.036	.300
Job promotions	71	1	2.89	.038	.318
Access to supervisor	71	2	2.65	.067	.563
Awards and recognitions	71	2	2.56	.069	.579
Alumni and faculty assistance in new student recruitment	71	1	2.46	.060	.502

Electronic tools such as emails, podcasts, and web page expenditures to assist recruiters' efforts	71	2	2.38	.068	.570
Laptop computers issued to admissions professionals	71	2	2.30	.073	.619
College issued cell phones	71	2	2.28	.097	.814
Viewbooks, brochures, and college fair displays to support the recruiting effort	71	2	2.20	.074	.624
Telecounselors to assist in recruiting new students	71	2	2.14	.081	.682
College autos issued to recruiters	71	2	2.07	.076	.640
Assignment of a territory closer to home	71	2	2.03	.085	.717
Assignment of a territory richer in prospects	71	2	1.92	.082	.692
Appointments to committees that help influence college policy	71	2	1.90	.070	.589
Assignment of a less geographically dispersed territory	71	2	1.83	.080	.676
Valid N (listwise)	71				

Table 6 displays one-sample  $t$  tests for a mean. A  $t$  test for a mean is utilized to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between two means (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). One-sample  $t$  tests for means were computed for the responses given to each survey question answered by the NHEI admissions professional respondents for the rating of each question in order to compare the means obtained by the sample of scores (Robson, 2002). The hypothesized population mean for the one-sample  $t$  test was a middle rating score of 2, which was the choice of “medium/moderate motivating power.”

The significance of the results of the research questions were established by analyzing the mean response value of the sample population for each survey question. The findings were deemed significant, if the mean of the sample population was statistically *significant*, at the following level, while utilizing the following methodology. A two-tailed  $t$  test was conducted, with the alpha level established at .025. The critical  $t$  value was 2.00, with 70 degrees of freedom, at the .025 level. In order to establish significance, the  $p$  value had to be below .025, the  $t$  value had to be greater than 2.00, and the confidence interval could not contain zero.

After analyzing the data in Table 6, the totality of the evidence was inconclusive in determining whether or not the perceived positivity of an administrator and the use of positivity and positive reinforcement by an administrator had “high motivating power” or greater than “medium/moderate motivating power” in regard to every variable mentioned in the survey questions. However, in the case of nine of the 13 total survey questions in this category, the  $p$  value was below .025, the  $t$  value was greater than 2.00, and the confidence level did not contain zero. Consequently, in these nine cases, the questions had a statistically significant  $t$  score and  $p$  value.



Table 6

Descriptive Statistics regarding the perceived positivity of an administrator

	N	Range	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Pay raises	71	1	2.90	.036	.300
Job promotions	71	1	2.89	.038	.318
Access to supervisor	71	2	2.65	.067	.563
Awards and recognitions	71	2	2.56	.069	.579
Alumni and faculty	71	1	2.46	.060	.502
assistance in new student recruitment					
Electronic tools such as	71	2	2.38	.068	.570
emails, podcasts, and web					
page expenditures to assist					
recruiters' efforts					
Laptop computers issued	71	2	2.30	.073	.619
to admissions					
professionals					
College issued cell phones	71	2	2.28	.097	.814
Viewbooks, brochures,	71	2	2.20	.074	.624
and college fair displays to					
support the recruiting					
effort					
Telecounselors to assist in	71	2	2.14	.081	.682
recruiting new students					

College autos issued to recruiters	71	2	2.07	.076	.640
Assignment of a territory closer to home	71	2	2.03	.085	.717
Assignment of a territory richer in prospects	71	2	1.92	.082	.692
Appointments to committees that help influence college policy	71	2	1.90	.070	.589
Assignment of a less geographically dispersed territory	71	2	1.83	.080	.676
Valid N (listwise)	71				

\* $t > 2.00$ , \* $p < .025$

Even though the answers to nine of the questions regarding positivity had statistically significant results, the researcher still had to account for effect sizes. Effect sizes determine the size of the statistically significant differences (Thalheimer & Cook, 2002). Cohen's  $d$  was used to analyze the effect size and was calculated by taking the mean difference divided by the standard deviation for each question that was deemed to have statistical significance. The effect sizes of .2 to .49 were interpreted as small, .5 to .79 were interpreted as medium, and .8 and above were interpreted as large (Cohen, 1992). The response, "pay raises" had a Cohen's  $d$  of 3.00 (large effect size); the response, "job promotions" had a Cohen's  $d$  of 2.79 (large effect size); the response, "access to supervisor" had a Cohen's  $d$  of 1.15 (large effect size); the response, "awards and recognitions" had a Cohen's  $d$  of .97 (large effect size); the response, "alumni and faculty assistance in new student recruitment" had a Cohen's  $d$  of .92 (large effect size);

the response, “electronic tools such as emails, podcasts, and web page expenditures to assist recruiters' efforts” had a Cohen’s *d* of .66 (medium effect size); the response, “laptop computers issued to admissions professionals” had a Cohen’s *d* of .48 (medium effect size); the response, “college issued cell phones” had a Cohen’s *d* of .35 (medium effect size); and the response, “viewbooks, brochures, and college fair displays to support the recruiting effort” had a Cohen’s *d* of .32 (medium effect size).

### Conclusions

The first research question in this study examined the evidence and effects of positivity in organizational culture at selected NHEI according to admissions professionals. Frequencies, descriptive statistics, and one-sample *t* tests for means were analyzed in order to answer the first research question. The frequency tables in Appendix C indicated that a high frequency count of admissions professionals identified various aspects of positivity as “agree moderately” or “agree very much” as a part of their organizational culture. These answers to questions regarding positivity such as, “I like my supervisor,” “I believe my supervisor likes me,” “I like the people I work with,” “I enjoy my co-workers,” “my supervisor encourages me often,” “my job is enjoyable,” and “I feel a sense of pride in doing my work” pointed to signs of positivity in organizational culture at NHEI. On the contrary, the answers to questions such as, “I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do,” “I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases,” “I am satisfied with my chances for promotion,” “I am satisfied with the benefits I receive” trended in a negative direction.

The descriptive statistics for the questions regarding positivity in organizational culture were shown in Table 1. The range, standard deviation, and means were varied and

indicated that the experiences of the respondents were not unanimous and were varied in some cases. The one-sample  $t$  tests for mean results displayed in Table 2 indicated that 11 of the 20 questions had statistically significant  $t$  scores and  $p$  values. Finally, the Cohen's  $d$  results for the 11 questions with significant results indicated that seven of these questions had large effect sizes, while four of these questions had medium effect sizes. Considering the aforementioned statistical findings, there was some evidence for positivity in organizational culture at selected NHEI, according to admissions professionals.

Past studies that analyzed the effects of positivity in college and university admissions professionals, as well as studies that have measured the effects of positivity in regard to motivating professional salesmen and saleswomen, have revealed similar findings regarding the full and consistent utilization of positivity in organizational culture. Because some of his findings were inconclusive, Scheer (2009), who delved deeply into the effects of positive reinforcement, resource munificence and worker motivation in the context of higher education at the community college level, suggested that "research at four-year colleges and universities is a logical extension" of his research (p. 158). In addition, Schein (2004) concluded that it is often difficult to ensure unanimity in regards to positivity if an organization does not have a clear plan for implementing, measuring and maintaining the central tenets of positivity in organizational culture. Also, Graeff (1997) and Fernandez and Vecchio (1997) argued that the successful use of positivity in organizational culture is strongly dependent upon context and may vary greatly according to location, environment, leadership style, and situational circumstances. Regarding the linkage between positivity in organizational culture and the

satisfaction, productivity, and retention of employees, Bass and Riggio (2006), Bryman (1992), Downton (1973), and Northouse (2004), all contended that there is a clear correlation between increased positivity and an increased satisfaction, productivity, and retention of employees. Hence, if there is a deficit in certain aspects of positivity, then there might be a deficit in the satisfaction, productivity, and retention of employees.

The second research question in the study examined the evidence and effects of positive reinforcement in organizational culture at selected NHEI according to admissions professionals. Frequencies, descriptive statistics, and one-sample  $t$  tests for means were analyzed in order to answer the second research question. The frequency tables in Appendix D indicated that there was a great disparity in the utilization of positive reinforcement at selected NHEI, according to the admissions professionals who responded. The respondents' answers indicated that there was no definitive evidence that, "through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can:" "gain access to the supervisor," "be assigned a less geographically dispersed territory," "earn awards and recognition," "earn appointments to committees that help influence college policy," "can be assigned a territory closer to home," "be assigned a territory richer in prospects," "earn job promotions," or "earn pay raises."

The descriptive statistics for the questions regarding positive reinforcement in organizational culture were shown in Table 3. The range, standard deviation, and means were varied and indicated that the experiences of the respondents were not unanimous and were varied in all cases. The one-sample  $t$  tests for mean results displayed in Table 4 indicated all of the eight questions in this section had statistically insignificant  $t$  scores and  $p$  values. Considering the aforementioned statistical findings, there was no evidence

supporting positive reinforcement in organizational culture at selected NHEI, according to admissions professionals.

Past studies that analyzed the effects of positive reinforcement in organizational culture, in various corporate cultures, and in reference to engineering organizational change, have revealed similar findings regarding difficulty of the full and consistent utilization of positive reinforcement in organizational culture. Blake and Mouton (1964, 1978, 1985), observed that it was difficult to implement fully methodologies around positive reinforcement in an organization or institution that had a long history of a more *top down* style of management. According to Blanchard, Zigarni, and Nelson (1993), Blanchard, Zigarni, and Zigarni (1985) and Hersey and Blanchard (1997, 1988), positive reinforcement in organizational culture might be more difficult to achieve in the midst of adverse circumstances, such as economic difficulty, a period of declining revenues, or intense competition. Atwater and Carmeli (2009) found that implementing positive reinforcement in organizational culture was easier in younger organizations with a more entrepreneurial mindset and more difficult in institutions where long-term patterns of negativity had been established. Bolkan and Goodboy (2009) also illuminated difficulties in consistently utilizing positive reinforcement in institutions of higher education because of a deeply embedded preference towards criticism, critical analysis and negativity.

Regarding the linkage between positive reinforcement in organizational culture and the satisfaction, productivity, and retention of employees, Bass and Riggio (2006), Bryman (1992), Downton (1973), and Northouse (2004), all contend that there is a clear correlation between increased positive reinforcement and an increased satisfaction, productivity, and retention of employees. Therefore, if there is a deficit in certain aspects

of positive reinforcement, there might also be a deficit in the satisfaction, productivity, and retention of employees.

The third research question in this study examined the possible effects of the perceived positivity of an administrator in organizational culture at selected NHEI according to admissions professionals. Frequencies, descriptive statistics, and one-sample *t* tests for means were analyzed in order to answer the third research question. The frequency tables in Appendix E indicated that a high frequency count of admissions professionals identified various aspects of the perceived positivity of administrator as possessing “high motivating power” or “medium/moderate motivating power” if utilized as a part of their organizational culture. The survey respondents were asked to select the response that best described their perception of the motivating power of the following variables if offered by an NHEI administrator: “Telecounselors to assist in recruiting new students,” “College autos issued to recruiters,” “Appointments to committees that help influence college policy” was rated as “medium/moderate motivating power,” “laptop computers issued to admissions professional,” “college issued cell phones,” “pay raises,” “awards and recognitions,” “alumni and faculty assistance in new student recruitment,” “access to supervisor,” and “job promotions” were all variables that perceived to have high or medium motivating power.

The descriptive statistics for the questions regarding the perceived positivity of an administrator in organizational culture were shown in Table 5. The range, standard deviation, and means were varied and indicated that the experiences of the respondents were not unanimous and were varied in some cases, although clear trends towards benefits of the utilization of positivity in organizational culture were evident. The one-

sample *t* tests for mean results displayed in Table 6 indicated that nine of the 15 questions had statistically significant *t* scores and *p* values. Finally, the Cohen's *d* results for the nine questions with significant results indicated that five of these questions had large effect sizes, while four of these questions had medium effect sizes. Considering the aforementioned statistical findings, there was some evidence of the benefits of the perceived positivity of an administrator in organizational culture at selected NHEI, according to admissions professionals.

These findings regarding the impact of a positive leader to improve the satisfaction, productivity, and retention of employees in various settings, are consistent with the previous research findings of Bass (1990b), Bass and Steidlmeier (1999), Chan (2005), Howell and Avolio (1993), who found that the perceived positivity of a leader is advantageous to an organization and beneficial to employees and team members. Bass and Riggio (2006), Bryman (1992), Downton (1973), and Northouse (2004), contended that when administrators act in positive ways, employees respond in positive ways and the satisfaction, productivity, and retention of those employees is increased. These findings also support the recommendations of Locke and Latham (1990), and of Seijts, Latham, Tasa, and Latham (2004), as they suggested further research among various sales forces in a variety of sectors. They asserted that positivity and positive reinforcement were positively correlated to increased employee satisfaction, retention and productivity.

#### Implications and Recommendations

These findings clearly demonstrate that there is room to increase the use of positivity and positive reinforcement for admissions professionals in NHEI. The review



of the literature clearly indicated that the use of positivity and positive reinforcement in organizational culture is one of the most effective means to use in increasing employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention. These findings also clearly demonstrate that NHEI admissions personnel perceived the central tenets of positivity and positive reinforcement as beneficial when utilized or embodied by an administrator.

Administrators at all of the selected NHEI should strongly consider the use of positivity and positive reinforcement with admissions professionals and seek actively to create and sustain an organizational culture centered on positivity. Additionally, administrators at all of the NHEI should strongly consider the eradication or diminution of negativity with admissions professionals, because the current study, as well as previous research (e.g., Hummel, 1975; Schiffer, 1973; Zaleznik, 1977; and more recently, Maccoby, 2003) clearly indicated that these negative tactics are counterproductive in relation to employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention.

While some signs of positivity in organizational culture were evident, clear signs of employee dissatisfaction regarding positive reinforcement in NHEI organizational culture were also apparent, especially around the issues of compensation, awards and recognitions, access to one's supervisor, and job promotions. There was no statistically significant evidence for the application of positive reinforcement in the organizational culture of NHEI, according to admissions professionals. An ideal area for further research would be to inquire about the specific utilization of positive reinforcement and positivity at each of the selected NHEI. A qualitative methodology might be useful in this pursuit to outline and analyze effectively the use of positivity or negativity, and positive reinforcement in each context. This additional inquiry into the effects of positivity and

positive reinforcement would also further the research findings and recommendations of Blanchard, Zigarmi, and Nelson (1993), Blanchard, Zigarmi, and Zigarmi (1985) and Hersey and Blanchard (1997, 1988), who looked deeply into the effects of various leadership practices in various contexts.

Building on the work and recommendations of Scheer (2009), further inquiry into the use of positivity and positive reinforcement in colleges and universities over a longer time period is recommended. It was difficult to understand the effects of positivity and positive reinforcement on long term productivity and retention fully, without a more comprehensive and exhaustive study. It would also be useful to test the effects of various leadership practices over a longer timeframe in regard to motivating and inspiring admissions professionals and building a culture of positivity. This line of inquiry would also build upon the research of Atwater and Carmeli (2009), who analyzed the evolution from an organizational culture of negativity to one defined by positivity. The results of the study would have likely also been enhanced by identifying and surveying employees who are no longer employed by NHEI. In addition, the inclusion of support staff persons would likely have led to a more complete understanding of the effects of positivity and positive reinforcement on organizational culture.

Schein (2004) placed tremendous emphasis on the role of leadership in building an effective organizational culture, as did Burke (2008) in regard to engineering organizational change. Because the NHEI admissions professionals responded in such a significant way to the potential motivating power of a leader who actively utilizes the central tenets of positivity and positive reinforcement, a further recommendation would be to seek to train and educate NHEI administrators in the practices, philosophies, and

techniques of positivity and positive reinforcement. The Authentic Leadership model, as described by Bass (1990b), Bass and Steidlmeier (1999), Chan (2005), and Howell and Avolio (1993), would be an excellent way to engage the core beliefs of positivity and positive reinforcement, as would the Transformational Leadership model, as reported by Northouse (2004), Bryman (1992), Bass and Riggio (2006), and Downton (1973).

Although leading in a manner defined by positivity, and consistently utilizing positive reinforcement as a means to motivate and manage an organization or a team is not the only way to create a dynamic and thriving organizational culture, it seems that this *positive, authentic, transformational* style of leadership is quickly gaining acclaim as a very effective and ethical way to lead. In the same way, there is evidence that negativity in organizational culture is counterproductive and even harmful in organizational culture. The research findings of this study also seemed to indicate that the use of positivity and positive reinforcement could improve the satisfaction, productivity, and retention of admissions professionals at NHEI in a variety of ways.

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Appendix A  
Survey Instrument



## Positivity in Organizational Culture

### 1. Introduction

Thank you for participating in this survey. There are 8 brief sections to complete. Please begin.

### 2. Section A

One area that may influence worker motivation is job satisfaction. For each of the following statements about job satisfaction, please select the response that most closely describes your reaction to each statement.

1. I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

2. Raises are too few and far between.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

3. I like my supervisor.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

4. I believe my supervisor likes me.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

5. I am unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

6. Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

7. There are benefits we do not have which we should have.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

8. I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

9. There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

10. My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

11. People get ahead as fast as they do at other places.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

12. My supervisor encourages me often.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

13. I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

14. My supervisor is unfair to me.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

15. I am satisfied with the benefits I receive.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

16. When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

17. My supervisor shows little interest in the feelings of subordinates.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

18. The benefits package we have is equitable.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

### Positivity in Organizational Culture

19. I do not feel the work I do is appreciated.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

20. The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

### 3. Section B

Please continue to select your responses to these job satisfaction statements.

1. There are few rewards for those who work here.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

2. My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

3. I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

4. I like the people I work with.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

5. Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

6. I have too much to do at work.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

7. I enjoy my co-workers.

☐ Disagree very much   ☐ Disagree moderately   ☐ Disagree slightly   ☐ Agree slightly   ☐ Agree moderately   ☐ Agree very much

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

8. The goals of this organization are not clear to me.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

9. I find I have to work harder at my job than I should because of the incompetence of people I work with.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

10. There is too much bickering and fighting at work.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

11. I like the things I do at work.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

12. I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

13. I have too much paperwork.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

14. I feel a sense of pride in doing my work.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

15. I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

16. My job is enjoyable.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

17. Communications seem good within the organization.

☐ Disagree very much  
 ☐ Disagree moderately  
 ☐ Disagree slightly  
 ☐ Agree slightly  
 ☐ Agree moderately  
 ☐ Agree very much

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

18. Work assignments are often not fully explained.

☐

Disagree very  
much

☐

Disagree  
moderately

☐

Disagree  
slightly

☐

Agree slightly

☐

Agree  
moderately

☐

Agree very  
much

### 4. Section C

The following are a few more statements about resources and factors that may be available to college admissions professionals. Please select the response that most closely describes your reaction to each statement.

1. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor.

☐

Does Not  
Apply, Not Used,  
Or Do Not Know

☐

Disagree  
very much

☐

Disagree  
moderately

☐

Disagree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
moderately

☐

Agree very  
much

2. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a less geographically dispersed territory.

☐

Does Not  
Apply, Not Used,  
Or Do Not Know

☐

Disagree  
very much

☐

Disagree  
moderately

☐

Disagree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
moderately

☐

Agree very  
much

3. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn awards and recognition.

☐

Does Not  
Apply, Not Used,  
Or Do Not Know

☐

Disagree  
very much

☐

Disagree  
moderately

☐

Disagree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
moderately

☐

Agree very  
much

4. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn appointments to committees that help influence college policy.

☐

Does Not  
Apply, Not Used,  
Or Do Not Know

☐

Disagree  
very much

☐

Disagree  
moderately

☐

Disagree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
moderately

☐

Agree very  
much

5. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory closer to home.

☐

Does Not  
Apply, Not Used,  
Or Do Not Know

☐

Disagree  
very much

☐

Disagree  
moderately

☐

Disagree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
slightly

☐

Agree  
moderately

☐

Agree very  
much

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

6. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a territory richer in prospects.

☐ Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know
 ☐ Disagree very much
 ☐ Disagree moderately
 ☐ Disagree slightly
 ☐ Agree slightly
 ☐ Agree moderately
 ☐ Agree very much

7. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn job promotions.

☐ Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know
 ☐ Disagree very much
 ☐ Disagree moderately
 ☐ Disagree slightly
 ☐ Agree slightly
 ☐ Agree moderately
 ☐ Agree very much

8. Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn pay raises.

☐ Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know
 ☐ Disagree very much
 ☐ Disagree moderately
 ☐ Disagree slightly
 ☐ Agree slightly
 ☐ Agree moderately
 ☐ Agree very much

## 5. Section D

How people feel about the organization in which they work may also affect employee motivation. Listed below are statements that reflect possible feelings that individuals might have about the organization in which they work. With respect to your own feelings, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that which is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.

☐ Strongly Disagree
 ☐ Moderately Disagree
 ☐ Slightly Disagree
 ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
 ☐ Slightly Agree
 ☐ Moderately Agree
 ☐ Strongly Agree

2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.

☐ Strongly Disagree
 ☐ Moderately Disagree
 ☐ Slightly Disagree
 ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
 ☐ Slightly Agree
 ☐ Moderately Agree
 ☐ Strongly Agree

3. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.

☐ Strongly Disagree
 ☐ Moderately Disagree
 ☐ Slightly Disagree
 ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree
 ☐ Slightly Agree
 ☐ Moderately Agree
 ☐ Strongly Agree

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

4. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree   ☐ Moderately Disagree   ☐ Slightly Disagree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Slightly Agree   ☐ Moderately Agree   ☐ Strongly Agree

5. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree   ☐ Moderately Disagree   ☐ Slightly Disagree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Slightly Agree   ☐ Moderately Agree   ☐ Strongly Agree

6. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree   ☐ Moderately Disagree   ☐ Slightly Disagree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Slightly Agree   ☐ Moderately Agree   ☐ Strongly Agree

7. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree   ☐ Moderately Disagree   ☐ Slightly Disagree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Slightly Agree   ☐ Moderately Agree   ☐ Strongly Agree

8. I really care about the fate of this organization.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree   ☐ Moderately Disagree   ☐ Slightly Disagree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Slightly Agree   ☐ Moderately Agree   ☐ Strongly Agree

9. For me, this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree   ☐ Moderately Disagree   ☐ Slightly Disagree   ☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree   ☐ Slightly Agree   ☐ Moderately Agree   ☐ Strongly Agree

## 6. Section E

Another area that may influence worker motivation is a person's beliefs about their ability to perform and influence events in their lives. Please select the response that most closely describes your reaction to each statement.

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.

- ☐ Not at all true   ☐ Hardly true   ☐ Moderately true   ☐ Exactly true

2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.

- ☐ Not at all true   ☐ Hardly true   ☐ Moderately true   ☐ Exactly true

### Positivity in Organizational Culture

3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary efforts.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

7. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

8. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

9. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

10. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.

- ☐ Not at all true    ☐ Hardly true    ☐ Moderately true    ☐ Exactly true

### 7. Section F

Following are statements about job behavior. Please select the response that most closely describes your reaction to each statement.

1. In the past twelve months, how often have you done more work than required?

- ☐ Never    ☐ Very Rarely    ☐ Rarely    ☐ Seldom    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ Very Often

2. In the past twelve months, how often have you volunteered to work overtime?

- ☐ Never    ☐ Very Rarely    ☐ Rarely    ☐ Seldom    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ Very Often

3. In the past twelve months, how often have you made attempts to change work conditions?

- ☐ Never    ☐ Very Rarely    ☐ Rarely    ☐ Seldom    ☐ Sometimes    ☐ Often    ☐ Very Often



### Positivity in Organizational Culture

4. In the past twelve months, how often have you negotiated with supervisors to improve your job?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

5. In the past twelve months, how often have you tried to think of ways to do your job better?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

6. In the past twelve months, how often have thought of being absent?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

7. In the past twelve months, how often have you chatted with a co-worker about nonwork topics?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

8. In the past twelve months, how often have you left your work situation for unnecessary reasons?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

9. In the past twelve months, how often have you daydreamed?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

10. In the past twelve months, how often have you spent work time on personal matters?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

11. In the past twelve months, how often have you put less effort into the job than you should have?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

12. In the past twelve months, how often have you thought of leaving your current job?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

13. In the past twelve months, how often have you let others do your work?

☐ Never ☐ Very Rarely ☐ Rarely ☐ Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Very Often

### 8. Section G

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

Whether or not these factors are present or available at your school, please select the response that best describes your perception of the motivating power of these items to admissions professionals.

Please rank the following:

**1. Telecounselors to assist in recruiting new students**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**2. College autos issued to recruiters**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**3. Appointments to committees that help influence college policy**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**4. Laptop computers issued to admissions professionals**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**5. Assignment of a territory richer in prospects**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**6. College issued cell phones**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**7. Viewbooks, brochures, and college fair displays to support the recruiting effort**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**8. Pay raises**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**9. Electronic tools such as emails, podcasts, and web page expenditures to assist recruiters' efforts**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**10. Awards and recognitions**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

**11. Alumni and faculty assistance in new student recruitment**

☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

### 12. Access to supervisor

- ☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

### 13. Assignment of a less geographically dispersed territory

- ☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

### 14. Assignment of a territory closer to home

- ☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

### 15. Job promotions

- ☐ High Motivating Power      ☐ Medium/Moderate Motivating Power      ☐ Low Motivating Power

## 9. Section H

This is the last section of the survey. Please answer the final few questions about yourself and the institution with whom you are employed.

### 1. Your gender.

- ☐ Male      ☐ Female

### 2. Your age.

- ☐ Less than 30      ☐ Between 30 and 39      ☐ Between 40 and 49      ☐ Between 50 and 59      ☐ 60 or older

### 3. Your highest level of academic attainment.

- ☐ Less than Bachelor's degree      ☐ Bachelor's degree      ☐ Master's degree      ☐ Doctoral degree

### 4. Your total years of service in admissions/enrollment management (include current and any past colleges for which you have worked).

- ☐ Less than 5 years      ☐ Less than 10 but more than 5 years      ☐ 10 to 15 years      ☐ More than 15 years

## Positivity in Organizational Culture

5. Regional accrediting body which accredits your school.

- ☐ North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS)  
☐ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)  
☐ Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools (NACS)  
☐ Western Association of Colleges and Schools (WASC)  
☐ Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)  
☐ New England Association of Colleges and Schools (NEACS)  
☐ Do not know

6. I am involved directly or indirectly in student recruitment.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. I am aware of the National Association for College Admissions Counselors Guidelines.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure/Don't Know

8. To the best of my knowledge, my institution adheres to National Association for College Admissions Counselors guidelines.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure/Don't Know

9. The job title that most closely matches your job title.

- ☐ Recruiter ☐ Admissions Counselor ☐ Enrollment Specialist ☐ Admissions/Enrollment Director or Manager ☐ Other

## 10. Thank You!

You have completed the survey.  
Thank you very much.  
Please submit the survey by clicking the "done" button.  
Again, thank you.

## Appendix B

### Frequency Tables for Positivity in Organizational Culture

**I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	11	15.5	15.5	15.5
	Disagree moderately	13	18.3	18.3	33.8
	Disagree slightly	12	16.9	16.9	50.7
	Agree slightly	9	12.7	12.7	63.4
	Agree moderately	21	29.6	29.6	93.0
	Agree very much	5	7.0	7.0	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I like my supervisor.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree moderately	3	4.2	4.2	7.0
	Agree slightly	8	11.3	11.3	18.3
	Agree moderately	11	15.5	15.5	33.8
	Agree very much	47	66.2	66.2	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I believe my supervisor likes me.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree slightly	5	7.0	7.0	9.9
	Agree slightly	3	4.2	4.2	14.1
	Agree moderately	16	22.5	22.5	36.6
	Agree very much	45	63.4	63.4	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	5	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Disagree moderately	9	12.7	12.7	19.7
	Disagree slightly	6	8.5	8.5	28.2
	Agree slightly	34	47.9	47.9	76.1
	Agree moderately	7	9.9	9.9	85.9
	Agree very much	10	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	19	26.8	26.8	26.8
	Disagree moderately	6	8.5	8.5	35.2
	Disagree slightly	12	16.9	16.9	52.1
	Agree slightly	16	22.5	22.5	74.6
	Agree moderately	10	14.1	14.1	88.7
	Agree very much	8	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	5	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Disagree moderately	7	9.9	9.9	16.9
	Disagree slightly	3	4.2	4.2	21.1
	Agree moderately	20	28.2	28.2	49.3
	Agree very much	36	50.7	50.7	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	5	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Disagree moderately	9	12.7	12.7	19.7
	Disagree slightly	6	8.5	8.5	28.2
	Agree slightly	34	47.9	47.9	76.1
	Agree moderately	7	9.9	9.9	85.9
	Agree very much	10	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	19	26.8	26.8	26.8
	Disagree moderately	6	8.5	8.5	35.2
	Disagree slightly	12	16.9	16.9	52.1
	Agree slightly	16	22.5	22.5	74.6
	Agree moderately	10	14.1	14.1	88.7
	Agree very much	8	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**People get ahead as fast as they do at other places.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	8	11.3	11.3	11.3
	Disagree moderately	15	21.1	21.1	32.4
	Disagree slightly	23	32.4	32.4	64.8
	Agree slightly	8	11.3	11.3	76.1
	Agree moderately	10	14.1	14.1	90.1
	Agree very much	7	9.9	9.9	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	



**People get ahead as fast as they do at other places.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	8	11.3	11.3	11.3
	Disagree moderately	15	21.1	21.1	32.4
	Disagree slightly	23	32.4	32.4	64.8
	Agree slightly	8	11.3	11.3	76.1
	Agree moderately	10	14.1	14.1	90.1
	Agree very much	7	9.9	9.9	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**My supervisor encourages me often.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree moderately	9	12.7	12.7	15.5
	Disagree slightly	2	2.8	2.8	18.3
	Agree slightly	8	11.3	11.3	29.6
	Agree moderately	18	25.4	25.4	54.9
	Agree very much	32	45.1	45.1	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	10	14.1	14.1	14.1
	Disagree moderately	7	9.9	9.9	23.9
	Disagree slightly	12	16.9	16.9	40.8
	Agree slightly	25	35.2	35.2	76.1
	Agree moderately	9	12.7	12.7	88.7
	Agree very much	8	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I am satisfied with the benefits I receive.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree moderately	9	12.7	12.7	15.5
	Disagree slightly	13	18.3	18.3	33.8
	Agree slightly	17	23.9	23.9	57.7
	Agree moderately	20	28.2	28.2	85.9
	Agree very much	10	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree moderately	5	7.0	7.0	9.9
	Disagree slightly	12	16.9	16.9	26.8
	Agree slightly	13	18.3	18.3	45.1
	Agree moderately	30	42.3	42.3	87.3
	Agree very much	9	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**The benefits package we have is equitable.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree moderately	3	4.2	4.2	7.0
	Disagree slightly	15	21.1	21.1	28.2
	Agree slightly	14	19.7	19.7	47.9
	Agree moderately	21	29.6	29.6	77.5
	Agree very much	16	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	5	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Disagree moderately	14	19.7	19.7	26.8
	Disagree slightly	14	19.7	19.7	46.5
	Agree slightly	10	14.1	14.1	60.6
	Agree moderately	13	18.3	18.3	78.9
	Agree very much	15	21.1	21.1	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	4	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Disagree moderately	3	4.2	4.2	9.9
	Disagree slightly	8	11.3	11.3	21.1
	Agree slightly	15	21.1	21.1	42.3
	Agree moderately	36	50.7	50.7	93.0
	Agree very much	5	7.0	7.0	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I like the people I work with.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Agree moderately	17	23.9	23.9	26.8
	Agree very much	52	73.2	73.2	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I enjoy my co-workers.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Agree slightly	3	4.2	4.2	7.0
	Agree moderately	28	39.4	39.4	46.5
	Agree very much	38	53.5	53.5	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I like the things I do at work.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree moderately	11	15.5	15.5	18.3
	Agree slightly	12	16.9	16.9	35.2
	Agree moderately	28	39.4	39.4	74.6
	Agree very much	18	25.4	25.4	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**I feel a sense of pride in doing my work.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Agree slightly	6	8.5	8.5	11.3
	Agree moderately	41	57.7	57.7	69.0
	Agree very much	22	31.0	31.0	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**My job is enjoyable.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree moderately	3	4.2	4.2	7.0
	Agree slightly	8	11.3	11.3	18.3
	Agree moderately	32	45.1	45.1	63.4
	Agree very much	26	36.6	36.6	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Communications seem good within the organization.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	8	11.3	11.3	11.3
	Disagree moderately	5	7.0	7.0	18.3
	Disagree slightly	21	29.6	29.6	47.9
	Agree slightly	12	16.9	16.9	64.8
	Agree moderately	13	18.3	18.3	83.1
	Agree very much	12	16.9	16.9	100.0
Total		71	100.0	100.0	

## Appendix C

### Frequency Tables for Positive Reinforcement in Organizational Culture

**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can gain access to the supervisor.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know	4	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Disagree very much	21	29.6	29.6	35.2
	Disagree slightly	3	4.2	4.2	39.4
	Agree slightly	9	12.7	12.7	52.1
	Agree moderately	16	22.5	22.5	74.6
	Agree very much	18	25.4	25.4	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned a less geographically dispersed territory.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know	17	23.9	23.9	23.9
	Disagree very much	20	28.2	28.2	52.1
	Disagree moderately	16	22.5	22.5	74.6
	Disagree slightly	9	12.7	12.7	87.3
	Agree slightly	9	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn awards and recognition.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know	2	2.8	2.8	2.8
	Disagree very much	14	19.7	19.7	22.5
	Disagree moderately	19	26.8	26.8	49.3
	Disagree slightly	3	4.2	4.2	53.5
	Agree slightly	16	22.5	22.5	76.1
	Agree moderately	8	11.3	11.3	87.3
	Agree very much	9	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn appointments to committees that help influence college policy.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know	6	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Disagree very much	9	12.7	12.7	21.1
	Disagree moderately	19	26.8	26.8	47.9
	Disagree slightly	10	14.1	14.1	62.0
	Agree slightly	16	22.5	22.5	84.5
	Agree moderately	11	15.5	15.5	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	



**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned  
a territory closer to home.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know	15	21.1	21.1	21.1
	Disagree very much	12	16.9	16.9	38.0
	Disagree moderately	24	33.8	33.8	71.8
	Disagree slightly	5	7.0	7.0	78.9
	Agree slightly	7	9.9	9.9	88.7
	Agree moderately	6	8.5	8.5	97.2
	Agree very much	2	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can be assigned  
a territory richer in prospects.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know	12	16.9	16.9	16.9
	Disagree very much	13	18.3	18.3	35.2
	Disagree moderately	31	43.7	43.7	78.9
	Disagree slightly	15	21.1	21.1	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn job promotions.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree very much	11	15.5	15.5	15.5
	Disagree moderately	27	38.0	38.0	53.5
	Disagree slightly	3	4.2	4.2	57.7
	Agree slightly	10	14.1	14.1	71.8
	Agree moderately	13	18.3	18.3	90.1
	Agree very much	7	9.9	9.9	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Through on-the-job performance, admissions professionals at my institution can earn pay raises.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Does Not Apply, Not Used, Or Do Not Know	3	4.2	4.2	4.2
	Disagree very much	20	28.2	28.2	32.4
	Disagree moderately	29	40.8	40.8	73.2
	Disagree slightly	4	5.6	5.6	78.9
	Agree slightly	6	8.5	8.5	87.3
	Agree moderately	9	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

## Appendix D

### Frequency Tables for the Perceived Positivity of an Administrator

**Telecounselors to assist in recruiting new students**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	22	31.0	31.0	31.0
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	37	52.1	52.1	83.1
	Low Motivating Power	12	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**College autos issued to recruiters**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	17	23.9	23.9	23.9
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	42	59.2	59.2	83.1
	Low Motivating Power	12	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Appointments to committees that help influence college policy**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	9	12.7	12.7	12.7
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	46	64.8	64.8	77.5
	Low Motivating Power	16	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Laptop computers issued to admissions professionals**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	27	38.0	38.0	38.0
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	38	53.5	53.5	91.5
	Low Motivating Power	6	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Assignment of a territory richer in prospects**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	14	19.7	19.7	19.7
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	37	52.1	52.1	71.8
	Low Motivating Power	20	28.2	28.2	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**College issued cell phones**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	36	50.7	50.7	50.7
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	19	26.8	26.8	77.5
	Low Motivating Power	16	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Viewbooks, brochures, and college fair displays to support the recruiting effort**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	22	31.0	31.0	31.0
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	41	57.7	57.7	88.7
	Low Motivating Power	8	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Pay raises**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	64	90.1	90.1	90.1
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	7	9.9	9.9	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Electronic tools such as emails, podcasts, and web page expenditures to assist recruiters' efforts**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	30	42.3	42.3	42.3
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	38	53.5	53.5	95.8
	Low Motivating Power	3	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

#### Awards and recognitions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	43	60.6	60.6	60.6
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	25	35.2	35.2	95.8
	Low Motivating Power	3	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

#### Alumni and faculty assistance in new student recruitment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	33	46.5	46.5	46.5
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	38	53.5	53.5	100.0
	Low Motivating Power				
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

#### Access to supervisor

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	49	69.0	69.0	69.0
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	19	26.8	26.8	95.8
	Low Motivating Power	3	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Assignment of a less geographically dispersed territory**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	11	15.5	15.5	15.5
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	37	52.1	52.1	67.6
	Low Motivating Power	23	32.4	32.4	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Assignment of a territory closer to home**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	19	26.8	26.8	26.8
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	35	49.3	49.3	76.1
	Low Motivating Power	17	23.9	23.9	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	

**Job promotions**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High Motivating Power	63	88.7	88.7	88.7
	Medium/Moderate Motivating Power	8	11.3	11.3	100.0
	Total	71	100.0	100.0	