Thank you for participating in our Reflective Leadership Survey. This report was developed to provide you with the initial results of our research. As you will read, conclusions were quite powerful and several journal publications are expected in the near future.

**Introduction**

Reflective Leadership (RL), characterized by learning from reflecting on past experiences, is critical in multinational organizations where experiential learning from participation in diverse markets and political, legal, social and cultural systems around the globe promotes cultural awareness that enables organizations to adapt their strategies, policies, and business practices to the diverse markets they compete in around the globe. Castelli (2012, 2011) created an integrated model for promoting reflective learning that leaders can apply to ensure they obtain maximum organizational benefits from their experiences and from the experiences of their followers in adapting to diverse cultures. The model of reflective leadership consists of five constructs: openness, purpose, meaning, challenging beliefs and ongoing dialogue and feedback. A reflective leader provides a safe work environment that encourages followers to share their work experiences (openness); relates followers’ tasks and responsibilities to the organization’s goals and objectives (purpose); encourages followers to learn from past experiences to improve their future conduct; behavior and performance (meaning), challenges followers to question their values, beliefs; and assumptions as a result of their experiences with different value and belief systems (challenging beliefs); and maintains a continuing dialogue with followers by providing feedback on their experiential observations (ongoing dialogue and feedback).

**Purpose**

The purpose of this research was to test the theory of reflective leadership to determine the impact on organizational performance, and if any of the RL constructs are mediated by cultural adaptation. Figure 1 shows the conceptual model for this study.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model for Measuring Reflective Leadership
**Research Methodology**
Starting with the model of RL, three researchers wrote definitions for the five constructs of RL and developed ten to fifteen items for each construct. Each researcher then read all items for each construct from a combined list, and indicated her top ten from most representative of the construct (10) to least representative (1). Aggregate ratings for all items thus ranged from zero (did not make the top ten of any researcher) to thirty (the “best” item according to all three researchers). The top 15 or 16 items in each construct were retained.

A modified Q-sort was then conducted in which faculty and staff in the College of Management were given definitions of the constructs, and asked to identify which of the five constructs were being measured by each of the 93 items. Twenty participants completed the modified Q-sort. Items were retained when a minimum of 70% of the participants (14 participants) agreed on the construct that was being measured by each of the 93 items. Items for which fewer than 14 participants agreed on the construct being measured were rewritten, and additional items developed to assess those constructs. In all, 54 of the 93 items were retained in the survey including one item for each construct to allow participants to indicate the importance of the construct to them. In addition to the 54-items to measure RL, the survey included demographic items (5) and the performance of the respondent’s work unit over the last twelve months (3 items).

The 62-item electronic survey (SurveyMonkey) was administered to 50 professional groups on LinkedIn. Participants were recruited by posting the invitation to participate in the research on each group site. Groups included a variety of leadership and international management forums in addition to higher education and other non-profit sectors. Each post explained the purpose of the study, and included a link to the survey. Participation was voluntary, and the survey was anonymous. Participants indicated the extent to which the leader engages in each of the behaviors included in RL, and the extent to which the organization demonstrates cultural adaptation on a four-point scale (never, some of the time, most of the time, always). Participants indicated their work unit’s performance on a five-point scale (substantial decline to substantial improvement). A total of 714 subjects (approximately 50% U.S.A. and 50% international) responded to the survey.

**Results**
Factor analysis was conducted and showed confirmation for 5 items related to purpose; 5 items related to challenging assumptions; 5 items that relate to creating a safe and open environment; and 5 items related to cultural adaptation. There is very strong evidence that this factor structure is reliable (all Cronbach’s alphas are .89 or higher in both exploratory and confirmatory data sets) and replicable (two forms of confirmatory factor analysis were conducted and both show strong support for the factor structure established with the exploratory data set). Tests for validity (face, criterion and construct) also provided a sound scientific basis. Evidence indicates that the RL instrument measures behaviors leaders take to create a safe/open work environment, connect followers’ activities to organizational goals and objectives and promote reflection on the part of their followers. Additionally, all three independent variables (openness, purpose and beliefs) are related to all three dependent variables (sales, profits, and meeting goals). Further, cultural adaptation mediates all the relationships (9 out of 9).

**Research Significance**
This research is significant since the theory of reflective leadership has not been empirically tested to date. The findings of the analysis suggest that reflective leadership can be defined as a leader who creates a safe/open work environment, connects followers work to organizational goals and
objectives, and encourages followers to challenge their assumptions by reflecting on past experiences. Providing frequent and ongoing ways to challenge and cause the follower to critically think and reflect upon their current views opens the door for a new way of thinking and behaving. Once the follower understands that she is safe to step out of her comfort zone and has the support from the leader and fellow peers, alternative approaches and views can be realized. By setting the tone as a global leader who is also a reflective practitioner, a more cohesive, proactive and high performing workplace can occur.

Authors:

Patricia Castelli, Associate Professor of Management, Lawrence Technological University, USA pcastelli@ltu.edu

Thomas Marx, College Professor of Management, Lawrence Technological University, USA tmarx@ltu.edu

David Egleston, Assistant Professor of Management, Lawrence Technological University, USA degleston@ltu.edu