Looking within: A grounded theory study of the internal socialization of recently promoted leaders

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But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.
(1 Cor 15:10)

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Jack Welch, former CEO of the iconic General Electric (GE), built his career at GE moving from one position to the next, progressing up the corporate ladder until he became the top leader of the organization for nearly two decades. Of his first day as a newly promoted executive of the Consumer Sector at the corporate headquarters, he describes:

> *The place was very quiet and formal—cold and unwelcoming. I had no secretary and no staff…I didn't know many of the hundreds of people who worked in Fairfield headquarters…there were only a couple of friendly and familiar faces…talk about lonely. Forget about all that 'small fish in the big pond' stuff. I felt like a minnow in an ocean. Of course, I had been here many times [on business trips]…this time…it would be different. This was permanent.*
>
> (Welch, 2001, p. 63-64)

Welch (2001) goes on to describe his first four months in the corporate headquarters as an "out there" feeling (p. 64). This example from Welch's autobiography highlights the cognitive, physical, and emotional adjustment experienced when starting a new job, *even* for internal employees within the same company. Most astounding is the fact that this account of transition only skims the surface.

The term *transition* assumes one is experiencing a change and that there is a period of time in which this change is taking place (Louis, 1980). As we begin to dig into the process of transition and the underlying components of internal job transition experiences, what will we find? How do newly promoted leaders experience this learning adjustment as they transition into roles of increased responsibility and impact? What challenges do these newly promoted leaders face during their assimilation? Are there common mistakes? Who or what facilitates their learning and adjustment? What

factors matter most for their successful transition? These are the questions that stimulate this research study.

In this chapter, I describe internal job transitions and the importance of this topic to organizational practitioners and academics. I argue that although there has been extensive attention to the topic of socialization of newly hired employees, the socialization processes of newly promoted leaders have not been sufficiently documented in the literature. I outline the specific research questions that will be used within this dissertation to provide insight into how newly promoted leaders experience internal socialization. I propose qualitative methodology as the optimal means to provide insight into the study's research questions. Finally, I outline the important contributions of this study.

To begin, it is essential to be clear on the type of job transitions being discussed. Internal job transitions are defined as a change in job (interrole) without a change in employer (intraorganizational). A prime example of an internal job transition is a promotion; this may include a change in work location, division, or function, although these are not necessary conditions. The theory of work role transitions (Nicholson, 1984) posits that "transitions can have a profound significance for the future development of individuals and their organizations" (p. 172). The process of job or role change as experienced by the individual is referred to interchangeably hereafter as adjustment or transition.

The excerpt in the introduction referencing Welch's experience as a promoted leader in transition is not unique; roughly half of all job changes happen within the same

organization (Ashforth, 2001; Rousseau & Arthur, 1999.) While internal transitions may also include lateral transfers, cross functional moves, or demotions, the majority of job changes within most organizations involve promotions (Nicholson & West, 1988; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987). Bittel and Newstrom (1990) estimate that 75% of all management talent in the United States has historically been promoted from within. These are compelling numbers, but what is most astounding is Hogan, Hogan, and Kaiser's (2009) projection that half of all promotions end in failure.

Given the prevalence of internal transitions and the frequency of transitional failure within organizations today, it is important to understand *how* individuals learn to adjust successfully to new work roles. The socialization literature provides insight into this phenomenon. Socialization is defined as the process individuals experience in the acquisition of the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors which aids in their adjustment to a new work context (Fisher, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Onboarding is another term used for socialization and the one most often referenced in applied settings.

There are various forms of socialization practices implemented within organizations, varying from informal socialization to more structured approaches such as formal welcome events, guidebooks, and classroom training (Joyce, 2008; Klein & Heuser, 2008) or interventions like the new leader assimilation facilitated session (Manderscheid, 2008). Additionally, under the category of employee or leader development, there are relevant programs such as mentoring (Allen, McManus, & Russel, 1999; Scandura, 2002), executive coaching (Bono, Purvanova, Towler, & Peterson, 2009;

Feldman & Lankau, 2005; McCauley & Hezlett, 2002; Smither et al., 2003), and action learning (Marquardt, 1999).

However, in most cases the socialization processes for newly promoted leaders are ad hoc and not well documented in the academic newcomer socialization literature. The literature provides little insight into what the entire internal socialization process entails and what helps or hinders employees to transition smoothly and successfully. This study will examine this phenomenon of internal socialization using a qualitative methodology to capture the richness of this experience from the perspective of promoted leaders in mid-to-large sized organizations.

Socialization is an important topic for both theoretical and practical purposes; academics and organizational practitioners alike are very interested in research findings. From a theoretical and empirical perspective, there has been a surge in research on organizational socialization over the past forty years (for reviews, see Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Fisher, 1986; Klein & Heuser, 2008; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Wanous & Colella, 1989), reflecting the substance of this topic within organizational contexts in both the success of each individual's adjustment as well as distal organizational outcomes such as satisfaction, commitment, performance, and intentions to remain (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007). Socialization also provides positive experiences during the early phases of adjustment which impact the success of the long-term transition (Hall, 1976). Further to this effect, McCall (2010) looks to internal transition experiences as a form of leadership development, calling for more research to be done to understand how organizations help top talent pass through these critical transitions

successfully. Looking ahead to the future of socialization research, Bauer and colleagues (2007), the authors of the most recent meta-analysis on socialization, sum it up best in their concluding statement: "socialization continues to be an interesting and promising avenue of research" (2007, p. 718).

From the practical viewpoint, trends show organizations see the value in effective talent management systems which cultivate a pipeline of future leaders who are "promotion ready" and invest heavily into such programs (Joyce, 2008; Klein & Heuser, 2008). However, organizational leaders are not satisfied with their current talent management strategies or find them altogether ineffective (Balaguer, Cheese, & Marchetti, 2006; Barnett & Davis, 2008; Bernthal & Wellins, 2006). Therefore, organizations first need to better understand the impact and effectiveness of talent management practices and consult sound theory to develop new policies. Accomplishing this requires a depth of understanding that has yet to be tapped, particularly with regard to what the experience of this transition process is like for newly promoted leaders.

Unfortunately few organizations have taken steps to bridge the critical transition period of adjustment for newly promoted leaders with the same intensity they give to organizational newcomers. Internal socialization into new roles is a critical piece of this. Particularly salient to organizations is the evidence of failed transitions resulting in turnover, demotion, or career derailment (Hogan, Hogan & Kaiser, 2009; Lombardo, Ruderman, & McCauley, 1988; McCall & Lombardo, 1983; Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1987). Promotions often serve as make-or-break criteria in career success; when a leader takes a new role with increased responsibility and larger scope, they are put to

the test and often left to “sink or swim”. Executive derailment and failure will be summarized in chapter three.

The research on socialization has covered a broad array of variables and outcomes as they relate specifically to newcomer socialization as detailed in the following chapter of this dissertation. However, the literature could benefit from more contextually rich, descriptive accounts of what this transition experience is really like for individuals. Saks and Ashforth (1997) conducted a review of the socialization literature and determined that while there has been a surge in research interest on this topic, the research has become “sterile” and the quantitative analyses “only scratch the surface of the individual’s phenomenological experience of the dynamic process of socialization” (p. 270). They call for future work to “reinstate richness” to the socialization literature, which is one of the main goals of this research study (Saks & Ashforth, 1997, p. 270). Nicholson and West (1988) conducted a large quantitative study in Europe analyzing survey data (n=1,081 for matched responses in both time waves) for men and women in transition; their concluding remarks indicate that more detailed studies are necessary and specifically, “there is also a need for qualitative methods and biographical case studies of the lives and transitions of individuals and organizations, to enrich our understanding...” (p. 230). This study seeks to fill this dearth by adding depth of insight and richness to the literature, as well as broadening our understanding of the socialization of promoted leaders to set the foundation for future research focused in this direction.

As emphasized in the preceding paragraph, while there is extensive coverage of newcomers in the socialization literature, a very important aspect of socialization has not

been adequately addressed: the *internal* transitions of leaders *within* firms. The vast majority of research has focused on newcomer socialization, relying on organizational newcomers who are either "raw recruits" or university graduates (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007) leaving a void in research examining internal socialization. This limited focus on newcomers "disregards other important boundary crossings that necessitate socialization" (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007, p. 49.) Ashforth, Sluss, and Harrison (2007) call for socialization research to move beyond newcomers and encompass the "resocialization of veterans," in terms of lateral transfers and promotions, which is needed in the dynamic context of organizations today ; Feldman, 1989; Hall, 1980).

Some would say there is an empirical emphasis on organizational newcomers, those joining the organization as a "new hire" from an external organization, because they experience the greatest volume of change simultaneously: a new job, new company, and new cultural context (Ashford & Taylor, 1990). However, contrary to this assumption, Nicholson and West (1988) found that "the *most* stressful job changes are those which involve an upward status move and *no* change of employer" (p. 104, emphasis added). This finding may surprise the community of socialization researchers and indeed was a self noted "unexpected and challenging finding" reported by Nicholson and West (1988, p. 104). Therefore, we are faced with a plausible alternative, the premise that *internal* socialization has distinct qualities that differ from newcomer socialization and make it a unique experience. Significant learning may be gained from exploring this phenomenon, uncovering the associated adjustment process of internal promotes and understanding *why* this context is challenging and unique. This opens the

door for some interesting explanations and possible implications for the extension of socialization theory.

This premise holds the assumption that the socialization literature has overlooked the socialization of internal members, specifically those who are experiencing a significant job transition upon promotion within their organization. Moving upward within the organization requires intense learning and adjustment to increased role demands (Hill, 1992; McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988; Nicholson & West, 1988). The literature on managerial and leader development has been growing, with a stream of research finding that challenging on-the-job experiences are instrumental to learning and development which often leads to career growth (Berlew & Hall, 1966; Bray & Howard, 1983; Davies & Easterby-Smith, 1984; McCall, et al., 1988; Kelleher, Finestone & Lowry, 1986). McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott, and Morrow (1994) assessed the developmental components of managerial jobs and found that job transitions are a critical point of learning on the job. These may include moves from line to staff (McCall et al., 1988), increases in scope (McCall et al., 1988; Valerio, 1990), radical job moves (Stewart, 1984), and changes in employer, status, or function (Nicholson & West, 1988).

Therefore, despite the theoretical and practical importance of internal socialization at this critical stage in career transition, current research lacks a collective understanding of *how* internal leaders experience the socialization process during this time and *what* factors are critical for a successful adjustment. This study will address how promoted leaders experience socialization by considering the challenges, mistakes, learning, and successes during their role transition in a grounded theory methodological

approach with an embedded case design utilizing in-depth semi-structured interviews. Additionally, the crucial factors and facilitators for successful adjustment will be assessed, including what promotes learning and adjustment. The overarching research question guiding this study is, *"How do newly promoted leaders experience the internal socialization process as they transition into roles of increased responsibility and impact?"* More specific, directed questions include:

RQ1: What are the challenges associated with adjusting to a promotion from within and how do leaders assimilate in this context?

RQ2: What mistakes are prevalent during this transition period?

RQ3: What facilitates learning and adjustment during internal socialization?

The research attention on internal socialization is scant (as an exception, corollary literatures contains some related content including Nicholson's work role transition theory, 1984; Nicholson & West, 1988; some work on job transfers by Pinder & Schneider, 1987; a communications perspective by Kramer & Noland, 1999; and related studies on managerial transition including Gabarro, 1987 and Hill, 1992). I will be approaching the topic of internal socialization with a more fluid and contextually rich methodology to allow for critical evaluation of emerging constructs (Suddaby, 2006), such as detailing how leaders transition upon promotion and why this is a qualitatively rich experience. This approach fits well with my research goals and overarching research question while aligning with the assumptions presented in similar studies (Bartunek, 1984; Isabella, 1990). Furthermore, emergent streams of research on leadership succession (Sonnenfeld, 1988) and dealing with change and transition (Isabella, 1990)

have been studied qualitatively. The cognitive processes common in these studies on transition are amenable to interpretive research approaches that capture complex individual and organizational phenomena (Daft & Weick, 1984; Isabella, 1990; Pfeffer, 1981; Pondy, Frost, Morgan & Dandridge, 1983) and even serve as a complement to more traditional, quantitative studies (Isabella, 1990). Interviews with internally promoted leaders will allow for greater depth of insight and broader exploration of the phenomenological interest in internal socialization while also eliciting data on the complete interactional situation amidst transition (Suddaby, 2006). In fact, Barley (2006) finds that qualitative research is often interesting and generates important insights *because* it has a largely inductive approach.

Particularly, I seek to delve into the embedded transition process and allow for the leaders to share their experiences so that insight is gained regarding how they navigate these transitions. Qualitative methods allow for the flexibility that is conducive to finding either unique or new information about a theory or something that contradicts extant theory (Sutton, 1997). Therefore, this research study includes a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis to capture the richness and complexity of the interpersonal and organizational dynamics of internal socialization which was determined to be the most amenable to the research questions and study objectives, as well as being in alignment with similar research. The methods will be detailed extensively in chapter four.

This study seeks to explore the phenomenon of internal socialization with the potential to extend theory; it is expected that the result of this work will have important

theoretical and practical implications. First, this study will provide direction for academics conducting future research on internal socialization, including a baseline of research propositions for empirical work as well as the creation of a model of internal socialization. Additionally, it is hoped that the results of this research will provide evidenced based management guidance for practitioners in program development for internal leadership transitions. The data is expected to reveal insights from the individual perspective of leaders in transition, allowing a venue for their story to be told while deep learning results from this collective knowledge. As more is learned about these experiences, it will be possible to identify the challenges and missteps that are encountered when a leader is promoted from within and what individual and organizational tactics prove to be successful during this adjustment process.

Furthermore, the gap in the current literature creates a rich opportunity to explore internal socialization and contribute to the literature by making the connection between academic socialization theories and applied talent management practices, a process that is ripe for an approach guided by engaged scholarship (Van de Ven, 2007). Engaged scholarship is a solution and research approach to address the theory-practice gap, which Van de Ven (2007) believes is really a problem of inefficient knowledge transfer. Talent management systems and implementation are rich in practice while socialization theory parallels this depth of rigor and intellectual investment from academic study.

This research study attempts to bridge the two, bringing a deeper understanding of the practice of talent management in the form and experience of transitioning leaders, while building upon our academic understanding of socialization from a theoretical

perspective. Then, once a more solid theory of internal socialization is defined, this knowledge can be relayed back to practitioners who may benefit greatly from this research. This fulfills an engaged scholarship approach defined as "a deeper understanding of communicating knowledge across boundaries and a more engaged relationship between the researcher and his/her audience" (Van de Ven, 2007, p. 3). Van de Ven (2007) states this level of connectivity is necessary in order for research to truly advance both science and practice.

The structure for the remainder of this dissertation will be as follows: chapter two will include a brief review of the socialization literature which sets the foundation for the current study, chapter three will include the research questions along with an overview of the relevant leadership development, derailment and succession topics, chapter four will encompass the study design and methodology, chapter five will present the results, and finally, chapter six will conclude with a discussion of the results and delineate contributions to theory, research limitations, and directions for future research.

Chapter 2 Socialization Literature Review

The body of literature on socialization has grown considerably in the past fifty years. Extensive reviews are available (Bauer, et al., 1998; Bauer & Taylor, 2001; Fisher, 1986; Klein & Heuser, 2008; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Wanous & Colella, 1989) and most recently two meta-analyses have been published (Bauer, et al., 2007; Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007). As outlined in the introduction, almost all the current knowledge on socialization is based on organizational newcomers.

The following chapter encompasses a review of the socialization literature, providing the highlights to serve as a frame of reference for the data to be collected on internal socialization in the present study. The chapter begins with an overview of the most recent meta-analytic findings, followed by the historical progression of the socialization literature and then a topical break down of key themes. Additionally, a process model is presented to guide the reader, providing synthesis and direction for understanding a view of socialization in context of the myriad constructs, antecedents, proximal, and distal outcomes.

Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker (2007) Meta-Analysis

Bauer et al. (2007) created and tested a model of socialization which included both the antecedents and outcomes of adjustment most often studied in the newcomer socialization research. Their model posits and examines the extent to which newcomer adjustment upon joining a new organization is important to classic organizational outcomes including job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intentions to remain, and turnover. The model incorporated three newcomer adjustment variables: role clarity (understanding what the job tasks are and how to perform them, including a prioritization of tasks and relevant timeframes), self-efficacy (when the newcomer believes they can learn new job tasks), and social acceptance (feeling liked and accepted by the new peer group) (Feldman, 1981). The Bauer et al. (2007) model also includes two antecedents most often studied in the socialization literature of newcomer adjustment: newcomer information seeking (Miller & Jablin, 1991) and organizational socialization tactics (Jones, 1986).

Newcomer information seeking refers to the proactive attempts of the newcomer to seek out relevant information regarding their new role (e.g., What are my responsibilities? How should I best perform this task? Who should I consult about this problem?) (Morrison, 1993). This process of seeking information is essentially an uncertainty reduction technique, which Van Maanen and Schein (1979) categorized in their early theoretical work on socialization theory. Uncertainty reduction theory (Berger, 1979) is based on the assumption that we as individuals seek predictable environments. Exchange and information sharing are essential components of socialization (Bauer et al., 1998; De Vos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2003; Louis, 1980; Morrison, 1993; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Miller and Jablin (1991) categorized information seeking into three distinct types: referent information (the information a newcomer needs to function in their new role), appraisal information (the information a newcomer uses to determine if they are successfully completing the job tasks), and relational information (the information provided through interactions with others on the job).

The second antecedent is labeled organizational socialization tactics (i.e., how and to what extent the organization has facilitated socialization). Van Maanen and Schein (1979) created the theoretical conceptualization of organizational socialization tactics, identifying six different socialization tactics that organizations use: (1) formal vs. informal (i.e., newcomers go through an orientation off-site or simply separated from their organizational team members as they participate in a formal training or onboarding program as opposed to ad hoc processes that lack any formal structure or format); (2)

collective vs. individual (i.e., an organized group orientation session for all newcomers starting at the same time versus a one-on-one training for individual new hires); (3) sequential vs. random (i.e., if an order is placed on the tasks or learning that need to be mastered or they simply can be completed at any time in any random order); (4) fixed vs. variable (i.e., if a timeframe is established up front versus a timeline for adjustment that varies based on the situation, context, or person); (5) serial vs. disjunctive (serial means that there is an established trainer, supervisor, role model, or mentor that assists the newcomer in learning the ropes as opposed to disjunctive socialization which lacks a designated informant, trainer, or guiding other); and (6) investiture vs. divestiture (investiture indicates that a newcomer brings their prior identity into the new role, divestiture is the contrary). Jones (1986) created a framework to rearrange these tactics onto a single continuum encompassing institutionalized socialization (collective, formal, fixed, serial, etc.) on one end labeled institutionalized socialization tactics and then identified individualized socialization tactics (informal, individual, variable, etc.) at the opposite end.

Bauer and colleagues' (2007) meta-analysis examined the relationships between the antecedents and proximal and outcome variables. Specifically, the antecedents of organizational socialization tactics and information seeking were connected to "newcomer adjustment" identified by role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance, followed by the relationship to outcome variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, intentions to remain, and turnover. Additionally, this meta-analysis addressed the moderating effects of data collection type, whether studies

were longitudinal or cross-sectional, the sample characteristics, specifying whether this sample was a school-to-work scenario or mid-career transitions typecast as work-to-work, and antecedent measures used (i.e. were the scales tapping facet levels rather than composite measures). The study involved 70 unique samples (N = 12,279; sample sizes range from 272 to 4,027).

The authors' model was generally supported, aligning well with Feldman's (1981) seminal work on the multiple socialization of organizational members, emphasizing that there are several processes at play simultaneously. Their findings support a correlation between information seeking and socialization tactics with newcomer adjustment variables. Specifically, these correlations include information seeking and the adjustment variable of role clarity (.10), information seeking and social acceptance (.11), organizational socialization tactics and role clarity (.25), socialization tactics and self-efficacy (.42), and finally socialization tactics and social acceptance (.17).

The standardized parameter estimates from Bauer and colleague's (2007) meta-analysis show strong support for the predictive power of the adjustment variables to outcome variables. When analyzing effect sizes, we find that role clarity correlates with performance (r_c = .15), job satisfaction (r_c =.18), organizational commitment (r_c =.21) and intentions to remain (r_c =.14). Self-efficacy is correlated to performance (r_c =.25), intentions to remain (r_c =.09), and turnover (r_c = -.12). Social acceptance correlates with performance (r_c =.10), job satisfaction (r_c =.23), organizational commitment (r_c =.29), intentions to remain (r_c =.18), and turnover (r_c = -.13). A critical finding from this study is that newcomer adjustment partially mediates information seeking and socialization

tactics on the outcomes captured in the study; therefore newcomer adjustment is an important issue for application in organizations. The type of adjustment (role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance) experienced by newcomers can signal whether socialization is working (Bauer et al., 2007).

Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina (2007) Meta-Analysis

Saks, Uggersley, and Fassina (2007) took a slightly more focused approach to their meta-analysis, emphasizing the predominant six socialization tactics while expanding the meta-analysis to other strong indicators of newcomer adjustment including proximal outcomes of role conflict, role ambiguity, and perceived fit in their analysis and model predicting distal outcomes for newcomer adjustment including organizational commitment, job satisfaction, job performance, intentions to quit, and role orientation (2007). Their analysis included 31 independent samples (N = 6,104) and showed the largest effect sizes for social tactics (serial and investiture) in predicting all eight of their study's adjustment outcomes. The predictive strength of social tactics on the indices of newcomer adjustment is represented in the following regression coefficients: reducing role ambiguity (-.465), increasing job satisfaction (.413), and increasing perceived fit (.398). Overall, Saks and colleagues' (2007) meta-analysis was consistent with Jones (1986), finding support for a negative correlation between institutionalized socialization tactics and role ambiguity, role conflict, and intentions to quit, along with positive correlations between socialization tactics and distal outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, fit perceptions, and a custodial role orientation.

Socialization Pioneers

Early pioneers in the socialization literature were Schein, Van Maanen, Feldman, and Jones. Schein (1964, 1968) studied new college graduates entering the management field. Van Maanen (1975) focused on organizational cultural values and socialization at work. Feldman's (1976) contingency theory highlighted a model of individual socialization into organizations, identifying three distinct stages within the socialization process (anticipatory socialization, accommodation, and role management) while also considering the outcome variables of general satisfaction, mutual influence, internal work motivation, and job involvement. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) together developed the first categorization of socialization tactics, as mentioned in the previous section. This typology was followed by a revised categorization of institutional socialization tactics by Jones (1986), which has been cited heavily since.

Socialization Perspectives

The research on socialization has primarily focused on three approaches: person-centered, situation-centered, and interactionist (Griffin, Colella, & Goparaju, 2000; Saks & Ashforth, 2000). This research recaps what organizations have done in terms of socialization procedures, again with particular emphasis on newcomer socialization (Fisher, 1986; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous & Colella, 1989). People-centered approaches deal with the individual differences that relate to the socialization process. Proactive behaviors were introduced by Morrison (1993) and continued research in this critical area has ensued (Ashforth & Saks, 2007; Gruman, Saks, & Zweig, 2006; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Situation

centered research is not prevalent, although context specific work is available. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) identified socialization tactics as a significant approach which incorporates situation and organization specific practices of socialization. The interactionist approach was developed by Jones (1983) and combines both the person and situation centered approaches seeking:

> *To integrate these two areas by examining how newcomer's attempts at self-socialization work in tandem with the organization's attempts at socialization tactics employed by the organization will impact on, and interact with the pro-active tactics used by newcomers to influence the socialization process.* (Griffin et al., 2000, p. 454)

Numerous authors have urged further research in the interactionist realm (Bauer et al., 1998; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Wanous & Colella, 1989; Fisher, 1986; Jones, 1983) and a subsequent work by two of these authors (Saks & Ashforth, 2000) argues "that in order to predict newcomers' adjustment to work, one must also consider both person and situational factors and the interaction between them" (p. 44). The interactionist approach was taken by Bauer and Green (1998) as they assessed the combined effects of newcomer information seeking and manager behaviors as organizational insiders. Currently, there is an increasing use of interactionist approaches by most researchers addressing the topic of socialization (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002; Griffin et al., 2000).

Moving beyond a conceptualization of these three approaches to socialization research, any given study on socialization may stem from a variety of perspectives or encompass one or several areas of emphasis. Klein and Heuser (2008) categorize these into six perspectives: socialization stages (detailed more in the next section), sense-

making and proactivity, socialization tactics and practices, relationships, and socialization content.

Levels, Stages & Timing of Socialization

Organizational socialization occurs at several levels. For example, Klein and Heuser (2008) delineate socialization at the job, work group, unit, and organization level. The careers literature focuses somewhat more on occupational socialization, portraying five levels of socialization: job, organizational rank, function, occupation, and field (Latack, 1984). It is largely viewed that the more change or newness one faces in entering a new role (i.e., more levels tapped) the larger the adjustment required (Latack, 1984; Nicholson, 1984; Klein & Heuser, 2008).

The stages and timing of socialization remain under much debate (Bauer et al., 1998; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Fisher, 1986). Bauer and colleagues (1998) synthesized the literature into three phases that appear to be generally consistent and accepted, although the exact length of each phase continues to be a point of contention: *anticipatory socialization* (Feldman, 1976; Louis, 1980) is the preparatory stage before organizational entry; *accommodation* (Feldman, 1976) is the phase when the newcomer enters the organization and begins to learn the organizational processes and practices, job content, and begins building relationships; finally, the *adaptation* (Louis, 1980) stage is the pinnacle of the socialization process when the employee is no longer considered a newcomer and is now treated as any other organizational group member. Adaptation is measured in the form of classic outcome variables such as performance, satisfaction,

commitment, and turnover; these exact variables mirror those addressed in Bauer and colleague's (2007) meta-analysis.

The Socialization Process

Several models integrating the vast array of variables in the socialization literature have been proposed (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007; Feldman, 1976; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Saks et al., 2007; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Figure 1 presents a comprehensive model synthesizing relevant socialization theory and variables addressed in the literature. Two components of the socialization process, the anticipatory phase and the accommodation phase, require further elaboration.

Anticipatory Phase

Pre-entry Perceptions and Influences. The pre-entry experiences of newcomers (i.e. the recruitment and selection processes) fall into the anticipatory socialization phase (Riordan, Weatherly, Vandenberg, & Self, 2001). The impact of these experiences on newcomer attitudes, turnover, and worth are examined under the operational definition of "organization-based self-esteem, or the individual's belief that s/he has worth specifically as an organizational member." (Riordan et al., 2001, p. 160). Anderson (2001) wrote four fundamental postulates to further guide practitioners and researchers in their use of the selection process as a critical predictor to successful socialization although these postulates still need to be empirically tested. He argues that the experience an applicant has in the selection process will impact five constituent domains: information provision, preference impact, expectation impact, attitudinal impact, and behavioral impact

(Anderson, 2001). However, Riordan and colleagues (2001) claim that the interaction between newcomer attitudes and behaviors with their pre-entry experiences is not yet clearly understood.

Additionally, applicants may have numerous organizations or offers to consider when selecting their next job move. The value of perceived alternatives available when a newcomer is socializing into an organization could have large implications (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Riordan and colleagues (2001) did not find significant results in support of their hypothesis that pre-entry job choice variables effect newcomer perceptions of fit, worth, or attitudes. Further research is necessary to more fully understand these implications, if they indeed exist. As a start, Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) suggest the inclusion of personality surveys into the selection process to better test for the specific proactive behaviors that researchers now know affect the socialization process for newcomers.

A study done by Saks and Ashforth (2000) also brought attention to the problem of unmet expectations in work adjustment and tested this entry stressor in their study; they did indeed find strong support for the prediction of newcomers' adjustment to work. They state further that simply doing realistic job previews would not be sufficient (Saks & Ashforth, 2000).

The idea of perceptions influencing behaviors came to an interesting twist in this next study. Finkelstein, Kulas, and Dages (2003) researched age differences in proactive newcomer strategies and suggest the possibility that a person older than the expected age of a newcomer may feel out of synch or be perceived as entering 'late in the game.'

Therefore, they tested whether older newcomers are more likely to use covert information seeking than their younger cohorts in an academic environment of new entrants to faculty positions. Their results actually found that older newcomers are *less* likely to use covert information; however, these results must be taken lightly given their small final sample size (*n*=50). The aptitude for and use of covert information seeking will be detailed in my research study; given the context of internal promotions it could be assumed that there is pressure to already have all of the answers.

Previous Transition Experience. Related to self-perceptions prior to entry is the presence of previous transition experience as a measure in socialization. Chan and Schmitt (2000) recommend this variable be included in all research in this area, as it could account for adaptation rates of work adjustment (2000). However, their research did not find evidence for a positive relationship between this previous transition experience and information seeking and relationship building in the socialization process outcomes. Interestingly, a negative relationship was detected which suggests that newcomers who join the organization with less previous transition experience will have a higher likelihood of possessing referent information seeking than their cohorts with higher levels of previous transition experience (Chan & Schmitt, 2000). Again, the newcomer socialization literature may add insight into the nuances of internal socialization. In the context of a promotion at the mid to senior levels, the leader has already experienced one or several role transitions in their career. There is the underlying assumption, once again, that they know what they are doing and they are good at it; this is why they have been promoted. However, along with that assumption comes a sense of

confidence that these promoted leaders "know it all" and thus reach out less to seek guidance or knowledge from others.

De Vos et al. (2003) reviewed the influence of psychological contract formation in a large sample of 333 organizational newcomers in Belgium on their socialization experiences. This study found that newcomers adapt their perceptions to the reality on the job and that when the organization fulfills their expectations through the promises that were made about job content, the newcomer is more likely to have positive perceptions of the organization (De Vos et al., 2003).

The influence of being considered the "newcomer" may hinder self-perceptions of ability to master a task or achieve cultural mastery, or successful socialization when the work adaptation is complete, and therefore delay the socialization process, suggests Rollag (2004). He posits that researchers and practitioners should separate the concept of newcomer from that of socialization to create two distinct entities, rather than just opposite ends of a continuum, to eliminate this problem (Rollag, 2004). This aligns well with the intent of the current study: to focus on socialization that is not related to being an organizational newcomer.

Proactive Personality. Proactive personality is defined as the general disposition to make conscious efforts to change one's environment, which plays an integral role in the socialization process of newcomers (Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Crant, 2000; Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). The significance of the positive relationship between proactive behavior and socialization is

well supported (Bauer et al., 1998; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

However, a study by Bauer and Green (1998) failed to find support for this when they included manager behavior as a variable. They conclude that perhaps there are times when proactive behaviors do not add to the predictive component of socialization. They also suggest that the omission of a manager behavior variable in previous work may explain an inflation of results in proactive behaviors predicting work adjustment. For this reason, manager behavior should be included in future research on the socialization process (Bauer & Green, 1998).

Crant (2000) synthesized the proactive personality research across domains. He also found the literature related to socialization to be capturing newcomers' active role in the socialization process, even to the extent that newcomers are initiating socialization, further confirming the evidence of a proactive personality's influence on this process.

Wanberg and Kammeyer-Mueller (2000) have expanded the literature in their research study, which encompassed the Big 5 personality factors with proactive personality in the organizational socialization realm. They initiated a three-wave longitudinal study to capture the predictors and outcomes of employee proactivity to expand the scope of current research. Results show a strong positive relationship between the two Big Five personality variables of extraversion and openness to experience and proactive socialization behaviors (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Additionally, the sample (n=118) included a diverse group of individuals from numerous occupations which eliminated some of the criticism from previous research that primarily

drew from the graduating university student population. They obtained some interesting findings: extraversion has been found to have a positive relationship with feedback seeking and relationship building and openness had a high positive relationship with sensemaking (i.e. feedback seeking) and positive framing but no significant relationship with information seeking. The results lacked significance for the relationships between the other three Big 5 personality factors of neuroticism, conscientiousness, or agreeableness which may be a reflection of the influence of the control variables put in place (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). In a subsequent study, Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) revealed that newcomer proactive personality has a positive relationship with proximal outcomes (task mastery, role clarity, and work group integration) which will be discussed briefly in a later section.

Accommodation Phase

Organizational Socialization Tactics. Socialization tactics are identified as one of the primary areas of research on socialization (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Saks et al., 2007) and they continue to be a highly researched area up to the present. Many socialization tactics are used by organizations, but the most prevalent tactics reported in the literature are centered on institutionalized socialization. This is a structured program that an organization creates for consistency of training for all newcomers and mentoring or role model systems. It is interesting to find that socialization tactics are still so heavily researched given Gruman and colleagues' (2006) view that the dependency on socialization tactics is an approach that "regards individuals as passive, reactive agents and in isolation may not fully capture the dynamics of the socialization process" (p. 2).

Movement in the literature to better understand self-initiated socialization processes has brought us to study the relationship between proactive behaviors and socialization, which will be discussed in a forthcoming section.

There are pros and cons to the incorporation of institutionalized socialization processes in any organization. Jones (1986) found institutionalized socialization builds a newcomers' commitment to the organization, but it also tends to hinder innovation in a new role (1986). Similar results were found by Ashforth (2007), with a negative relationship between institutionalized socialization and role innovation uncovered in their sample of 150 graduates entering the workforce.

Bravo, Peiro, Rodriguez, and Whitney, (2003) and Jones (1986) are in support of institutional socialization tactics because they reduce newcomer uncertainty and build the relationship between newcomers, superiors and peers. A second study by Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002) looked at the perceptions of organizational socialization tactics when newcomers' attitudes about outcomes are measured and found that socialization tactics are indeed a predictor for both organizational commitment (.34) and job satisfaction (.28) but results for intentions to quit were not statistically significant (.19). Socialization tactics did predict knowledge in the social, interpersonal resources, organization, and role domains, as mediated by information acquisition. Additionally, overall institutionalized socialization tactics predicted job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002).

However, Cable and Parsons (2001) did not find support for a stronger relationship between institutionalized socialization tactics in a collective and formal

setting and greater person-organization fit perceptions than those exhibited by individualized, informal socialization tactics. This same study did find support, though, for sequential and fixed socialization tactics over random and variable socialization tactics in relationship to newcomers' person-organization fit perceptions.

Klein and Weaver (2000) deployed a quasi-experimental study to test the effectiveness of an orientation program. In their sample of 116 newcomers about half voluntarily participated in a live orientation session and were found to have significantly increased levels of socialization in measurable dimensions of history, goals/values, and people but not language. A significant relationship between orientation attendance and the distal outcome of organizational commitment was also found in this mediated effect of socialization (Klein & Weaver, 2000).

Looking at specific institutionalized socialization tactics, Hauter, Macan, and Winter (2003) found mentors and job training to have a significant positive relationship with socialization (2003). Mentors strongly affected organizational socialization and there was some effect at the group and task levels but job training was only significantly related to task socialization (Hauter et al., 2003). Allen et al. (1999) also studied the effects of mentoring through peer social support in a MBA student sample and the effects that this has on reducing newcomers' stress and increasing successful socialization. Although a negative relationship between mentoring and work stress was not found directly, there was partial support in the evidence of mentors reducing stress from the psychosocial and overarching career perspective of the newcomer and an indirect strength of relationship in that mentoring is positively related to socialization and

socialization has a negative relationship to work-induced stress (Allen et al., 1999). These results should not be taken with grave surface value, however, since the sample size was very small (n = 64) so any test of significant effects should be interpreted with caution.

Riordan and colleagues (2001) found serial, investiture, and sequential socialization tactics to have a positive relationship with newcomers' perceptions of fit, worth, and work attitudes. This further implies that role models (i.e. mentors) increase the newcomers' perceptions of fit, worth, and attitudes and had a negative relationship to turnover (Riordan et al., 2001). It should be noted, however, that the negative relationship to turnover found was fully mediated by the P-J fit adjusted after the newcomer entered the organization (Riordan et al., 2001).

Before implementing institutionalized socialization programs, an organization should consider the new employee population and pace of organizational growth. Rollag (2004) found that companies experiencing a high growth phase may cause employees to move from newcomer/rookie to oldtimer/veteran more quickly and thus find structured orientations, training, or mentoring programs inappropriate or beneath them. However, it is important to recognize the difference between an employee who has adequately matured beyond being a newcomer from the 'unsocialized oldtimer' that has a false sense of confidence in organizational knowledge, culture, and values or a hesitancy to ask questions for fear of revealing their lack of knowledge (Rollag, 2004). This is an important consideration in the present study as well because it is insufficient to assume that simply because the leader is moving into a new role within the organization that they

have been properly socialized in the first place. Other researchers have found a lack of institutionalized socialization tactics will in fact prompt proactive behaviors so the newcomer obtains the needed information and reduces the uncertainty (Gruman et al., 2006; Griffin et al., 2000).

Two areas of the socialization tactics literature that have been ignored are whether organizations actually have control during the organizational entry process over a newcomers' socialization and if the relationship between socialization tactics and P-O fit can be generalized to other countries and cultures (Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005). Kim and colleagues took the opportunity to generalize findings in an international context and established a study sample in South Korea involving seven organizations to analyze the relationship between organizational socialization tactics and P-O fit with the moderator of employee proactivity. Results showed a positive relationship (.46) does exist between institutionalized socialization tactics and P-O fit perceptions, and they are moderated by positive framing in the South Korean employee sample. Lastly, this research team found that socializing strengthened the relationship between institutionalized tactics and P-O fit, and the effect was more significant when socializing was higher (Kim et al., 2005).

Rollag's 2004) research study sample of four start-up dot-com companies brings new insight into another variable, the influence of relative tenure, in the socialization process. His strong support for the need to separate the term 'newcomer' from the overall socialization concept is based on the premise that being a newcomer is relative to the tenure of others in one's work group or organization and does or does not equal one's successful socialization. This has an important implication for this research study

focusing on internal transitions; it is perhaps falsely assumed that those who currently work for the organization have achieved a sense of cultural mastery.

Proactive Behaviors. While proactive personality was outlined as an antecedent to adjustment, proactive behaviors manifest from these personality traits (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000). Specifically, this study revealed that extraversion and openness to experience have been correlated with increases in proactive socialization behaviors. Proactive socialization behaviors include sensemaking (how a newcomer makes sense of their new role and environment using both information and feedback seeking), relationship building, and positive framing (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

Exchange and information sharing, feedback seeking, and the sensemaking process are essential components of socialization (De Vos et al., 2003; Bauer et al., 1998; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Morrison, 1993). Bauer and colleagues (1988) suggest that a newcomer may utilize these activities to assist in the sensemaking process. De Vos and colleagues (2003) reviewed the impact on psychological contract formation during the socialization process under the influence of the important role that sensemaking plays. Support was found for a positive relationship between newcomers' sensemaking activities and their perceptions of the experiences they have encountered in the organization which translate as their psychological contract.

Furthermore, newcomers with high levels of self-efficacy are predicted to have higher levels of information and feedback seeking (Jones, 1983). Saks and Ashforth (2000) studied the effects of general self-efficacy on job attitudes and behaviors and

found it did not have as much predictive strength as task-specific measures for self-efficacy did. Gruman et al. (2006) looked at socialization and proactive behaviors from the perspective of self-efficacy and the organization's socialization tactics and revealed a positive relationship does exist, based on their sample of co-op students in Canada.

Little research has been done to examine the relationship between goals and proactive behaviors to predict work adjustment; only one study had been identified in this review, a longitudinal study by Maier and Brunstein (2001). This study evaluated the personal goals new employees set and strive for during the organizational entry phase and how the commitment to the goal, attainability of the goal, and progress towards goal achievement accounted for changes in job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Goal commitment did act as a moderator for differences in the attainability of these goals and goal progress was mediated by goal commitment. Unfortunately it was a relatively small sample (*n=81*) and findings have yet to be replicated. However, Maier and Brunstein's results do show the merit of future research in this area, linking personal-goal approach to proactive personality and job attitudes for organizational newcomers.

Relationship-Building is the final component of proactive behaviors, and it has begun to gain momentum in the literature (Finkelstein et al., 2003; Morrison, 2002). Wanberg and Kammeyer-Muller (2000) found role clarity and social integration to be positively related to relationship building but not information seeking or feedback seeking. Finkelstein and colleagues (2003) reviewed the affects of age differences in newcomers and the relationship this held with overt information seeking and relationship building. Bauer and Green (1998) examined the manager's behavior and support of the

newcomer which provides a unique perspective in terms of relationship building above and beyond peer level relationships. Morrison (2002) conducted a study on the role social network ties play in the informational and friendship networks of newcomers' relationships, impacting their work adjustment. She found newcomers' organizational knowledge, task mastery, and role clarity positively relate to the status and range of their information networks. Her sound sample is from an accounting firm (n=235) but generalizes to the role of relationships in a newcomer's socialization process (Morrison, 2002).

Proximal Outcomes

Task Mastery & Role Clarity. These two proximal outcomes will be presented together because they were often paired in most studies analyzing numerous outcome variables. Morrison (2002) found support for a positive relationship between task mastery and network size, and role clarity and task mastery and density of social network. Results also show role clarity will increase in positive relationship to network range, allowing for a more broad understanding of the organization as a whole.

Additionally, a newcomer's task mastery and role clarity have a positive relationship with informational networks that refers to the organizational status level of their network members (Morrison, 2002). Bravo et al. (2003) studied a large sample (n=661) of international newcomers to determine the relationship between role stress and social antecedents in predicting career-enhancing strategies and found institutionalized socialization tactics are negatively related to role conflict and ambiguity two years later due to incompatible role information provided by co-workers.

Other researchers have found organizational socialization to have a positive influence on role clarity (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). More specifically, Bauer and Green (1998) found task information seeking is identified as a way to increase role clarity for newcomers. Researchers Chan and Schmitt (2000) found evidence in support of task mastery and role clarity increasing over time, as a result of newcomer proactive behaviors. Further support for task mastery in socialization comes from Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg's (2003) study of 589 organizational newcomers with evidence that newcomer task mastery and role clarity has a negative relationship to work withdrawal and role clarity will have a positive relationship to organizational commitment.

Group Integration. Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) found that work group integration is positively related to organizational commitment. Morrison (2002) links proactive personality behaviors such as establishing networks of friends and information to enhance the newcomers' work adjustment. The newcomer uses his or her initiative and discretion to interact with a set of informational sources to increase learning and expand his or her set of friends to increase assimilation (Morrison, 2002).

Newcomer Learning. Ashforth, Sluss, and Saks (2007) define the proximal outcome variable of newcomer learning to encompass both socialization tactics and proactive behavior to provide a more complete understanding of newcomers' learning process during adjustment. Newcomer learning was revealed to be a mediator for the relationship between both institutionalized socialization and proactive behavior and the adjustment variables of performance, job satisfaction, and organizational identification.

Chapter 3 Research Questions and Corollary Literatures

The socialization literature reviewed in chapter two, while relevant to internal socialization, does not provide sufficient insight into how newly promoted leaders experience the internal socialization process. Other academic areas of study (i.e., research on work transitions, succession, work identity, and leadership development) can be used to complement the socialization literature and provide a deeper knowledge base for this study's research questions. While these literatures together are still insufficient for responding to the questions posed by this dissertation, the current chapter incorporates a discussion of relevant information from these related bodies of research. The three major research questions of this study will be presented one by one, followed by a brief discussion of literature from other areas of organizational research that informs each research question.

Research Question 1: What are the challenges associated with adjusting to promotion from within and how do leaders assimilate in this context?

Some of the challenges expected to emerge from data collection included those related to relevant extant theories: work role transitions, succession, and identity. Additionally, it is expected that managing interpersonal relationships will present certain challenges. These themes are addressed with a brief literature review on corollary topics, as they inform the reader of connections to the current research.

Work Role Transitions Theory

Nicholson (1984) created the theory of work role transitions to address two questions applicable to organizational science: "(1) How are change and stability

interrelated?" and "(2) How does the interaction between individuals and social systems affect either?" ultimately resulting in a theory that could explain and predict the range of adjustment modes (p. 172). Work role transitions are defined by Nicholson (1984) as either a change in status or some aspect of the job, and include both internal and external status passages. The theory encompasses life-span development, organizational change, and occupational socialization while contributing to mobility outcomes and job design. Work role transitions theory provides a foundation for the exploration of corresponding topics that affect many areas of management including leader development (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988; McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott, & Morrow, 1994), careers (Karaevli & Hall, 2006), proactivity at work (Grant & Ashford, 2008), previously mentioned job design (Grant & Parker, 2009), and job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Work role transitions theory categorizes adjustment to role transition as either personal development or role development, noting affect and novelty to varying levels (Nicholson, 1984). Personal development assumes the learning occurs within the individual and may include shifting perceptions, identity, or values in the adjustment process. Role development is an external adjustment initiated by the transitioning employee and may manifest in the redesign of work tasks, methods, or relationships; job crafting specifically stems from this component of the theory.

Four adjustment modes were identified based on a matrix of personal and role development. The second mode, replication, requires the least amount of adjustment resulting in minimal role development and low levels of personal development. The third

mode, absorption, requires the person to adjust personally but again has minimal opportunities to develop, or shape, their role. However, the person does develop role learning in this mode. Determination represents low personal development, or no change internally, yet high role development. At the time that this theory was published, there was no clear evidence of this type of adjustment; however, subsequent recent research on job crafting has filled this void (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Finally, the fourth mode of adjustment in the work role transitions theory is Exploration, representing both high personal development and high role development.

Nicholson and West (1988) conducted one of the largest quantitative studies on transitions, simultaneously empirically testing the work role transitions theory with a comparison of external and internal job changes. They categorized managerial job changes into twelve types: in-spiraling (internal promotes with increased status and functional change), out-spiraling (entering the organization from the outside: a typical "new hire" yet moving upwards in organizational rank), in-lateral (internal lateral job change), out-lateral (external job change to same level position), promotion, out and up (exit organization to be promoted in a new organization), drop-out shift (leaving the organization, a demotion, and a functional shift), out-transfer (leaving the organization with function change but moving to job of the same level), job reorder (equivalent to a lateral transfer), drop shift (internal demotion with a change in function), out-demotion (exiting the organization and a demotion), and in-demotion (internal demotion).

The study sample included over one thousand British managers and three types of role demands were assessed. The twelve job changes included varying levels of novelty,

learning, and transfer of skills. Surprisingly, there were not consistent patterns connecting these three role demands. External organizational shifts were the most demanding overall, particularly with respect to novelty and transfer. However, spiraling upward, both internally and externally, proved to be the largest learning opportunity. This is in alignment with the socialization literature that emphasizes learning in the adjustment process (Ashforth, Sluss, & Saks, 2007; Morrison, 2002; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Therefore, promoted leaders will experience a period of intense learning required for development of major skills for their new job of increased scope and responsibility; the problem is that a better understanding how they experience and obtain this necessary learning is needed.

Overall, Nicholson and West tested the work role transitions theory with the empirical data collected. They ran correlations between role development (similar to role innovation) and personal development (internal, within person change). They found the managers who rated higher on role development tended to be older, had higher organizational status, and needed more dominance, creativity, and growth in their work. Increases in discretion over decisions and authority were present, although job novelty did not necessarily increase. However, if managers were in a newly created role, then job novelty tended to be higher. Personality and attitudes were assessed along with the personal development component of the work role transitions theory; managers in the study experienced more change in their personality, or personal change, than in their attitudes, which were operationalized more as preferences.

A change in status is a major shift in role demands (Nicholson & West, 1988) that is often overlooked when an employee advances from within the organization. Work role transition theory (Nicholson, 1984) posits that an increase in discretionary judgment in a new role paired with high role novelty will result in the leader exhibiting the absorption behavior, meaning that they will deal with this new challenge in the same way they handled prior situations. Leaders tend to continue doing what was successful for them in the past, hence the promotion for this prior success (Grusky, 1964; Kanter, 1977).

Results from this longitudinal, empirical study also uncovered some interesting findings. For example, managers' expectations were found to be unrealistic as they entered new jobs. Unfortunately, Nicholson and West (1988) did not explore the reasons behind these findings (Brett, 1989). In a book review for the Academy of Management Review, Brett (1989) details specific questions Nicholson and West failed to probe regarding the intriguing findings on managers' expectations:

> *Why are managers surprised? Do their disappointments contribute to out-spirallying? Why doesn't changing jobs every three years cause managers to become calloused, cynical, and realistic about the true opportunities offered by new jobs? Do these findings reflect no realistic job previews and socialization, or do they suggest ineffective job previews and socialization programs? (p. 605)*

These questions are not only accordant to the current study, but in fact perfectly align with and provide justification for the inductive methodology required to capture evidence of this nature.

Perhaps most surprisingly, Nicholson and West (1988) find that the job change with the *most* stress includes one which has an upward status move in the *same* organization (p. 104, emphasis added). They find that a manager moving upward in job

scope at a *new* organization is given extra latitude in the adjustment process since organizational leaders are cognizant that a huge shift is required when joining a new organization; however, a promoted leader is given no such 'honeymoon' period and must hit the ground running (Nicholson & West, 1988, p. 105). Furthermore, managers felt their organizations lacked the provision of support and assistance for managers in transition. Managers in Nicholson and West's study cared more about mastering their new job than investing in the development of their people (Brett, 1989); this is a critical issue still present in organizations today and directly linked to talent management systems.

While the work role transitions theory provides a foundation for an understanding of internal job transitions in terms of predicting outcomes and the creation of a typology for modes of adjustment, it does not identify ***how*** leaders experience these transitions and how these experiences manifest within the socialization process. As detailed above, Brett (1989) and others have asked stimulating questions the Nicholson and West (1988) study does not address. Findings from the current study may have an opportunity to further delineate this theory. Furthermore, it is important to make connections between the work role transitions theory and current research in socialization when analyzing the results.

Succession Theory

Research on succession began to accumulate in the eighties and nineties and included event studies of stock market reaction to top management change, origin studies, succession planning, and above all, succession processes and consequences (for a complete review, see Kesner & Sebora, 1994). Although the volume of studies on

succession theory has tapered off to some extent, the interest in succession has not waned. Most of the management succession literature has focused on the top leader, the CEO (cf. Friedman & Saul, 1991; Shen & Cannella, 2002; Vancil, 1987; Zhang & Rajagopalan; 2004.) Emphasis on the most senior leader's transition is important because it is commonly understood that CEO succession plays a major role in organizational performance (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996; Kesner & Sebora, 1994; Zhang & Rajagopalan, 2004) and stockholder valuations (Lubatkin, Chung, Rogers & Owers, 1989; Friedman & Singh, 1989).

Relay succession, when an incumbent CEO helps their successor transition into the role in an overlapping leadership process Vancil (1987) coins "passing the baton," is an emerging stream of research (Bigley & Wiersema, 2002; Cannella & Shen, 2001; Shen & Cannella, 2003; Vancil, 1987) that is especially relevant to the current research study. Zhang and Rajagopalan (2004) studied relay succession from an organizational learning and adaptation perspective. They found that CEO relay succession is negatively associated with the number of internal candidates considered for the job and positively correlated with the performance of the firm prior to the transition.

Ballinger and Schoorman (2007) took a different approach to measuring CEO succession, focusing their work on the reactions to leadership transitions within workgroups. Their theoretical paper is situated from the receiving work group members' perspective, not the leaders in transition themselves. They move the succession literature past merely connecting CEO succession with firm performance, known as the "succession effect" (Grustky, 1963), to analyzing other valuable outcome effects. The

circumstances surrounding the exit of the former leader, expected or unexpected, could affect individual reactions to the succession. The power and continued influence of the former leader over the workgroup could also influence the perceptions work group members have of their new leader. The impact that this predecessor will have on the newly promoted leader will depend on the amount of power the predecessor had over the workgroup (Ziller, 1965). It is advisable for organizations to bring the newly promoted leader's attention to the circumstances surrounding the prior leader's departure as well as provide insight into the power and relationship dynamics within the group (Ballinger & Schoorman, 2007).

New research on leadership succession should include individual level analysis because this "is a new frame of reference for this research and opens up a new perspective for measuring the outcomes of these commonplace organizational events" (Barringer & Schoorman, 2007, p. 133). Ballinger and Schoorman's paper is informative to the current study because it provides insight into the team level perceptions upon entry of a promoted or externally hired successor.

A notable study expanding the frame of management succession beyond the CEO post is Gabarro's (1987) research on "taking charge" of organizations. Gabarro actually stumbled onto this topic while studying the working relationships of senior leaders; the result was a study that morphed and spanned eight years. Gabarro's (1987) definition of taking charge is the "process by which a manager establishes mastery and influence in a new assignment" (p. 6). Emphasis is placed on the organizational and interpersonal

dynamics of this taking-charge process and plotting out adjustment curves based on the transition experiences of seventeen managers across three studies.

Five stages are identified in Garbarro's (1987) study: (1) taking hold, (2) immersion, (3) reshaping, (4) consolidation, and (5) refinement. The taking hold stage lasts for three to six months and includes a spike in organizational change activity as the new leader gains knowledge that helps orient them to their new role and learn who and what is important, building a cognitive map of the organization. In immersion, lasting for four to eleven months, the new leader is in a diagnostic stage and drawing connections from organizational practices, early change initiatives, and emerging problems. The reshaping stage brings about more rapid change, serving as the second surge of action, involving changes that impact organizational processes. Garbarro found over 30% of management personnel and organizational structural changes happened at this stage. Consolidation comprises the fourth stage, bringing another wave of activity although now at a decreasing scale. The new manager is evaluating the outcomes of decisions made at previous stages and carrying out follow through. Typically consolidation lasts four to eight months. Finally, the last stage identified by Gabarro is refinement. This is the pinnacle for the manager as they have now fully "taken charge" and are no longer considered new. At this point, learning becomes routine, knowledge is acquired incrementally, and actions are focused on maintenance and refining previous initiatives for sustainable growth.

Identity- Status

Identity is a major component in role transitions (Aldrich, 2003; Ibarra, 1999) and will come up in the interviews at some point. However, this may be an inferred assessment made upon receiving the individual leaders' reflections. In one pilot interview for this study, the leader called the interview a "cathartic experience" because he had not had such a deep, reflective conversation about his transition experience before that point. As individuals, our identity is constantly evolving; identity serves as a dynamic process of self-reflection and understanding of the self (Adlrich, 2003; Nicholson & West, 1988).

When leaders move vertically within their organization to positions of increased power and influence, it is natural for them to experience a heightened sense of self-awareness as they make comparisons between themselves and what the organizational expectations are for senior leadership, even "justify[ing] their position in the social order" (Barley, 1989, p. 49). They may begin to realize a need for a separation from their old identity, tied to their previous role, and attempt to create a new or modified identity as it relates to their new position within the organization (Ibarra, 1999). Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) have even suggested that these role transitions instigate self-narratives which help transitioning employees solidify and express their new role identity. The process of this personal growth and learning will vary by individual but this critical period provides an opportunity for an intervention from the organization.

Managing interpersonal dynamics

A unique challenge in advancing from within an organization entails managing interpersonal relationships that may become strained due to a change in status. For

example, the leader may now sit in a position of influence that out ranks their former peers. An even more complex case is when a leader has been promoted from their own group of peers to a position of authority over this same group; this is called a peer-promote situation. Part of this challenge relates not only to the tactical matter of managing former peers, but indirectly relates to the previous argument that promoted leaders are experiencing a shift in their identity. Much of our public identity is interpreted or even crafted by others' perceptions of who we are and this perceived identity results in reputation. Internally, a high potential leader builds a reputation for performance and success; this is validated further as they are promoted upwards in the organization. However, little is known about how leaders successfully transition in this challenge and what, if anything, organizations can do to support leaders in transition.

Watkins (2009) categorizes this peer-promote situation as a challenge for managers and identifies guidance for newly promoted leaders to "accept that relationships have to change, focus early on rites of passage, reenlist your (good) former peers, establish your authority deftly, focus on what's good for the business, and approach team building with caution" (p. 50). It will be helpful to probe leaders in transition about their socialization in terms of managing changing relationships and the dynamics of peers and former colleagues to determine what the challenges have been for them and how they are overcoming these. Have they applied the strategies Watkins (2009) suggests and do these efforts result in success or benefit their transition experience and development? Are we researchers and organizations missing something? Rather

than allowing leaders to rely solely on trial and error, what could organizations do in terms of an intervention to assist in this critical transition point?

If the leadership abilities of the transitioning leader are in question, whether these perceptions are accurate or not, this may also influence the leader's experience in transition as it relates to both interpersonal dynamics and identity. For example, it is quite possible the newly promoted leader may experience workplace envy, even resulting in social undermining or work sabotage (Duffy, Ganster, Shaw, Johnson, & Pagon, 2006; Duffy, Shaw, & Schaubroeck, 2008). Envy in the workplace is defined as occurring "when a person lacks another's superior quality, achievement, or possession and either desires it or wishes the other lacked it" (Parrott & Smith, 1993, p.). Particularly if the newly promoted leader is in a peer-promote situation, they may find those rejected for the promotion respond with "complex emotions to being passed over" (Schaubroeck & Lam, 2004, p.). This is when envy can turn into negative consequences for the promoted leader. One such outcome is social undermining, defined as "behavior intended to hinder, over time, the ability to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work-related success, and favorable reputation" (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002, p. 332). Envy impacts one's professional identity and devalues both the envied leader and the envious alike (Duffy et al., 2008).

Research Question 2: What mistakes are prevalent during this transition period?

Leadership Failure & Derailment Theory

There is an assumption that if a leader has succeeded in the past, they will succeed again; this is why they have been selected for the promotion. However, if this were the

case then all, or at least most, newly promoted leaders would be successful in their new role. This assumption has proven to be incorrect; a growing literature on managerial derailment (Bentz, 1967, 1985, 1990; Boyatzis, 1982; Lombardo et al., 1988; McCall & Lombardo, 1983; Morrison et al., 1987) shows that while it is true leaders who have been promoted possess "the right stuff," those who derail also possess dysfunctional characteristics that Hogan and colleagues (2009) categorize as the "wrong stuff" including personality defects, troubled relationships, inability to build a team, and failures of leadership (p. 5). They reviewed twelve studies on management failure and estimated that 50% of management promotions resulted in failure, based on individual studies with failure rates ranging from 33-67% (2009). Context is needed as to why these leaders are failing and to determine if interventions could mitigate some of this failure.

Organizational insiders will likely experience less formal organizational socialization tactics because there is an assumption they are already "members" of the organization and therefore, they already know how things work. It is not common for organizations to adequately prepare leaders for their promotion in advance (Van Velsor & Leslie, 1995). Although development is addressed generally, it is rare that the specifics of a particular role are identified and tailored. Organizational support upon promotion is just as sparse (Freedman, 2005; Hogan et al., 2009; Watkins, 2003).

Pre-Entry Perceptions & Influences

A component of the preparation for promotion is the negotiation process that happens prior to the leader accepting the promotion, or the terms of the new job. This is a distinct difference between transitioning from inside the organization as opposed to

being hired externally. In the case of a new hire from outside the organization, the recruit experiences the entire recruitment and selection process and during this time the organization is "selling" the opportunity from the start. Likewise, the external leader has the opportunity to compare their options with other offers outside the organization (usually a process that can span several weeks if not months) and therefore has more leverage in terms of negotiating the salary, scope, and timeline for accomplishing the immediate targeted goals for the position. The organization, if presenting the culture and the role in an honest light, will make every effort to provide a realistic job preview (Popovich & Wanous, 1982) to help the new hire fully understand the components of the new job, including the challenges.

In the promotion situation, the organizational decision makers who offer the promotion to the internal leader will likely assume it will be viewed as a "reward" for past accomplishments and previous success within the firm and is rarely approached as a negotiation of terms or transition timelines. Actually, the transition timeframe is often expected to be shorter since the leader is already employed at the organization and the leader in many cases is expected to wrap up their current position, find a replacement for their previous role, and begin their "new" job simultaneously. Their transition experience does not have hard stopping and starting points between roles; the overlap of their time, energy, and focus during this transition could be contributing to the source of conflict and stress. Research on on-the-job development found that high level managers who were amidst key job transitions experienced higher levels of job overload (McCauley et al., 1994).

Research Question 3: What facilitates learning and adjustment during internal advancement?

Leader Development, Mentoring, & Coaching

Organizations reported in a study by the Corporate Leadership Council (2005) that many of their internally identified high-potential employees in fact "do not have what it takes to be successful in more senior, critical roles" (Barnett & Davis, 2008). Development through job experiences is an area of research gaining emphasis (McCall, 2010; McCauley, Lombardo, & Usher, 1989; McCauley et al., 1994). Managerial transitions are great development because managers must deal with novel situations that require new solutions to problems (Brett, 1984; Davies & Esterby-Smith, 1984; Louis, 1982; MCauley et al., 1994; Nicholson & West, 1988). The notion is that leaders learn by doing and the more developmental experiences and on-the-job learning that takes place, the better positioned they will be for more strategic roles. However, there is still a lot to learn about what types of experience are the most critical to leadership development (McCall, 2010).

It is expected that some of the leaders in this study will have the opportunity to work with an executive coach for the purpose of preparing high-potential employees for career advancement (Feldman & Lankau, 2005; McCauley & Hezlett, 2002) and that they will likely find it helpful (Bono, et al., 2009). The mentoring literature supports the impact on learning by having a strong mentor for guidance and direction (Allen et al., 1999; Kram, 1985). Informal mentors, those who have not been formally assigned by an organization, may be even more impactful (Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003) and particularly helpful during advancement transitions within the organization. The

executive coaching arena shows a preliminary glimpse at the positive prospects for more formal onboarding programs and transition coaching to aid in the success rate of promoted leaders while reducing the time needed for adjustment (Witherspoon & Cannon, 2004).

Organizational & Social Support

The assumption for most individuals experiencing a promotion is that they will *not* have a formal onboarding program, as this is typically characteristic only of new hires into the organization. In this circumstance, the learning required for the newly promoted leader will need to be self-initiated and self-directed. If anything, the leader may describe an informal orientation from their manager or senior HR leader. If this orientation or introduction to working at a new level will be present, it will likely be an individual rather than a collective initiative since it is rare for internal organizational moves to happen in collective groups or be timed to transition multiple leaders on the same day or even same week.

Individual learning upon transition lacks the strong support network and cohort of peers also currently experiencing a job transition, making it challenging for the new promote. It is expected that the experience of loneliness or isolation may be connected to this stage of the transition cycle. Recent research on the socialization of newcomers has shown network support and friendship structures are important factors in newcomer adjustment (Morrison, 2002). The exception to this lack of a collective socialization process might be an international venture or merger, where several senior leaders would be transitioning to new roles together to lead a new business unit or acquisition.

Given the lack of a clear picture of what factors matter most for successful internal socialization, the current study is needed. It is the purpose of this research to explore the differences inherent in internal socialization. It is possible that the very reason organizations often overlook important organizational socialization tactics and transition management strategies for newly promoted leaders is because they are incorrectly assuming that internal advancement is not as challenging as entering a new role from outside the organization and therefore do not feel offering support and interventions adds incremental value.

However, it could then be equally plausible that this lack of formalized socialization processes causes the new promote to experience ***greater stress*** in their individual transition in role than necessary: they have *less* organizational support and *increased* pressure to perform, given their previous reputation for success in the organization. Furthermore, it is possible that their primary network and established contacts are maintained inside the organization so if they indeed fail in this assignment, it would require an organizational exit, the loss of a hard-earned organizational network, and the destruction of an established internal reputation, again adding pressure to an already stressful role transition. It is known that leaders experience challenges upon promotion, and this often results in stress. However, researchers and practitioners still lack clarity of understanding why this occurs and what would facilitate a more smooth and successful transition. The exploration of this research question, in particular, will bring insight and greater depth to the phenomenon of internal socialization.

Chapter 4 Method

Research Design

Grounded theory is the overarching methodology utilized in this study to uncover *how* newly promoted leaders experience the internal socialization process as they transition into roles of increased responsibility and impact. Grounded theory is formally defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) who are the originators of this methodology, as the "discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research" (p. 2). The analysis of data in a grounded theory study is a process that involves "generating, developing, and verifying concepts" that accumulate over time as more data is acquired (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 57). Grounded theory is particularly useful for research on socialization because it captures the complexity of the dynamic socialization process, links well to practice, and is supportive of substantive theorizing in underdeveloped areas of research as well as those that have grown mature but fail to capture the essence of basic social processes (Locke, 2001). As outlined in the preceding chapters, a dearth of research on internal socialization exists. Therefore, using a grounded theory approach to extend socialization theory to encompass internal socialization presents an auspicious opportunity to contribute to the literature.

The primary and focused unit of analysis for this study is at the individual leader level. Therefore each case, or "unit," is an individual person. Within each individual case, the data was analyzed based on the embedded units of reflection and experience (resulting in categories), as provided by the individual leaders in the interview process. Three organizations were selected in order to gather data across varying contexts and to

allow for supplementary analysis. These organizations differed in size and industry to allow for variance in context (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Since the targeted unit of analysis in this study is at the individual level, the target participants were organizational leaders, operationalized as managers of people who have been promoted to a role of increased scope and responsibility within their organization within the last nine months. The term "managers of people" requires that the leader has at least one direct report. Front line or first-level leaders are those who directly oversee the work of individual contributors; they serve as the "front line" of supervision for these employees. Mid-level leaders are those who are managers of other managers and often lead an entire department. Senior level leaders include those leading managers of managers while also operating as the head of their function, operating group, or division up to and including executives and c-suite members. Promoted leaders from three organizations and various levels, job titles, professional and technical functions, and a myriad of individual differences (age, gender, race, tenure) were sampled.

The goal was to study the leaders *in transition*, as they experienced the adjustment of moving into a new role upon promotion within their organization. Fisher (1986) noted socialization is a dynamic process in which both individuals and organizations are adapting over time. There is not a definitive time period or month marking the point when an individual "has arrived" and will be fully socialized; it differs by individual and the magnitude of change and role demands. While some researchers have created socialization stages (Feldman, 1981), or cycles of transition (Gabarro, 1987; Watkins, 2003), these time points vary by a span of several months. Research on socialization has

found the first months in a new role is a meaningful time period for research (Feldman 1977; Katz, 1978; Morrison, 1993) and most quantitative studies on newcomer socialization are set at intervals of entry, three months, six months, nine months, and one year following entry (Bauer et al., 2007). It should be noted that measures as late as one year after entry are usually measuring outcome variables, which are not factors of emphasis in the current study. Rather, this study focuses on the dynamic process and experience of transition *amidst* this promotion.

There are several angles from which the topic of internal socialization could be analyzed. This research study is from the individual employee perspective, based on the leaders in transition. While the organizational level program and processes are valuable, it is expected that the administration of these programs and processes will vary by specific company and even between organizational unit levels or divisions within the company, as well as be impacted by organizational culture and sub-cultures which are beyond the scope of this project. These organizational level factors will also likely be perceived differently by each transitioning leader. Therefore, while organizational practices will not be analyzed on their own merits, the organizational context will be analyzed from the perspective of the leaders in transition and will be considered when analyzing the results.

When conducting qualitative research, one could use either a longitudinal design, which would include the staggered data collection of several interviews at specific intervals over a period of time, usually spanning several months or even years to capture the process of change unfolding, or a retrospective approach, which includes data

collection at a single point in time and requires the research participants to reflect back recalling their experiences. The retrospective approach is well suited for the process of sensemaking, which means making sense of what one's self has been experiencing. Coincidentally, sensemaking is also a key component to organizational socialization, as detailed in chapter two. Weick (1995) goes so far as to say that sensemaking can *only* be done in retrospect.

Given the inherent impact of reflection and self-awareness in aiding learning amidst the process of transition, there is potential for interference in the normal progression of learning if a researcher prompts this awareness through their line of questioning. The result is what is known as the researcher-effect. Gabarro's (1987) longitudinal data collection in the "taking charge" study proved to be problematic for this reason; there was a flaw in his original research design. A notable outcome of his research was the identification of five stages of adjustment. He found the spikes in learning and action directly corresponded, albeit lagged, to the longitudinal data collection points which he conducted in the form of pre-set time staggered reflective interviews. Garbarro (1987) himself acknowledges there is a "startling degree of periodicity" to the interviews and corresponding action taken post-hoc by the division presidents in his first study and the results may be tainted by this researcher-effect, overshadowing any representation of the phenomenon that may have otherwise organically emerged (p. 155). Therefore, this study's research design did not include a longitudinal component and will focus on retrospective reflections in the semi-structured

interviews to more accurately reveal the phenomenon itself and reduce the potential influence of researcher-effect.

Aligning with the theoretical sampling procedure, this study targeted three separate organizations of varying sizes and industries for data collection. Theoretical sampling involves collecting data from a diversity of people, places, and events in order to maximize the opportunity to develop concepts and themes through the extraction and exploration of their dimensions, variations, and connectivity (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Creswell (2007) recommends in qualitative research it is best to start with maximum variation in sampling at either site level, process level, or participant level and any combination of these is ideal. This study allows for this variation at both the site and participant levels. Given that the study is centered on the process of internal socialization, that factor is held constant across participants.

Additionally, sampling theoretically includes building variation into the sample by locating extreme cases to maximize differences among comparative groups. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state the true elaboration of theory necessitates the largest contrast available within a given sample to maximize "ranges, continua, degrees, types, uniformities, variations, causes, conditions, consequences, probabilities of relationships, strategies, process, [and] structural mechanisms" (p. 57). In alignment with this, the present research sought to include leaders from multiple functions, tenure, organizational levels, and demographics (gender, race, age) in addition to the variations listed above (function, geographic relocation, and peer-promote) across the organizations. Since in-person interviews were preferred, the study was constrained to the geographic vicinity of

the Twin Cities Greater Metropolitan Area, with a few exceptions for phone interviews that were conducted to accommodate geographical and logistical issues. The research study protocol and procedure for data collection is visualized in Figure 2.

Figure 2 about here

When verbally approaching these organizations, I included a description of how this research may extend the understanding of internal socialization including possible implications for practice. I knew from previous preliminary discussions about this study with a few large organizations in the metro area prior to the commencement of sample recruitment that there was an appetite from human resource practitioners for access to more knowledge and theory on internal socialization. The hope was that they would be able to incorporate some of this study's findings to enlarge their understanding of the internal promotion transition experience and how it impacts leadership development programs, onboarding practices, and talent management systems. Of the three organizations I approached for access, all three agreed to partner with me and provide names of promoted leaders. One organization had a few stipulations which will be discussed in the sample section.

While some organizations may have been willing to supply access to a sample of newly promoted leaders purely as a contribution to the academic study of the internal

transition process, I did offer a brief organizational report outlining summary findings and applied contributions of this research to practice. I believe this will be a benefit to these organizations and more importantly, it is the final loop in the engaged scholarship model (Van de Ven, 2007), communicating academic results back to the practitioners who have an opportunity to implement these findings in a practical way. However, I was clear that organizations would not have access to any transcripts or raw data and all research participants' names would be kept confidential. Great care was taken to ensure that the organizational reports did not supersede any guarantees of anonymity made to the leaders who elected to participate in this study. Given the caution required for anonymity, the opportunity to include direct quotations from the data can be limited in some instances (see the interview protocol section for further discussion of these ethical considerations).

Sample

The total sample for this study includes 24 interviews with managers of people working within a business functional or line role who have been promoted within their organization in the past nine months to a new leadership role with an increase in scope, responsibility, and job title or level. For reference purposes, manager and leader are used interchangeably. Some individuals were switching functions or geographic locations, while others were in peer-promote situations where they now directly manage former colleagues. The size of the final sample was ultimately determined by theoretical sampling, according to the formal practice of grounded theory as the leading methodology of this study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This sample size is within the 20-30

interview range that Creswell (2007) expects for a grounded theory study. As explained later in this section ,the sample was collected in two phases, with 17 individual interviews in the first phase and seven additional interviews in the second. This strategy is in line with grounded theory technique, as it allows for the researcher to refine questions and to explore relationships within developing concepts following theoretical saturation. Saturation is reached when no additional data is found to develop properties of the category (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The data collection took place over a two year period from 2011 to 2013.

The first step in recruiting the sample was to find organizations willing to provide a list of their promoted managers. I approached this task by utilizing my network of business leaders whom I knew to be influential executives in organizations in the Twin Cities metro area. These leaders connected me with the appropriate HR leader at their organization.

The first organization is a non-profit in the health science industry and employs over 1,000 employees nation-wide (Organization A). The second organization is a mid-sized regional cooperative (Organization B). The third organization is a large sized Fortune 500 company in the manufacturing industry that employs individuals world-wide (Organization C).

The second step in recruiting the sample was to invite the individual managers to participate in a one hour interview. Each of the three organizations provided me with a human resources contact to work with directly; these HR leaders sent me a spreadsheet of each of their promoted leaders including name and job title, function, and division.

Unfortunately Organization C, while much larger than the other two, would only allow me to speak with their first-time managers, which was their target group for improvement in terms of leadership development and training within their organization. This was suitable, given they had a large volume of first time managers and the diversity in other aspects (i.e., particularly in terms of race, functions, geographical moves into Minnesota, and representing varied departments) would offset the fact that they were all first-time managers. Plus, I had two other organizations in the mix and expected these would bring in higher level leaders to balance out the sample.

The HR contacts then personally sent an emailed letter to each of these promoted leaders informing them they had been selected for a research interview with me and that the organization valued and encouraged their participation in the study. The IRB approved consent information sheet was also provided, which guaranteed their participation was voluntary and would remain confidential. While there were no direct benefits or risks to participating, I offered a complimentary $10 gift card to participants as a token of gratitude. Managers were invited to contact me directly to participate in the study.

In phase one of the data collection which represented the initial request for interviews in 2011, Organization A provided a total of 22 managers for research participants. Of that list, seven agreed to be interviewed, resulting in a 32% participation rate. Organization B provided a total of three managers that had been promoted in the last nine months. It is a smaller organization in a stable industry with less internal movement, yet two of the three managers agreed to be interviewed, giving a 67%

participation rate. Organization C provided a total of 28 eligible managers. While 11 initially agreed to be interviewed, due to vacation scheduling, business travel, and other unknown factors, three individuals never confirmed an interview date and had no response to repeated attempts to finalize the interview. The final count of participants from Organization C was eight for a participation rate of 29%. The total phase one sample resulted in 17 interview participants.

The phase one research sample of 17 individuals was predominantly female (76%) and the majority of participants were under the age of 35 (n=8), followed by the 46-55 age bracket (n=6), and then three individuals in the 36-45 age bracket. The number of subordinates spanned from 1 to 270, although the median for direct reports was 4 employees. Job titles ranged from Supervisor to Senior Vice President and 35% of the sample was a manager of managers. The average organizational tenure was 8.9 years with a range of two to twenty years.

Early on in data collection I noticed the prevalence of females volunteering to participate so the trend was investigated further. All three organizations actually had promoted more women than men, based on the lists provided. In questioning this trend, the HR contact at Organization A told me nearly 70% of their organization is female, due to the industry they are in and the mission of their organization. Additionally, while Organization C has more of the typical overall distribution of 50/50 employees by male/female ratios, the list provided of their front line leadership promotions also had more females than men.

When analyzing the phase one sample (13 females, 4 men) compared to the total invited to participate (37 females, 16 men), it can be seen that the sample is proportionately representative of those who had been invited. The female participation rate is slightly higher, at 35.1%, than the male participation rate of 25% but in line with the gender distribution of the available participants. That said, I made a concerted effort to interview more men in the secondary interviews conducted after the serial coding was completed.

The ability to maximize differences in extreme sampling, according to theoretical sampling, was limited in some aspects, given the research design and because access to organizational leaders flowed through an organizational gatekeeper, namely the senior leader in the HR function. In addition to the oversampling of women in this study, the sample includes a high representation of front line managers. The extent to which this may impact the generalizability of the findings of this study is discussed later.

Stage two of data collection and analysis included conducting additional, slightly shorter interviews to explore sub-themes and the relationship of the developing grounded theory concepts. This phase two sample was collected in tandem with the axial coding and data analysis process, which is detailed later in this chapter. A second call for research participants was done after the first phase of data analysis was completed. Organizations A and B were targeted for this effort, given that they were willing to provide names of leaders transitioning at all levels within their organizations, which helps address the over-representation of first level managers.

Organization A provided 12 leaders promoted in the previous nine months and seven agreed to be interviewed for a response rate of 58%. Given the higher proportion of women in the original sample and also a higher percentage of women and first time managers on this second list, only some of the interviews were scheduled to maintain a more equal balance in the male/female ratio of study participants. Three new individuals participated in second stage interviews including two males (the only males to respond) and one female. Organization B did not provide any new individuals to invite into the study. The addition of these three individuals now adds to the total and final sample of 20 individual *participants*.

However, while the number of individuals interviewed remains at 20, the final sample of post-promotion *interviews* conducted for this study is 24 because four leaders were interviewed again after a subsequent promotion. As part of phase two data collection, I reinitiated contact with several insightful participants from phase one who had expressed interest in the final research results, and learned of their newest promotions. These second interviews took place approximately two years after the original interviews and all four individuals had been promoted again since the time of the original interview. This is consistent with grounded theory, using an opportunistic sampling strategy (Creswell, 2007) to follow new leads by taking advantage of the unexpected. In this case, to leverage the unique circumstance and opportunity to interview these leaders a second time amidst their newest promotion transition experience. I offered four previously interviewed individuals the opportunity to

contribute to this study again and offered a $50 Amazon.com gift card as a token of appreciation; all agreed to be interviewed.

This additional second stage sample broadened my total interview tally to 24 and resulted in two second interviews with leaders at Organization C and an additional interview with a leader at both Organization A and B; the gender of these four managers was balanced with two women and two men. To recap, the final sample size for this study includes 24 interviews capturing 24 separate internal transition experiences across 20 individuals. With the additional four second interviews with leaders, the final sample size of 24 reflects an unbalanced distribution of 75% first level managers. Across all twenty-four interview transcripts, the total word count is 171,614. This word count includes the labels for interviewer and respondent at each question and response marking point. Excluding 200 words per interview to account for these labels, there remains approximately 166,814 words that have been personally analyzed to create and saturate the themes and develop the emergent theory for this study. As a frame of reference, typically there are about 500 words on a single spaced page. Therefore, a total of 334 single spaced pages of interview transcripts were read, reviewed, analyzed, re-read, and analyzed again (noting specific categories were reviewed again several more times during the refinement of axial and selective coding). The NVivo software was an integral research tool used for storing and recording this analysis, capturing the emerging themes, and historical log of progress completed. I used NVivo 9.0 and then upgraded to version 10.0. NVivo is a qualitative research software package from QSR International, one of the top two recommended software packages among experience qualitative researchers.

Interview Protocol & Execution

The three research questions for this study were assessed using data points from individual leaders' experienced incidents, events, and reflections which represent the accumulation of learning and job transition experiences of the socialization process upon promotion. Leaders were asked about specific incidents, resource tools, or people that were impactful in their learning and development. Individual cases were studied using a semi-structured interview format (see Appendix A) to determine how these leaders were socializing and then, through analysis, determining what categories and themes existed for the data set as a whole. The focus of this diagnosis is on the processes and experience of socialization and not on individual differences, although these individual differences are expected to influence the way the leader experiences this socialization process.

All managers who volunteered and confirmed participation in my interview study were sent a pre-interview questionnaire (see Appendix B) prior to the commencement of the interview. This allowed for greater detail on some demographic and organizational details and provided access to the context and timing of their promotion prior to our interview. This added detail was helpful and allowed for some small talk with participants at the beginning of the interview, building a rapport and trust at the onset. Some interviewees were more open and forthcoming, while others needed some time to get comfortable, so this questionnaire content was valuable.

The interview protocol was followed although it was modified slightly as the interviews progressed to take advantage of emerging themes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The interviews began with a few general questions to set the leader at ease and build

rapport (Duncombe & Jessop, 2002; Fontana & Frey, 1994). Each interview started with a very open ended, "Tell me a bit about your promotion. What has your transition been like?" The purpose here was to get them talking about the context of the promotion and then gradually move into the core content of the study, targeting their socialization into this role.

As shown in Appendix A, the first segment of each interview focused on the overall transition experience and present state of adjustment. Probing questions were used to further delineate challenges, mistakes, learning and adjustment facilitators, and success factors. The second segment of each interview focused on specific facilitators that helped in the learning and adjustment phase of the internal transition. Finally, the third segment was more reflective in nature and gleaned personal insights into the internal socialization process. This closing topic provided leaders the opportunity to share any advice or "critical factors" that worked well for their own transition.

The interviews were semi-structured to allow for the direction and flow as dictated by the participant because they were the source of the reflection. While most of the interviews followed the format outlined in the interview protocol, a handful elaborated more in their answers and addressed questions in the protocol without prompting. The format of the interviews upheld the reflective nature of transition experiences and supported Polkinghorne's (2005) qualitative research guidance stating "the purpose of the exploration of remembered events is not to produce accurate recalls but to provide an occasion for reflection on the meaning these events have for the participant" (p. 148). I remained open to receive and document the experience as the

participant relayed it, while understanding that certain points were met in the collaborative exploration during the interview process (Creswell, 2007).

Most of the interviews were conducted at the organizational sites for the convenience of the participants. One participant preferred to meet at a local coffee shop, and five of the 24 interviews were conducted by phone. Audio recordings of each interview ensured exact written transcription and accuracy in data analysis.

All interview notes and transcribed audio tapes were compiled, stored, and backed up in several places, accessible only by restricted password for security of the data. Funds received from the doctoral student research grant from the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management's Human Resources and Industrial Relations Department were used to hire a transcriber for all audio interviews in a timely fashion. The later interviews were transcribed via an online transcription service called Civicom to allow for a speedier turnaround.

Each interview participant was assigned a code prior to the interview. All transcripts and my personal records were labeled with this identifying code. Individuals from organization A were labeled A1, A2, etc. I kept a separate file linking the name, job title, organization, number of months in promoted role, gender, organizational rank, gender, and date of the interview. Once the interview file returned from transcription, I redacted the organizational names and replaced them with a bracketed general identifier such as [Organization X] or [my organization]. Any personal names used or referenced in the interviews were replaced with a pseudonym or otherwise referenced by title when that was more descriptive, for example [my boss].

To guarantee anonymity and the assurance of confidentiality to the leaders in my study, it is critical the identity of research participants not be revealed or inferred from the quotes included in my findings. This is a noted challenge and integral consideration for the integrity of qualitative research (Baez, 2002; Creswell, 2007). Thus, organizational identifiers were not attached to the quotes due to the small number of participants from each organization and concern for their identity to remain confidential. Many of their comments are quite specific and by adding the organizational identifier, I felt their anonymity could not be guaranteed. Personal experience research has particular importance when it comes to confidentiality (Baez, 2002; Ebbs, 1996; Fontana & Frey, 1994).

In concordance with grounded theory, data collection and analysis were done in tandem, roughly following three phases which closely align to Beyer and Hannah's (2002) process (see Figure 3). Phase one included the first set of interviews and *open coding*, followed by a review of all the codes in each interview. The total accumulating codes were reviewed on an ongoing basis. The second phase encompassed *axial coding* along with further analysis of the emerging themes and testing relationships in addition to some new second phase interviews to help fill in specific areas to elaborate the emerging theory. Finally, phase three was a confirmatory process of checking that the themes held in *selective coding*, refining and developing additional categories as necessary and were valid within and across cases. The data collection relied primarily on individual in-person interviews along with an informal site observation while meeting with each

organization's human resources correspondent who provided the employee data lists. More detail about each of these phases of analysis is provided below.

Figure 3 about here

Data Analysis Phase I: Open Coding

Data analysis followed the grounded theory methodology as originally outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and then for a more detailed, current outline and exemplary of analysis procedures I referenced Corbin and Strauss's (2008) methodological text on qualitative research. Additionally, Locke's (2001) book on grounded theory in management research was applicable and helpful given it's specificity to the application for the field of management.

The first stage of analysis included *open coding* where I created categories which explained each specific component of the phenomenon of internal socialization as experienced by the leaders interviewed (see Figure 3, box 1a). I literally went line by line, word for word, through each transcript to identify emerging themes or categories, which I identified with a code, for every embedded unit of analysis which covered nearly every sentence of most transcripts. The identification and determination of these codes, classified as "nodes" in the coding software, also involved a labeling process which later helped me determine the theoretical properties of larger themes.

After the first code was created, the process of comparative analysis began. Every new category identified needed to be compared and contrasted with existing codes, as outlined in the *general method of comparative analysis* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Evidence from each embedded comparative unit, or emerging categories, is verified through a constant comparison of data, meaning that before a new code was created the existing codes were reviewed and compared to see if the theme, or embedded unit of analysis, was best represented with an existing code or if a new one needed to be created to capture the nuance or novelty of this concept. As each new code was created, the exact excerpt of text from the interview transcript was then tagged to this code. The NVivo software served as a database, collecting the quotes or excerpts. As I continued to code each embedded unit of data within each interview case, the total list of codes continually increased. Each embedded unit was coded in as many categories as necessary to fully capture the richness of that particular experience or insight.

The constant comparative method was challenging and time consuming. I would review the codes and sub-codes and ask myself if I was being consistent and applying the decision rule for inclusion of an embedded unit of analysis into each code in the same way. I would look at variations and differences within each code. After an interview transcript was coded entirely, I would review the new codes created and also review that interview.

These categories served as the initial coding scheme, called *first order codes,* developed directly from the interviews. Out of respect for the necessary and representative diversity of data, I pursued a random coding sequence to break up the

organizational level commonalities. I coded two interviews from Organization A, then moved to B1, followed by two interviews from Organization C, etc. As I continued to code each interview, immersed in the constant comparative method of grounded theory, I was progressing towards theoretical saturation. As this process continued, I focused on reducing the amount of mere descriptions in my coding scheme and moved towards more theoretical or inferred assessments of what the promoted leaders were experiencing. For example, when a leader talked about knowing that their weakness was on financial knowledge so they reached out to the CFO to determine what needed to be learned and what resources were available, this was coded as self-awareness in addition to being coded for proactive tactics such as asking others for guidance and engaging others as resource to facilitate learning. This process of data collection and analysis continued until I had reached a point where no new themes were emerging from the data.

Theoretical saturation involves collecting data until no new themes emerge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I was watching for indicators of saturation as my analysis progressed. One measure I used to help determine this was an Excel spreadsheet tracking the number of codes culminating after each interview was coded. I created a code report after each interview was coded and then also reviewed the entire code list that was accumulating. Upon the completion of the first order coding of the first interview, I had sixty-one codes. By the fourth interview, my total codes had doubled to 121, which also showed the variance of experiences represented in the sample. At one point I had 184 codes, which became quite exhaustive to compare and contrast as

each embedded unit was analyzed. At this time, I began merging categories that were similar and redefined category names or descriptions.

At several points in the process, between the open coding of interviews, I would review the entire coding scheme and again compare and contrast categories, reviewing the quotes contained in each category to ensure they were in fact distinct and different. I maintained a memo log which helped me track my thoughts, questions, and developing conclusions as they arose amidst data analysis. I would also review the codes to see if I was consistently applying them.

Sometimes there would be differences within a code and I would determine that they in fact need to be separated. For example, I had some codes in an initial "figure it out" category and I soon determined that some quotes were more specifically listing tactics used to figure it out. Since the explicit tactics codes were created later, as they emerged, I could now take a step back and determine what coded items needed to be revised or additional codes added. Eventually the general "figure it out" category was no longer needed because I had more specific codes to capture these concepts more accurately at a deeper level of analysis. In some instances, I merged two similar categories and renamed them to encompass the concept of the embedded unit of analysis. This was particularly the case when, after coding several interviews, I would determine that certain codes were only representing embedded units of analysis from one source. When I broadened the definition for the category slightly, then multiple sources and perhaps two or three codes could be merged together. While strenuous, this process bolsters the comprehensive nature of the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss,

1967). This process resulted in the emergence of the general theoretical properties for each category (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The need to create new codes began to decline after the tenth interview. Only four codes were added in the analysis of the eleventh interview, followed by three, two, one and then zero new codes added in the sixteenth and seventeenth interviews. Therefore, I was fairly certain theoretical saturation was nearing. I continued in the constant comparison method, reviewing the similarities and differences between codes.

Another indicator for saturation was reliance on my own knowledge and experience of the internal socialization process, given my theoretical sensitivity to the topic. I was reflecting on the different cases, the varied experiences the leaders I interviewed had, and questioning whether I could think of other variations happening. Some had experiences with a supportive boss, others were learning to adjust without close guidance of a boss. Many had been promoted from a peer group, others had not. Some talked about the massive increase in responsibility they were experiencing whereas others felt it was an easy transition in terms of the scope and responsibility of work. There were situations where conflict and tension was high and others where this was the opposite. There was fairly good variance in the experiences here, yet the categories were converging, which again supported my determination that the data was capturing the essence of the internal promotion experience, further solidifying my confidence that theoretical saturation was near. Upon analysis of the categories that had developed, I could see there were clear dimensions to the experience that were ready to be further explored in terms of relationships and higher order themes. There did not appear to be

any new illuminations of the concepts within transitioning amidst an internal promotion, other than the two divergent themes addressed in the next section. Divergent themes are those that go off in another direction and at present do not fit with the other themes that are emerging from the data. Therefore, at interview seventeen I determined I had adequate saturation to proceed to phase two of data analysis.

One consideration in reaching theoretical saturation at this point is that a semi-structured interview protocol was used. It has been noted that the more specific the questions you have are, the less variation you may find in your sample (Charmaz, 2006.) There is a natural tension here between having a structured, organized (and approved) dissertation proposal and the opposite of the spectrum in terms of a free-form, open-ended exploratory study.

Remember that the theoretical sampling procedure requires an emphasis on the concepts, and more specifically concepts derived from data. The ideal scenario is a simultaneous process where the analysis will uncover concepts that generate questions for further data collection (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). While theoretically ideal, this is not always logistically efficient. I conducted interviews in sets of two to seven at a time, usually spanning a few weeks, depending on mutual availability. This allowed for better use of travel time and bundling for productivity and continuity of the transcriptionist hired. Later, when the online transcription service was used, the timing (or rather timing paired with the volume of interviews to transcribe) was not an issue as they were simply uploaded to a secure, online datacenter. However, my time was used most efficiently when I could have at least three interviews on site on a given day. This was difficult to

achieve because those invited responded at different speeds and their availability changed over time.

Data Analysis Phase II: Axial Coding

Upon nearing saturation, I moved to the second stage of analysis, axial coding, and began to create a model of internal socialization. While the areas addressed in the interviews had become repetitive, there were components of the developing model that needed to be fleshed out more fully and a couple divergent themes that needed further exploration. These were areas I explored in the phase two interviews. *Axial coding* is a deeper level of analysis of the data often assisted by the use of a coding paradigm or logic diagram (visual model) to identify a central phenomenon while exploring *causal conditions*, specific interactions resulting from the central phenomenon, identifying context and *intervening conditions*, and delineating the *consequences* for this phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). At this stage of analysis, I begin to develop and reorganize sub-categories of concepts within each major category and test the relationships between concepts while building the initial model of internal socialization. There were several iterations of this model, as codes and the quotes within them were reviewed. I used Microsoft Visio to track major revisions to the model. Each phase of the data analysis process was again recorded and archived in NVivo through a history of saved files.

The two divergent themes that popped up during the first stage of data analysis were also explored during this second stage of data collection and analysis. Exploration of divergent themes is a component of grounded theory analysis, to determine whether it

is a predominant theme that will effectively reach saturation or if it is merely an anomaly in the sample. The first divergent theme revolves around a novel situation that arose in open coding was the case of one individual who was pregnant when informed of the promotion and the context of this situation required that she return from maternity leave into the first day in her newly promoted role. It would be helpful to interview more leaders promoted while pregnant and either starting or returning to a newly promoted role.

Another divergent theme is the incorporation of minority status and breaking the glass ceiling by being the token individual promoted into a higher-level role. Again, there are time and opportunity constraints in the research design of recruiting from a select handful of organizations where there are limited occurrences for such situations. Of course, more racial minorities and women are being promoted into higher levels of leadership, but this is difficult to capture given the design of the present study recruitment plan.

Phase III: Selective Coding and Case Comparisons

At this point, I began my third and final stage of analysis (see Figure 3, boxes 3a and b). I concurrently analyzed both within- and across-case comparisons and performed selective coding to further scrub the data for meaning, causal conditions, context and intervening conditions of the phenomenon of internal socialization. *Selective coding* involves the refinement and development of additional categories (Creswell, 2007) and validation for categories and relationships (Beyer & Hannah, 2002). This final stage

included consideration of the divergent themes addressed at the second stage of interviews.

It was in this stage of the coding and analysis process that two types of properties began to emerge: those that fit with constructs based on the prior literature review and those that emerged in a new way, abstracted directly from the respondents' experience. There were instances of convergence and divergence within themes at this point and the complexity of the analysis required specific decision rules be created to deal with these situations. Once a category had been established and created and the embedded units of analysis had been integrated, it was critical that the codes and evidence be reviewed three to four times to find and resolve conflicts in the coding scheme, revising the decision rules for inclusion along the way. This resulted in eliminating some categories, expanding other categories, and creating new categories that better reflected the meaning of the data when assessing across all 24 interviews.

Given this tension between themes that fit with extant theories and those that are newly emerging from the data, the researcher must take an informed inductive approach which acknowledges that it is impossible to analyze data without any prior knowledge of the topic under review (Van de Ven, 2007). This approach maximizes the efficiency of data collection by structuring the focus of the study around the theoretical constructs present in the literature while not allowing this conceptual framework to restrict the final outcome. Therefore, the intent of this study was to both more fully explore the key areas identified from the literature review and positioned in the research questions and also remain open to revealing other new themes relevant to internal socialization that have not

otherwise been captured in the newcomer socialization literature. A benefit of utilizing a grounded theory methodology is to allow for the discovery of information that would otherwise be overlooked (Locke, 2001). The new themes that emerged from the data will be explored in the discussion section.

Now that the phases and components of the data analysis procedure have been fully detailed, in correspondence with Figure 3, I would like to address validity and reliability considerations next. Grounded theory, and qualitative research more generally, approaches these issues differently than quantitative studies, yet they are equally important to address and uphold.

Validity and Reliability

Per recommendations in the qualitative research methods literature, I strengthened internal validity by using several procedures during the data analysis stage: selective member checks (Creswell, 2007), pattern matching (Yin, 2009), and most importantly, triangulation (Mathison, 1988). Member checks were used to engage participants in the research process and provide an opportunity for a select sample of interviewed leaders to review and comment on their own interview transcript (Creswell, 2007). Member checks increase internal validity because they are a verification step to ensure the transcription accurately reflects the experience the interviewed leader had and clarifies that their responses were clearly communicated to the researcher. After reading the transcript they may recall an additional detail or wish to make a clarification to better depict their experience or add an additional thought. Two leaders from each organization were invited to perform a member check of their interview, for a total of six member checks in

total. Respondents were offered a $20 amazon.com gift card for completing this verification. All respondents agreed that the interview had appropriately captured their experience. Several made some small comments to either emphasize a particular theme as a major component of their transition experience or to provide another example of how this was an important part of their experience.

Yin (2009) recommends utilizing pattern matching to bolster the case for internal validity. Pattern matching compares emerging new data, revealed through analysis of the interviews, and resulting "evidence" of the phenomenon in effect, with the proposed patterns and themes that were developed in prior stages of analysis. This process runs parallel to the constant comparative method introduced earlier. If there is convergence of the data, internal validity is bolstered according to pattern matching. Furthermore, theoretical replication can be achieved when comparing patterns across cases.

Finally, triangulation of data is a confirmatory process. Triangulation of data (Mathison, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1994) serves as a validation for the application of generated theory. Triangulation involves the "use of multiple methods and measures of an empirical phenomenon in order to reduce bias and to improve convergent validity" (Thorpe & Holt, 2008, p. 222). By using multiple sources, findings can be verified through replication to determine whether there is an anomaly of one case interview or if evidence of this finding exists in another source (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This will help ascertain if the evidence is convergent or divergent. Triangulation inherently seeks convergence. However, in instances of divergence, key learning is also a desirable outcome.

External validity is approached with caution in qualitative research. One point that should be made first is that generalizability to the population is not the goal of qualitative research; rather, this study seeks to generalize theoretically (Van de Ven, 2007) and analytically (Yin, 2009, p. 43). The results of this study aim to generalize to the broader theory that evolves.

The reliability of any research study is assessed in the consistency with which the data was collected, ensuring the instruments are measuring the same thing over time. The reliability of my study is upheld with both a case protocol and more specifically, a semi-structured interview protocol for all conversations with both participants and informants, for consistency across cases. A chain of evidence will be maintained to increase reliability, as shown in Figure 2.

From personal experience working in the field of human resource management, I am familiar with instances where newly promoted leaders have both succeeded in their new role and witnessed others who have failed. The research questions in this study seek to provide some insight into the procedural mechanisms in place for the socialization of newly promoted leaders and shed light on the challenges they face during this critical transition. This exploration may give insight into whether specific organizational interventions may be beneficial for transitioning leaders.

My practitioner experience provides theoretical sensitivity for analysis, heightening my vigilance to the hidden meanings within the data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Hannah and Lautsch (2010) recommend that a researcher develops theoretical sensitivity by having familiarity with the relevant literature and “having direct experience

with a phenomenon of interest" (p.7). The literature reviews conducted for this study, presented in chapters two and three, span several literatures broadening my familiarity with the central and corollary topics of this research. I am prone to theoretical sensitivity for this topic given my personal experiences transferring roles within the same organization upon promotion several times during my career as a human resource professional in the corporate environment as well as serving as an advisor to leaders in those organizations who experienced promotions and the corresponding adjustment.

Chapter 5 Results

One major goal of this research was to elucidate the dynamic experience of internal socialization and answer the overarching research question, *"How do newly promoted leaders experience the internal socialization process as they transition into roles of increased responsibility and impact?"* The data collected and analyzed in this study answers this and explicates the contextualized process. The study results in an emerging theory represented in the Internal Socialization Model in Figure 4.

This chapter will begin with an overview of the model, which is based on my analysis, to provide perspective on the bigger picture of the internal socialization experience and then move into more detail on each component of the model, along with illustrative quotes. The qualitative findings suggest the journey of internal socialization is one where challenges, mistakes, and learning impact leaders on emotional, physical, and cognitive levels.

Research Model Overview

The model is centered on the intrapersonal socialization experience of internal promotion. This experience is a powerful force working inside the self, as promoted leaders encounter emotional, cognitive, and physical experiences. This middle component of the model, represented as a large circle at the center of Figure 4, will be presented first in the illustrated results because it represents the core individual experience of socialization while the various challenges, support, and learning facilitators all converge into this intrapersonal sphere. Within this larger circle, there are three distinct, yet overlapping circles which represent these embedded emotional, cognitive, and physical factors. They are pictured in Venn diagram form because there are experiences that affect more than one domain simultaneously.

Challenges appear on the left side of the model; these factors either stimulate or strain the intrapersonal experience of a promotion transition. Stimulating challenges are those that bring energy, excitement, and positive satisfaction or offer the leader an opportunity to thrive as they rouse to action. Challenges that are defined as straining are those that pull down the emotions of the transitioning leader, cause mental and physical exhaustion, or result in stress, tension, or frustration. The data suggests three challenge categories: (1) role transition challenges, (2) interpersonal challenges, and (3) systems challenges. Role transition challenges include the overlap of two jobs, role definition, the scope of responsibility, and transition logistics such as when and where to move for new office space and how the work for the prior job will be transitioned to someone else. The interpersonal challenges encompass transition experiences that are directly impacted by

and in interaction with others. In essence this is an externally interfacing experience where the promoted leader is both receiving stimuli and interacting with the people and organizational systems surrounding them. The data reveals that interpersonal challenges were a strong factor in their transition experience and the model reflects this critical importance with the bolded frame for this category. Interpersonal factors will be detailed later but include the peer promote dynamic, navigating relationships with the new boss, peer group, and direct reports. Finally, systems challenges represent the data that defines difficulty with using new systems or trying to transition without the appropriate organizational systems in place. For example, if there is little to no onboarding, the culture is not aligned with organization goals, the organizational structure has recently shifted, or organizational processes like performance management systems are new. These systems challenges are connected on a continuum to the organizational learning facilitators to the right of the model.

As the individual encounters these challenges which strain and stimulate their experience amidst the transition, sometimes mistakes or minor missteps are made. Mistakes are categorized as either those made by the self or by others. When leaders talked about mistakes they had made in their transition they were reflecting on what went wrong, what could have gone more smoothly, and what lessons were learned. When leaders talked about what they observed other leaders doing that was less successful or outright mistakes, they also had lessons learned from these observations. Using mistakes to glean insight and lessons learned is a component of the intrapersonal experience and sometimes these mistakes become learning facilitators themselves.

As represented in the model to the right of the intrapersonal circle, a major theme involving learning prevailed in individual interviews. Learning was categorized into three areas: individual level learning, learning that engaged others, and organization driven learning. The arrows in the model connecting these learning categories to the intrapersonal experience go both directions to reflect how emotions, cognition, and physical experiences impact the kind of learning that leaders seek while learning is also part of the experience and has implications for each of the three intrapersonal components. *Individual level* learning involved reading books, observing others, making a written plan, or attending training or graduate courses. Actively *Engaging Others* was a strong theme that emerged from the data and all of the leaders interviewed mentioned this as influential in their learning and transition experience. Similar in scope to the socialization literature's emphasis on proactive newcomer tactics, the data suggests that engaging others encompasses activities such as asking for advice or asking questions, receiving support from coworkers, direct reports, one's boss, or non-work connections via either the leader's social network or family, and proactively managing the relationships with superiors. *Organization Driven* learning facilitators include formal onboarding programs, transition roadmaps or checklists, mentoring programs, or new leader assimilation exercises.

This brief overview of the model should provide some perspective to how all the components of internal socialization fit together. Next, I will delineate each component of the model more specifically, beginning with the middle circle (see Figure 4) labeled as the intrapersonal experience.

Figure 4 about here

The Intrapersonal Experience

The intrapersonal component of the model adds unique insight into the within person experience of internal promotions. While the extant socialization literature addresses the cognitive task of sensemaking quite extensively in the general newcomer sample domain, there are far fewer studies (cf. Brett, 1982) that go beyond the cognitive elements to examine the emotional and physical effects on the individuals experiencing socialization, and certainly a void in the literature addressing the context of those promoted within the same organization (for an exception, see Feldman & Brett, 1983). Participant comments provided insight into the internalization of these experiences and give a broader view of the impact internal transitions have on what these promoted leaders are thinking, feeling, and physically experiencing as they adjust to their promoted role. The three intrapersonal reactions were identified from the participant comments.

Emotional Experience

The emotions felt by internally promoted leaders are particularly interesting, crossing the spectrum from pain to exhilaration, with these emotions overlapping with cognitive and physical experiences. For example, as leaders learned how to cognitively adapt to their new role under new physical time pressures, they found these experiences were emotionally charged in terms of pain:

> *I think with any transition there are transition pains and there is always this not really sure what to expect, not really sure what is expected. (3, f)*

> *So it was sort of at the same time I was getting the promotion, all of a sudden [I] was meeting with a lot of people. So a lot of project work just happened. So, doing lots of project work in the midst of trying to get my regular work done has been quite painful. (15, f)*

The data further illustrated accounts of feeling overwhelmed, stressed, isolated, or leaders experiencing self-doubt while also representing the excitement, confidence, and empowerment a larger role brings. The emotional internalization of the cognitive process was particularly prevalent in participant descriptions like the following excerpt:

> *The transition was very overwhelming. It was just the biggest jump that I have ever made in the company. I went to having four team leaders and a team of 28….Then I think my own, I guess, personal high standard of myself has also helped me, even though I felt like I was drowning at times or – people often say they didn't notice. I think I hide it well but okay, I might not know what's going on but I fake it until I make it." (12, f)*

Another leader is cautious to self-monitor and regulate the display of her emotional response to the transition strain: "I'd tell myself, 'Don't worry, it'll get better' and to not sweat the small stuff. Don't overwhelm yourself because if you get stressed out, your entire department and your direct reports can feel it." (17, f) This manager's account of the emotional journey he experienced showcases his resolve:

> *I think it's just more working through some of the emotional toll. How do you handle some of the pressure?...at first it was pretty heavy. A lot of working at night and building some anxiety going into Monday morning, following meetings, that sort of thing. I think I'm better equipped to handle it now, but certainly I think it's something that it takes time and you develop…a better way to separate the two from personal life and work life and not trying to bring that anxiety or whatever it is home and know that you're doing everything you can and so you've got to, at some point, just move on and let it go. (16, m)*

Promotions can also be a lonely experience. Isolation from former friends, peers, and even the experience of a new physical space, whether merely a new office location or a new geography altogether, can be challenging. Several managers talked about the isolation they felt upon promotion. One manager working in a close-knit, non-profit organization explains, "You're switching, like, from your peers and, (sigh) it's a little difficult, because you kind of feel like, 'wow.' Not that you're excluding them but, they might start excluding you" (6, f). Another manager states, "I just felt very alone for some pieces" (17, f). A sales manager experiences a progression in how his emotions evolved:

> *The thing that worried me most I think was the level of autonomy… I think that it's the first time you are put in a position where you might be the person, the lone person out there.…So you are kind of put into this…division on the floor and there is a level of excitement to that but also a little bit of you feel like you might be alone on the island. How do you make sure – the challenge is how do you make sure to bring as many people in so that you are not feeling alone and that you are feeling like you have a lot of support from the people with you…..…I think the exciting part of the job has probably naturally lent itself to allow me to let go of the fear of I'm alone here…. That's very good. (4, m)*

While some comments suggested internal transitions can be cognitively taxing, stressful, and even painful, it is imperative to bring front and center the other positive comments highlighting emotions of excitement, empowerment, pride, and confidence that participants relayed in their transition accounts. These are examples of how the intrapersonal experiences weave in and out of emotional, cognitive, and physical aspects almost simultaneously. For example, the cognitive process of making sense of the transition reveals different positive emotions, like confidence or increased identity. When a promoted leader initially questions their ability to do the job at the time of the promotion, they go through a self-discovery process that allows them to self-motivate to

learn and figure out what they don't know, building their self-esteem and affirming their ability. One manager (5, m) summarized his new job, transition, and focus on external strategy as "a breath of fresh air," while others touted their new self-awareness and confidence.

> *I felt good. I felt confident moving into this position…my understanding of the function and kind of the where we needed to go made it a really decent move for me. I was very confident that yeah, I can lead us there. (13, m)*
>
> *I've just learned to appreciate who I am and embrace it and say, "This is who I am. I know I can be effective here. Either you love me or you hate me and if this is what's going to get me there, then fine. If it doesn't get me there, then maybe I don't need to be here." I think it helped me realize that I think that's why I am here today…. So I think that was good for me and I was excited about it. (18, f)*
>
> *Then I think one of the other things that probably is specific to promotions in general is just to have confidence. You want to come in either to learn and engender trust but you also have to have confidence that not only do you feel like you belong in that role but you know you are going to do a good job. That once you got your marching orders – it's like I'm going to get it done so that people, when you leave the room, they are going to say this guy's got it or she's got it. I think that's pretty important. (4, m)*

There is a fine line of tension between confidence and self-doubt when transitioning upon a promotion. Questioning one's self and whether one has the ability or skills to do the job came up frequently. The internal promotion context is a particularly relevant and fortuitous time to capture the progression from self-doubt to self-efficacy. For example, in many cases a promotion comes as a surprise to leaders themselves, or at least the exact opportunity and timing of the offer for a bigger job could come up suddenly. In contrast, a new hire is clearly not surprised because they had already made the decision to leave their job, and had intentions to withdraw likely for some time before the actual active pursuit of a new opportunity. This new hire goes through the

recruitment and selection process and then has time to process the demands of the role prior to formally accepting the job. A promoted senior c-suite executive relays her perspective on this:

> *You know, because I didn't have the time to think about it as if you'd applied for the position and thought about the position and then took the position.…I didn't have that time to prepare, so I spent the first couple of weeks thinking, "Holy moly, do I have the skills? Am I up to the tasks?" (21, f)*

A manager at another organization also questions herself and the fear that arises when a big challenge awaits:

> *Things I was worried about obviously is this fear that wow, will I be able to do this? Will I be successful? Maybe it really wasn't what I expected it was and maybe I won't enjoy the types of things that I have to get involved in or maybe I'm going to determine that I really don't have an aptitude for these things and I'll be better off someplace else at a different level. So I think there are just a lot of fears about really success and ability to do well and also I don't want to be a disservice to my team. I never want to put my team in a situation where they've got the worst manager who can't figure out what to do with them. I would never want to be that person. (3, f)*

> *I think the thing that I was most worried about is…are people going to think I was promoted just because I was a diverse candidate and in the daylight, yes, I don't care what people say but you don't want to be the person that everybody's whispering about. You don't want to walk in a room and know everybody is whispering about you. I have tough skin but how long could that tough skin last? Is it six months? Is it a year? Is it two years? How long can you just kind of shrug it off?....The other thing was just, can I meet expectations? (18, f)*

While questioning self and abilities arises as a challenge, it is important to make the connection to self-efficacy, a dominant variable in the socialization literature, serving as an antecedent to adjustment. Self-efficacy has been positively related to several socialization tactics, such as the proactive behaviors of information seeking and requesting feedback as well as the social skills of networking and building a good

relationship with the boss (Gruman, et al., 2006). What is insightful is the look into the self-doubt that precedes the confidence embedded in self-efficacy. The socialization literature has not fully elaborated how individuals amidst a role transition achieve self-efficacy. This study brings interesting elaboration that sheds light into the process of adjustment, with insight into the individual experience of advancing to a state of self-efficacy. Positive framing also arose as a component of this adjustment, often expressed as leaders talked about opportunities to grow, learn something new, or achieve their goals rather than as barriers (Ashford & Black, 1996). This is illustrated here with two managers' experiences showing the positive side amidst self-doubt, revealed as empowerment to lead:

> *I think the first feeling was maybe a little bit of nervousness or self-doubt creeping in just because I don't want to make the wrong decision. I don't want to fail especially since I'm in week one of this new job. I think the first instinct was probably a little bit of denial, like I don't need to make decisions; I need to loop my manager in. So those were kind of the first instincts. As I started to realize this decision was mine to make, I think I felt a sense of empowerment – wow! I am going to make this decision. (4, m)*

> *To become a manager was quite different. All of a sudden I was looked at and towards for everything. And even though the same people I had been leading [as a supervisor] were the same people I now managed, there was a different feeling, a different empowerment, I guess, that came along with the title change. I kind of had to step up. (6, f)*

While some adjustments are relished as empowering, other managers have documented their internal struggle with how their identity is impacted and now in question:

> *The other surprise that's bad is that I think for a while, I changed. I think I was so concerned with 'I'm a manager now. So, how does a manager dress? I should wear a blazer every day or I shouldn't wear jeans.' Then one day, I was like, "Why are you doing this?" Like going back to what I said earlier, you guys are who you are today because of who you are. You haven't really compromised who*

> *you are so why start now? So, it just was that whole thing….I don't know what happened….There are just certain things [like] I was going to go somewhere and have coffee with somebody and I'm like, "No, I probably shouldn't have coffee with them at work. We should do it afterwards." ….So, I just didn't want people to feel like [being a manager] defines me and I felt that for a while, I was getting caught up in the hype that, "Oh I'm a manager now." I've got an obstacle. So, I'm just trying to keep that in a perspective which [is] you're the same person you were before I gave you the promotion so don't change who you are. (18, f)*

> *I've always been kind of a maverick – over time [since my promotion], I'm becoming more strait-laced and watching what I say and who I say it to, which was kind of new for me….now I'm part of the machine and I'm that man….So I just can't talk about [information that might be confidential] with people anymore. So it's kind of interesting, these little side effects. (2, m)*

Physical Experience

Moving on to the physical intrapersonal experience, the data suggests that leaders were grappling with internal physical issues such as their new physical work space, stress induced health problems, work-life balance, and personal life transitions. Managers were also experiencing external physical changes that impacted their intrapersonal experience, such as office moves or relocating to a new state for this promotion.

> *Within about four weeks I physically moved my office two floors different. And that was really important for two reasons. One was that I had, I had just hired a leader in the department I was in [as my replacement], and I was going to be taking kind of a step back to have her take on more responsibility. And I really needed to make that break so that she could be recognized as the leader. And then I need to make that break, too, to become part of my team. So I moved up close to my new team and start working on those relationships. (21, f)*

> *So, it was good. A major change has occurred…because I actually got an office, so the physical changes…bring about some changes within my own group. And being able to have meetings in my own office. And it just has a different feel. Again, it's an empowerment thing. (6, f)*

Another manager relays how the physical office space limitations added to the emotional impact of isolation and also the physical impact she felt when there was separation from the rest of the department:

> *There was not enough space in the new space for us [after an organizational restructure.] So we were left behind. And that was incredibly detrimental to the team, because we were then even more isolated and all of the stuff that was going on, we were completely forgotten about and then when we finally moved over to the space a year later, then they didn't have space for us with the rest of the department, we're now up on a separate floor. And it's further isolation" (19, f).*

Several leaders also discussed the impact this transition had on their personal life including their sleep, exercise, food choices, and relationships at home. Above and beyond the work hours diminishing their free-time and impeding their home life, managers talked about the physical impact the role transition was having. One manager (14, f) described how it "can kind of cloud up your evening and worry and wake you up at night." Another leader (20, f) experienced upper back pain where she held her stress and tension. Others mentioned their exercise routine was eliminated during the early transition period when time was in high demand and low supply and their energy levels were low from work exhaustion. One manager sums up the status of his health:

> *My health, it was probably the unhealthiest I've ever been. Before, I'm a fairly athletic person. During that transition, I pretty much stopped going to the gym and I was skipping lunches and eating trash meals, which - not necessarily fast-food but fast meals in general. (9, m)*

In terms of work-life balance and personal life transitions, several leaders noted that the impact of their transition could not be separated from their home life. For example, a handful of managers had geographically relocated to take the new promotion

and this added to the life adjustment, and that of their spouse and family. Some were moving back closer to family and friends and this was a positive experience. Others were moving to a completely new area, which presented some social challenges to acclimate to a new community. One leader expected that his spouse would understand that more work hours would be necessary yet the added time in the office put a strain on their relationship. Another leader interviewed was dealing with her promotion while her husband was promoted at his organization and they found this was complimentary for their home life, given that they both were working from home at night, side by side on their laptops. One promoted manager was also a new mom and this was a particularly relevant dual challenge for her sparse time. She had "extra work at home and extra work at work."

Cognitive Experience

The cognitive experience included grappling with how to figure out what one doesn't know about the role and the role transition process itself. One of the main components in any role transition, as a new hire or internal promote, is defining the role and expectations. Sensemaking is a large piece of this and many of the interviews included accounts of *how* they figured this out. This "how" will be discussed further in the learning facilitators section and the specific, inherent challenges will also be addressed.

To provide the backdrop for this data relating to cognitive experiences, a sampling of these categories follows. Beyond role definition and understanding the scope of the new role, leaders identified several cognitive elements that were influential

in their transition experience. Managers talked about figuring out their new boss, peers, and subordinates, including the organizational politics present at their new level. Part of this perceptive process is determining what kind of impact their new role will have on the work and decisions of others and when to take a stand. For example, this leader (11, f) states, "The thing that I'm struggling with the most is just navigating when to voice kind of my point of view and when to take what leadership is saying and be fine with that." Another manager (3, f) relays this decision making struggle at her new level by questioning, "Is this my time to step in or is it my time to step back? Am I supposed to be pushing ahead now that I'm a higher level or am I supposed to be laying back and let my people do it?" Figuring out how to manage time, priorities, and the necessary delegation was another cognitive task the new leaders deemed critical to their experience. Many grappled with what success in this new role would look like.

The intrapersonal perspective just outlined provides scope for this question by introducing the emotional, physical, and cognitive effects that newly promoted leaders experience. Their detailed accounts provide deeper insight into the socialization experience and set the foundation for the remainder of the results. For example, the challenges, mistakes, and learning facilitators that newly promoted leaders encounter directly impact their intrapersonal experience in emotional, cognitive, and physical ways. This data reveals the foundation of understanding about internal socialization in response to the overarching research question guiding this study which was: *How do newly promoted leaders experience the internal socialization process as they transition into roles of increased responsibility and impact?* It is time to move to the rest of the data

collected and analyzed by exploring the emergent themes which address the three specific research questions targeted in this study. First, challenges will be addressed, followed by mistakes and insights, and finally the learning facilitators for internal socialization.

Challenges

Internal socialization is a complex, exciting experience that is filled with challenges. These challenges have either a stimulating or straining influence, or sometimes both simultaneously, on newly promoted managers. This study reveals that challenges are embedded into the experience of internal socialization, infiltrating each aspect (emotional, physical, and cognitively) of the intrapersonal experience. Three categories of contextual challenges emerged from the data: role transition challenges, interpersonal challenges, and systems challenges.

Role Transition Challenges

The promotion context of role transition challenges includes the overlap from one job to the next, scope and definition of the new role, and logistics of the move. These challenges play a role in the internal promotion experience and merit further elaboration as they extend beyond factors that are represented in the extant socialization literature.

The overlap of two jobs was noted by several managers as a major challenge, as many found that carrying the workload of two jobs was especially demanding. Long work hours, sacrifices to personal time and work-life balance, and the need for better time management were prevalent issues. The following two quotes exemplify this "dual role" transition zone:

> *Because we are a small organization we are very lean. We don't have a lot of extra people….we were in budget season and October 11 was when [my*

> *promotion] actually first started. Until the first of the year I really don't think that I had really 100% became a manager. It was always a bit of both and it was actually probably eighty-twenty, eighty [% of my time] in the old role and twenty in the new role. (10, m)*

> *So it's kind of the scramble of adjusting your calendar and making sure you're still keeping your old job afloat, but making time for some of those major events that would be very helpful for your onboarding into the new role. So, I think that's where the stress comes in is juggling the calendar, you know, trying not to make your old team feel like you've jumped ship and kind of left them in a lurch. So you're trying to kind of juggle the two roles for a while. …there's little to no work-life balance, I would say, so during that month of training for the new role, training my backfill, trying to get my feet underneath me, there's a lot of working in the evenings to keep things going because you are basically doing two jobs to some extent ….I work a lot in the evenings during those transitions… so a lot of that is just kind of my work ethic that pushes me to kind of keep up in the evenings. But, I mean, it was pretty much working nonstop for that month. (22, f)*

Another example of how juggling two roles at once can be straining on transitioning leaders is the burden of maintaining the perception of competence in a time where they need the support and encouragement from others most but did not know if it was appropriate to reach out and ask for help. One leader struggled with this conflict and how she rationalized the impression management she felt necessary:

> *I think I was someone who didn't – I didn't want to seem like a complainer. I was very excited about the role. I wanted to just do the best that I could in both roles and try to balance that without communicating with other people about, "Hey, how did you balance this? I'm really overwhelmed right now." Because I was concerned that may be perceived as less enthusiastic. (8, f)*

Some transitions were easier than others, depending in most cases on the level of increased job scope and responsibility. However, even for the individuals who said their transition had been smooth, challenges and missed opportunities and insights were noted in all cases. Transitions always bring new challenges, and one interviewed manager (A2)

sums it up perfectly: "You know, I think transitions are as easy or as hard as you want to make them, it's all in how you approach it….Change and transition is good." A project manager that recently took on people management responsibilities had a similar positive outlook. While she struggled with several challenges in the first few months of her promotion transition, she remained steadfast to the bigger picture and how her goal was to enjoy her new role with increased responsibility, allowing her to do the kind of work she enjoys (8, f).

Sometimes the move is a promotion but the new role is just an enlarged job, so a promoted leader is expected to do their work plus that of their new role with increased scope. Also potentially challenging for those rising in an internal position is the frequent delay in back-filling their former role, and in some cases no replacement is found at all. Leaders need to figure out how, when, and to whom their work needs to be delegated and in the interim they are often the one to shoulder the workload. One manager recounts this hurdle:

> *But I think that's hard when you've got someone who does their job and then says, "Oh, now you're a manager," so they just expand what they need to do and it's very difficult to get rid of the things that they're doing because they're obviously very good at them, and it's an important function, otherwise they'd probably wouldn't have been promoted, but what do you do with those things, because you still have this same number of staff, it's difficult, I think as a – difficult for me to then give all of my stuff to them. Either their not at that level or they've already got a full plate. (6, f)*

The timing and logistics around the promotion lay the foundation for a solid start. Some leaders were informed of their promotion months before the change actually became official, which has pros and cons for leaders. Delays can add to the

discouragement and delay of gratification for their hard work and commitment, and also in some cases require a certain amount of confidentiality around their circumstances that further adds to the strain of containing their excitement amidst such delays. However, one upside to having a longer wait before formally moving into the role is more time to mentally prepare for the transition and begin finding a replacement or deciding how their workload will be transitioned off their shoulders.

For those experiencing a larger transition, including massive increases in job scope and responsibility, time was often mentioned as the most valuable commodity. One manager (18, f) talked about her workload and said, "I know that there are things that you need to do and should do but you just…don't have the time…I'm trying to prioritize what's important." Another leader, (17, f), in her scurry to save time was in "fire drill mode" and said to herself,

> *I've got to get this thing figured out right now and I've got to get done right now because I've got a million other things I have to do so I have to hurry up." I didn't have time to stop and think "Okay, how should I do this the right way so that in the future it comes easier and things get easier?*

Sacrifice was used to describe this intensive time of role adjustment, and overall enlarged responsibility, by more than one manager, as shown in the following two comments:

> *You're looked down on if you work just forty hours….the people that get praised are the people that are putting in fifty hour work weeks. Seventy hour work weeks. I've heard people getting praised for seventy hours and I'm like, "Somebody's working seventy hours a week, there's something wrong with their job duties. And I seem to be one of the few managers in the department that is advocating for a work/life balance. And I, it's been a struggle, but I've come to the realization that work/life balance is more important…My life is more important. And I realized that will just kill any chances of advancing further. So I've had to come accept*

> *that. I will be a manager. That's all. I won't get the [future] promotions. I won't get the recognition. I will not get the bonuses that other people get, because it's just — I don't want to sacrifice my personal life. (24, f)*
>
> *I used to do compressed work week, and I tried to continue that as long as I could until it basically was stated, you know, "We really need you here."... So I would say yes, in that way…. my work schedule has changed due to [my promotion]. So I have made sacrifices there, I guess I would say. (6, f)*

While not everyone views the extra hours at the office as a sacrifice, and some fully expect to put more hours in especially during that transition period, most hope it will taper off once they are up to speed. Still others never see the hours reduce and accept this fact, and still enjoy the work enough to accept the hours that come with it. This leader (23, f) says, "I work more now than I have ever worked but you know I still feel like I love this job. So it's one of those kinds of hate-love things. It's been good. I like it a lot."

Yet the challenges also included a context for stimulation. Several managers were excited about the impact they would be able to make at a higher level in the careers of others and the organization as a whole, as expressed in the following comments:

> *I was most excited about the complexity of the position. Anytime you're managing people you have no idea what is going to come up every day and I've had a couple of examples where I'll start the day and something comes up…that you never expected or even dealt with before and how you handle that when they come to you for an answer. That's what I was most excited about is just being challenged and then learning. (10, m)*
>
> *I just felt like the synergy that we'd be able to have working together was so exciting, I felt that we'd be able to actually develop career pathways for nearly three hundred people that would be really visible and really go across operations. (21, f)*
>
> *… thinking at the next level, broadening it, making it useful for other people. I also think just being more employed to show my strategy because you are just*

> *privy to more conversations. Higher up people are wanting more of your time and your thoughts and so that was kind of exciting for me. (11, f)*
>
> *Well I was really excited about the challenge and I felt like I had kind of outgrown my job and a lot of my talents weren't being used ….I like challenges. I like to be part of problem solving groups. And so, anyway, I was really excited about that and really excited about being able to look at trying some new approaches and really digging in and getting more information about how to go about doing specific tasks in more efficient ways. (14, f)*

These excerpts highlight the positive nature of challenges; they can be stimulating and invigorating to newly promoted leaders. This leads to the next category of challenges, interpersonal factors, where slightly more strain than stimulation is seen but there is a balance of both nonetheless.

Interpersonal Challenges

People play a major role in transitions and data in this study support this finding. There is an accrued density of coded references for the interactions and challenges embedded in interpersonal factors amidst an internal promotion. Interpersonal challenges include interactions with the boss and superiors, interactions with group and peer dynamics, and managing tension and conflict. Managers are learning how to navigate at and perform in a new level in the organization. Many managers also talked about the importance of people management tasks and behaviors such as communication, empowering direct reports, hiring the right people, identifying strengths and weaknesses on the team, and building transparency and trust.

When a leader is internally promoted, they are not only adjusting to a new role but a new peer group as well. Many of the managers interviewed noted that acclimating to the culture and dynamics of a new set of peers who were formerly their superiors could

be challenging. One c-suite executive states:

> *I felt like it was stepping on the island in Survivor. And right away there were some that wanted to kind of form alliances, because it was a change in power to have four new team members join the team. (21, f)*

Other leaders talked about learning how to "relate to that next level of leadership" and figuring out how to navigate the power and politics in the new domain. One leader stated her struggle is to know when to voice her own point of view, while others described the challenge as knowing when to take a stand and have an opinion on an issue as opposed to taking whatever is coming down the pipeline as the way it must be done. Another manager (4, m) delineated how his strategy was motivated by the challenge of influencing others in his peer groups over whom he had no legitimate, positional power. He finds common ground and then builds a relationship, showing them how the work they are doing together will help their future as well.

The promoted leader's predecessor plays an instrumental role in their transition. First, the predecessor could be a huge resource which stimulates their learning or, in some cases, the contrast of management styles between the predecessor and incumbent may work in favor of the new leader. For example, a manager (24, f) states, "They weren't happy with their previous manager, so it was just, it was seen as a great new chance, and I just rode that wave and made sure that I capitalized on it." Another leader (12, f) described the need to break away from the mold of her predecessor, who coincidentally had many physical similarities, and this was a source of more than one joke. She states that she "had to step outside of her [predecessor's] shadow and kind of develop a name for myself as well."

A major and unique angle that emerges from this study is the theme emphasizing the peer promote context. This is often a challenging component of the internal socialization experience. Peer promote is used to describe the situation in which a leader has been promoted from within their group of peers to now supervise the work of these former peers, now serving as their direct boss. For those that were in a peer promote situation, this proved to be a focal point in their promotion transition experience. Many cited this when asked about what they were most concerned about coming into their promotion. For example, one manager states, "I would say the area of my biggest concerns were around people in my peer group and becoming direct reports to me." Another manager details her read on the situation:

> *Certainly [they felt] that either they should have been [the one promoted] or, you know, total unfairness, and life just isn't fair kind of thing. It's just a sense of, some sort of sense of entitlement. It should have been me. That kind of thing. And they're just not ever going to overcome that. (24, f)*

The following quotes from different managers across organizations present the sense of emotion and strain that this peer promoted dynamic can put on the promoted leader.

> *I've never felt like that I had to prove myself to, you know, anybody in the organization with this promotion, with the exception of the two new direct reports. And it's not so much that they're challenging me there. I just kind of felt like, yeah, there's kind of some things missing. That could make it better for them and that could, obviously, make it better for me. (1, f)*

This peer promote dynamic can become intensified, especially in situations when the leader was promoted blindly, meaning that it was a behind the scenes staffing and talent development positioning and the decision was made by more senior management

without posting the job as an opening on internal employment boards to allow for all interested internal candidates to apply and officially be considered for the role.

> *And then also, you know there were some of my peers might have been candidates for the position and they perhaps were working towards, even though, the situation I was in was the position wasn't posted and it didn't exist. I was just promoted. But certainly as we were looking to grow, I think we all thought that there would at some point be a position like mine, and, definitely, there were a couple of my peers that would have to have liked to have had that position, too. So they – I think they had a sense of uncertainty when I was promoted. That kind of hit hard…. So that [was] kind of emotional. (21, f)*

Several of the participants interviewed also expressed concern for these former peers who were overlooked for the promotion, and were empathetic to their plight. One senior leader (21, f) reflects: "I thought this a great time for me, but this is a disappointing time for them, and so I had thoughts about their reaction and knowing they would be disappointed." Another leader admits:

> *You know obviously I was a little apprehensive about it. The group that I was working with, some of them I had worked with for a year or so and some I've worked with almost ten years. I was apprehensive of how - I had a guess of how certain people would react…. The ones who I thought would have an issue with it had an issue with it….I knew it was going to be that way. (23, f)*

Some leaders navigated the challenging terrain of taking on former peers and friends as direct reports in stride and soon found a comfortable position in the new relationship dynamic.

> *But now that I'm their supervisor, it's different. I just kind of had to figure that out and figure out my place, communicating and talking and just working with people that I've became friends with. Now, it's just a very different relationship….At first I felt a little hesitation. I felt that people were holding back and didn't really know how to approach me about some things but shortly after the conversations and after working with people, I think it just took a while for people to get comfortable. (17, f)*

Other managers had more of a struggle in wading through conflict and some tepid support upon being promoted among peers. These managers talked about the need for that most obstinate person to leave, as expressed in the following accounts:

> *Yeah, there was two of us, and the other one expected to get the job, and we were peers and our boss had left the company she thought she was going to get the job, and I did. And, ooh, she made that uncomfortable. And it was an interesting stage… so now she was working for me, and she was my PR manager. And she was a difficult person that no one got along with to make it even tougher. And HR told me I needed to keep careful records…we kept records for two years and then we fired her. And she tried to sue us. And the lawyers on both sides met, and she had no leg to stand on and it was all fine, but it was really a nasty period. (24, f)*

> *There is the one other person I have worked with for quite some time…. He's been in the role too long. He's to the point where he is almost bitter about it. He wasn't mad that I got the position that I got but he was mad that it wasn't posted or offered to him to apply for…. he's got all this kind of pent up anger, not directed toward me but because I'm in the position. Then I get kind of the brunt of it I guess, or the side-effects to it. So it's a little bit touchy situation with him ….So it puts him in an awkward position and puts me in a little bit of an awkward position….It's been a challenge. (23, f)*

While being the new boss of former peers has its straining challenges, there are also some benefits to this work-relationship history, including some unique insight into the work group:

> *Now I have the luxury before being the manager…of being a consultant in their midst [prior to the promotion]. [I had time] To watch, to listen and hear and see… I was like, you know, a fly on the wall. Or just a colleague in their midst….I went from sitting right in the middle of their group, to being their manager down the hall….And that was a shocking change for them, I mean like, whoa, what's going on here. But fun for me. It was quite delicious because… I already know their strengths and weaknesses, the way you would really — I've never watched the TV show about the undercover boss….it's sort of like that idea of the undercover thing. So, if you're sitting in cubes out in the midst of everybody, you know what their complaints are or what they hate, what they love, and everything else. So I knew everything. (24, f)*

This manager describes the situation in which a former peer, and friend, of hers was now reporting to her and had an issue with it, yet still expected that because they had history together her flaws could be overlooked. Upon probing about how this disgruntled employee came across in the post promotion weeks, the promoted manager replied that she was given the silent treatment. This manager reflects on the experience further:

> *So I think she might have thought she could have some kind of edge there because I knew her better. The problem was I knew her better. So things that are considered her 'opportunities' which she still does not concede are her opportunities I know are her opportunities [for improvement]. (23, f)*

Other managers talked about managing former peers that had been friends of theirs. Clearly working with peers for a number of years allow leaders also get to know them personally and in some cases deeper friendships develop. Several leaders talked about how these personal ties could be a hazard, and make separating the person from their performance more difficult once they became a manager. As one leader (6, f) describes, "It's different when you are in charge of their review, basically. So you have a lot – you do have power, and that's not always that easy."

One additional nuance of the internal socialization experience, and in some cases magnified by the peer promote situation, involves the diversity of the work group. The age and gender factors came up in several interviews, particularly when the newly promoted leader is younger or the opposite gender from the majority of the group they are now managing. While racial diversity in this study was low (only two individuals interviewed were in the non-white racial category), this came up as a significant theme in

one of the interviews as the promotion shattered the glass ceiling:

> *So for me, I think it was a little sensitive because there has never been an African American female promote to this level within [my function]. So that in and of itself was a big deal and I think there was a lot of angst.*

The diversity dynamic is an interesting finding and in alignment with some recent conceptual work by Hurst, Kammeyer-Mueller, and Livingston (2012) on how newcomers who are different become adjusted. Hurst and colleagues have outlined the proposed relationships that exist between types of diversity and socialization processes; they believe that the more experience a newcomer has in being the minority, the easier this adjustment into a new work group will be. Given the gender and age diversity dynamics that came up in the data from interviews, it is fairly safe to say that at lower levels in the organization most people experience a fairly balanced exposure to working with both men and women at various age levels. However, when these became more prevalent differences was when leaders were promoted to a higher level and needed to relate to their new team of subordinates and peers. This is an area for further research to more fully explore how these dynamics play out in the context of both internal and newcomer socialization. Perhaps a more focused research question centered around promoted people of color would help pull in the right individuals to participate. Also, consideration to sample recruitment must be considered with a specific research question like this. A snowball sample recruitment scheme where current research participants refer others who fit the categorization of study to participate may be the best option to tap into this population of diverse candidates adjusting to internal advancement.

A final tangential theme of interest in this category of challenges includes perceptions of equity. Again, this is a situation that may be magnified due to the internal promotion system, namely internal labor markets versus external labor markets. While this came up in only a handful of interviews, the finding is impactful enough to the overall transition experience of promoted leaders that it bears merit in display, in alignment with the benefit of qualitative research in expounding on factors that may be otherwise overlooked.

> *So one of the things that was surprising to me was the pay rate of one of my peers who became a direct report. Um, and it still is a little bit of a conundrum, because I think with her benefits package, she may be still at a higher total package than I am….I know they gave me a bump and looked at things, but I still have wanted to kind of go back to my department HR contact and just talk a little bit through that. Because that was a bit awkward. (1, f)*

Another manager reflects back upon this inequity with both disappointment in the organization but also in herself for not standing firm in her confidence and ability to negotiate for a better offer.

> *And then from a purely selfish financial standpoint, I would have countered the salary I was offered. It was a pay bump and a significant pay bump, but I was underpaid to begin with and the salary I was offered was actually less than the salary they were willing to pay for a senior [analyst] which is below my position.…I'm being paid less than the other managers who came into the position new…. I knew it at the time that they were low-balling me and I just didn't have the nerve to speak up and say, because it was a significant bump in pay and looking at it, even though I knew they had low-balled me, I didn't want to appear greedy and selfish. So I said nothing even though when they handed me that figure, it was immediate disappointment because I knew what they had done. (19, f)*

To recap the main themes of these interpersonal challenges, the results showed

that many promoted leaders were experiencing increased strain in learning how to interact with peers and superiors at a new level. Additionally, there were specific group dynamics and internal team conflicts that required some leaders to resolve. Some leaders took a proactive role in managing upwards and exercising their ability to influence, which was both empowering and impactful. Most importantly, the peer promote context proved to be a particularly memorable component of the transition experience for several leaders in the study. This brings perspective to the complex situations that promoted leaders are facing on individual and interpersonal levels. This likely heightens the expectations they have for organizational systems, including the onboarding process and transition assistance programs to come to their aid. However, as the next section of systems challenges delineates, deficiencies in these systems only compound the strains they also experience amidst other organizational level challenges.

Systems Challenges

Organizational systems impacting a newly promoted leader include the first time for a new process (i.e., allocating divisional resources, administering the performance management system), an organizational restructure, or fitting into the new culture. Lack of an organizational process or system for onboarding promoted leaders was also brought up as a challenge. While most would agree that having a program like this or tools to aid in the transition would be helpful, many were proactive at creating their own self-led onboarding plan to fill this gap:

> *I think definitely within [my company] as you are on-boarding into new jobs higher up in the organization you get less and less training received but yet you are expected to catch on much quicker…. So I think that it was good but it was also a challenge which I think the company pushed me to move at a faster rate*

than I would have before as far as being on-boarding and getting into the job. (4, m)

Being able to plan some of that out or even understand more about what's expected of me for training as opposed to, "Here's an opportunity. I don't want to miss it, but I also don't want to be available to my team," or "I'm still juggling two roles. So how do I balance? What's the right thing to do or the required thing to do?" So for example, if one of those classes is…is available once a month, could I postpone it for a month and do it the next month when I have more time to dedicate to that training and learning? Those kinds of things where if, again, just being more involved in the understanding of what steps happen next, instead of just reacting to the things when you are notified you should participate in. (8, f)

Organizational restructuring was the impetus for several of the internal promotions of the leaders interviewed in this study. One of the organizations in particular had gone through a very strategic shift starting at the top with the executive suite being reorganized, right down to the front line management aligning to the new operational groups and leadership. Restructuring was mentioned as part of the contextual challenges in adapting to the promoted role by a third of the leaders interviewed. Two comments further explicate this category and the uncertainty that resides in shifts in organizational structure:

Now we've recently re-orged as well, the [functional] organization and pretty dramatically actually…I only had [my boss] then for a couple of months and then they switched to somebody else and it completely transformed the [functional] organization so dealing with all that as well…. My guess is that at some point she will have to put another layer in because there are a lot of direct reports for her right now and that could be a step backwards for me from this expectation piece about getting the support [I need] because she is very driven about being very clear about what her roadmap is…but whether or not we stay in this structure for that long – that will be kind of the true test. (23, f)

Well, now there's just [us] three senior managers, because all these managers now report under the rest of us. He collapsed down the hierarchy, if you will. And that meant a lot of people who used to report directly to him were all of a sudden not directly reporting to him. And that shakes people up a little bit. (24, f)

In summary, the challenges that the data revealed included role transition challenges, interpersonal challenges, and systems challenges. The elaboration of these addressed the first research question for this study, revolving around the challenges that promoted leaders face amidst their transition. Next, the mistakes and lessons learned will be addressed.

Mistakes and Lessons Learned

The second research question on transition mistakes was prompted by the reported high failure rate of promoted leaders. As adjustment failure has not been sufficiently addressed in the socialization literature, this study brings further insight into the mis-steps, missed opportunities, or mistakes made amidst leadership transitions.

In the internal socialization model, one sees that mistakes and lessons learned are related to the challenges experienced by internally promoted leaders, connected by an arrow on the bottom left corner. The relationship between challenges and mistakes is important to evaluate in the context of internal socialization. While there is certainly merit in considering individual differences and performance deficiencies as dominant determinants in the derailment theory of failed leadership transitions (Hogan et al., 2009), this does not tell the whole story. There are situational variables that add to the complexity and strain of taking on a new role of increased scope and magnitude within organizations. The data from this study reveals the greater depth and breadth of how these challenges can impact one's transition experience and be interpreted as mis-steps, mistakes, and ultimately opportunities from which to learn and grow.

Most individuals are not prone to begin talking about their mistakes unprompted, yet the reality is that one learns through experience, namely trial and error. Insights gleaned from reflection on each participant's own mistakes and observations of others who failed will be highlighted. While no one intentionally makes a mis-step or ignores signals, once the mistake is revealed, few are fool enough to make the same mistake twice. As one manager replied to a question about how he figured out what he didn't know: "Just going through the motions, really. I believe I'm still learning and I'll probably still be learning for a couple of years. I'm fine with that because I love learning from experience and learning from mistakes." (17, f)

Many leaders talked about trial and error as a mechanism for learning what worked and what doesn't work. Everyone interviewed had points where they clearly had things they would change and or do differently in future transitions. As one leader (7, m) put it, "Oh, I could have done that better, I should have done this." Another manager with a highly technical background reflected on the challenges she faced in managing multiple projects, which is not her area of training or expertise but part of the larger role she was promoted into. For her, a key mistake was not advocating for and pulling in the right resources to fill this weakness early on. She has learned from this experience and her advice to others in a transition is this: "So I think that's what they need to do: determine their strength, their weakness, the areas where they can have the most influence. And then bring in help to address those areas where they're the weakest." (19, f)

When mistakes were made, leaders either turned inward for self-reflection and to determine the best course of action to solve the problem or turned outwards to seek

support or guidance from trusted others. Usually in the midst of vulnerability, the safest place to go was inward. This was also a time when leaders were building self-efficacy and renewing their confidence in their abilities, affirming themselves by believing they were promoted for a reason and that senior leaders in their organization saw this potential in them.

The role transition and interpersonal contexts were rife for challenges that led to mistakes, or personal ramifications (i.e., lack of work-life balance), for promoted leaders. Many managers talked about the overload of work and shortage of time as a culprit for some of their mistakes, given that they were so rushed that they overlooked areas that needed attention or were oblivious to rumblings within their group. These are things that they may have otherwise picked up on but because of all that they were dealing with in terms of workload and stress, these issues were addressed later than desired. Many talked about the strain of the workload that they were under, in many cases carrying two jobs, and the impact this had on their ability to simply learn and soak up all the details of the new job. Some mistakes mentioned as learning opportunities typically involved leaders wishing they had taken a stand sooner, listened more, held their position on an issue or advocated for change, or asked for more information from their predecessor. One leader stated she wished she had stood her ground in terms of the timing and overlap of roles, which ended up extending nearly three months. She accepted a promotion on short notice given the sudden departure of her predecessor, yet maintained full responsibility of her previous project based role:

> *But looking back, maybe if I had been a little been more firm in saying, "You know what, I'm not comfortable starting at that date unless we can remove some of my project load," perhaps some of the politics would've played out differently. I don't know, but perhaps maybe I could've done a better job communicating that before accepting that quick transition date. (8, f)*

Leaders typically were quick to learn from their own mistakes and make modifications. One person talked about a moment when she was looking back at the prior week and realized how many hours she had worked, then asked herself how she was going to fix the problem. She then resolved to delegate more and find a way to prioritize her time appropriately.

Managers also learned from the mistakes of others. One leader says, "I watched my previous boss fail at it. He didn't have the connection to the team and he wasn't able to manage up, manage the expectations of leadership" (19, f). Here is a prime example of how mistakes can be used to facilitate learning. This promoted leader learned from the experience by observation that having an awareness of relationships both down and upstream is critical. This theme of managing up will be addressed further in the learning category.

Other lessons were a bit harsher to swallow, but were good learning opportunities all the same. One manager (18, f) described a particularly difficult grilling from her boss; she states that "he really took me to task." She went home upset and in tears, feeling like a failure. However, she learned from this experience and went back to her boss to address how that conversation had gone and reiterated her strengths and areas for improvement. She learned to stand up for herself, while being appreciative for the honest feedback she was receiving, just directing it to come in a more constructive way.

The systems challenges that presented accounts of insights gleaned from missed opportunities included the lack of onboarding provided by the organization, no preparation or provided training for new processes that one was required to complete in their new role, and cultural factors. For those leaders who had physical geographic moves to relocate to their promoted role, failures in the logistics processes were mentioned. This seemingly simple logistical moving assistance was seen as a missed opportunity on the company's part to help the promoted leader hit the ground running from the first day in the new role. One would have liked to see the organization provide a better moving stipend while another, who works for an organization with a lucrative moving package and has experience moving several times with the company, wished that:

> *…things [were] just being a little more planned. It's amazing how chaotic relocations and transitions can be given the amount of them that happen at [my organization]. We should be professionals at this. So that for me is a very eye opening and frustrating part of the process. This should be turnkey. There should really be no hiccups and there always are. You know, showing up and you don't have a computer at your new role. You know all these little things that are just frustrating. So I think that is something that [my organization] could probably work on. You know, there is a lot of movement and it's hard to do but it means a lot to the individual. (12, f)*

Another systems missed opportunity is the lack of a process for identification of readiness for promotions. One leader says that:

> *It's interesting that [my organization] sometimes doesn't move people into management or to that next level because they are good at that, it just feels like okay you have been here long enough and you have earned this spot so I wish there was a little bit more concern about that side of it or a little more review to say are you fit to be – you know 'test out' before you are a manager and you don't do well at it (12, f).*

At the conclusion of each interview, all participants were offered the opportunity to add any additional comments or pertinent information that had not been addressed. One manager's (19, f) response reiterated the importance of learning and keeping the proper perspective: "Realizing that you will make mistakes, and that to view those mistakes as learning opportunities and not a sign of personal failure." Another manager used this exact strategy when he was promoted from within a peer group later in his career. He used previous experience from an internal promotion a decade prior to guide him insight for his current transition, being mindful of the group dynamics at play. He stated that in the prior situation he was "quite naïve" and had to "learn my lumps" but that these mistakes paved the way for success the second time around. Specifically, this leader had some key "lessons learned" to share:

> *I would have to say probably the greatest learning was that I really needed to do was not try to manage so much and step back and learn from others, people who had been doing the job for quite some time and really just kind of being more of a learning sponge, if you will than a direct manager. I think that was my biggest problem at that time because people resented it. I mean looking back, hindsight is 20-20, looking back I'm like I would have resented it too. Probably that and just that I made the mistake of getting too close to - I was peers with them and then I kind of stayed close. We did things together and that made it difficult as well. So trying to keep that professional boundary this time has made it a lot easier. (13, m)*

This quote also explicates the intricate connection between the challenges presented in the previous research question focused on challenges (namely the peer promote situation and how to lead amidst the challenges of this subordinate dynamic), and the current category of mistakes, insights, and lessons learned. Leaders use their prior experiences, including mistakes and failed attempts, to learn and glean helpful

insight to do better next time. In fact, these lessons learned directly feed into the learning facilitators section of the internal socialization model, located on the right side of Figure 4. This section of the model coincides with the final research question, addressed next, regarding what facilitates learning for newly promoted leaders.

Learning

Identifying what helps leaders learn amidst an internal transition is especially important for both leaders and the organizations in which they work. From a theoretical perspective, it is important to determine whether those who are promoted from within are utilizing any socialization tactics that have been overlooked in the general socialization literature. All leaders were asked specifically about what type of support, tools, or resources were offered upon their promotion transition to help facilitate their learning.

Table 1 about here

Table 1 shows the tactics and types of support that emerged from this study in contrast to the historical socialization literature in this area.

Socialization theory has long engaged in the exploration of socialization tactics, social support, and more recently the impact of newcomer proactivity. The results of this research question run parallel to empirical results from the literature yet also elaborate upon the contextual arena of internally promoted leaders' experiences to bring a depth that previously had not been fully captured. On a more significant level, this elaboration of the phenomenon also identified a few key areas that require further exploration. The

noteworthy learning that stand out from previous work in this arena include (1) focused individual level proactive learning pursuits, (2) effectively engaging others by managing up and (3) new leader assimilation and peer learning facilitated sessions. Each of these learning categories, identified in Table 1 with an asterisk, will be discussed in turn to further expand theory on internal socialization.

Individual Level Learning

The analyzed results show that learning was clustered into three categories to capture the different ways promoted leaders accelerated their learning in the new role. Klein and Polin (2012) declare a "paucity of research on specific onboarding practices" and call for more academic work to identify specific tactics used effectively to learn in this environment of socialization (p. 267). The individual level learning category included things the individual manager did on their own to enhance their learning. Many talked about reading books or articles or referenced the learning they had gained in previous coursework from an MBA program, a mini-MBA certification, or leadership development classes. Several specifically recalled a book or paper they dug out of their files and found useful in application for their new role. Many of these resources were on leading people. One leader tailored her master's degree program in leadership to coincide with the skills she wanted to hone for her promotion, focusing first on organization theory and strategic decisions so that she was well prepared for the change management she forecasted was necessary in her organization. Others talked about internal training programs their organizations sponsored: people management skills, having difficult conversations, webinars, and other general management training

programs. Some managers noted that they knew their organization had training programs available but they simply did not have the time to invest in such things during this critical transition point. Some managers loved the in-person training courses while others thought reading a book was much more effective for them.

Another solo pursuit was observing other leaders and learning from what they did well as well as what they had been less successful with during their transition. Managers also talked about being observant of their team, peers, and the dynamics in the organization around them, listening and soaking up the informational cues. One leader described her first month in the new role in this way: "I was very much more in the observer mode, learning mode, listening, trying to kind of figure out the dynamics of, okay, what was going on with who? What was going on that wasn't being said" (21, f). Some created their own written plan or just mulled their situation over and reflected on what they were seeing and translating those observations into an action plan for how they needed to approach the new role. As one new manager described it:

> *I kind of just used what I had experienced in the past and tried to take it up a level. That probably doesn't describe it very well. But what I had seen my managers before me do, what has worked for them and just used those tips to figure out what to do. It was really a lot by intuition. I just kind of felt it out a lot. (11, f)*

Engaging Others

Engaging others emerged as the largest category of the three for learning: promoted leaders most often learned how to adjust to their new role with the help and guidance of others. This is consistent with extant research on the socialization of newcomers (Fisher, 1986; Lundberg & Young, 1997; Nelson & Quick, 1991) and more

recent meta-analytic work emphasizing the importance of social tactics (Saks et al., 2007) and the proximal outcome of social acceptance (Bauer et al., 2007). These parallel findings further amplify the importance of relationships amidst a promotion. Proactive tactics such as asking questions, asking for feedback and guidance, and clarifying expectations were used regularly.

Exploration and analysis of this theme of focusing on relationships provides insight into the social relationship mechanisms, and social tactics utilized amidst a role transition. We find preliminary answers to some of the questions posed by Saks and colleagues (2007) around role models as socialization agents including what type of role model is desirable, the tenure or experience level of that role model, how structured that relationship should be, and what kinds of socialization programs would be helpful (p. 440). When emphasizing relationships, leaders referenced the importance of building a strong relationship with their new team of direct reports, peers, and superiors. These transitioning managers also reached out to their network for support and guidance and many utilized the help of mentors from their personal, informal network of business contacts or previously established informal mentoring relationships. Some leaders found their predecessor to be a particularly helpful facilitator to their learning. The predecessors who developed a comprehensive transition plan, listing key events, contacts, and role responsibilities and offering opportunities to shadow them in important meetings or customer visits proved most beneficial to the newly transitioning leader.

A unique and emergent finding that arose from the data in this study was a propensity to actively manage the relationship with one's boss, understanding their

management style and expectations, and when they needed to be involved in decision making. Some leaders even talked specifically about the importance of being proactive in building a strong relationship with their boss by managing their boss's perception of their work expectations or together approaching the goals and constraints the team was facing. One leader (16, m) emphasized the importance of being able to influence others, particularly one's boss and superiors, in order to obtain the right resources to get the results needed to make the organization successful.

As leaders adjust to power and responsibility at a higher level within the organization, the boss-subordinate dynamics are also changing. Building upon the quote presented earlier where one leader specifically called out a lesson learned from her boss's failure around the ability to manage peers and superiors in both perception and aptitude for acquiring the necessary resources, several leaders interviewed mentioned leveraging their knowledge of their boss and building that relationship as a key component to their success in their promoted role. Another manager discussed the critical nature of learning to manage upwards:

> *I would say one is being able to manage the business unit director both in terms of like your relationship and you know, being open, being clear or having that line of communication very open. Then also knowing how to influence that person. Of course that's not, you don't always and most people don't have that set after the first couple of days - all right I've got that figured out. It takes time to build that and see where that person is at. That is probably one thing I see that kind of sets apart some successful managers from others. (11, f)*

While determining the expectations in one's role is critical and consistent with the proximal adjustment of role clarity (Bauer et al., 2007), extending that further to specifically understand one's boss's expectations for the role and how to manage those

expectations is important to enlarge. The opportunity to manage upwards and learn how to leverage the relationship with one's boss is a critical component to success in a new role, assuming in most new roles leaders also have a new boss.

At various levels of promotion, understanding the expectations of others beyond one's immediate supervisor is also imperative. Many times mid-level management roles are working across functions, business units, diverse sets of customers, or operating in a highly matrixed organization where job requirements include supporting various peers or superiors. One leader (4, m) talked about the shift in responsibility he experienced when transitioning into his promoted role and representing a national brand with many different customer teams coming to him for his expert advice. In prior roles, he merely supported his team and had been accustomed to checking in with his manager on big decisions. Now, in this larger role his boss also covers a wider territory and is not as directly involved in as many decisions. This leader talked about that big moment where he had to "make the call" and how that autonomy and responsibility helped him build confidence. So this reliance and responsibility his customers expected from him was actually helping facilitate his learning.

Over half of all leaders were explicit in mentioning their boss's significant role in either confirming or developing expectations and priorities. Some went one step further and discussed the need to delineate a communication plan detailing how this relationship could flourish, including identification of frequency one should meet with their boss and what method of communication is preferred. One leader talked about how some managers in her organization use a credo to state what they believe in and how they like

to work, and she reiterated that it, "is really more to understand the person and expectations rather than the role itself" (3, f).

Organization Driven Learning

Organization driven learning included onboarding for internal transitions, formal mentoring programs, assimilation focused facilitated sessions, and organizational support from a functional, namely the HR group, or senior leader perspective. One promoted leader cited HR as his *most* valuable transition resource in the first few months in the new role. He specifically noted that, given his audit background for his former consulting organization and exposure to many different clients' organizations, "HR is very underutilized. Here I just walk in. There are two people in particular that I go to all the time to ask for guidance and just to talk things through so that is one big tool." (10, m)

In terms of support, several leaders talked about the impact and affirmation received when senior leaders made the initiative to encourage the leader to apply for the job or congratulated and offered their support post promotion. One leader experienced several Vice Presidents reaching out to her, meeting for coffee, and reiterating that they were there as a resource for her and telling her that they wanted her to be successful. As another promoted leader stated in her account of support: "So I think the organization has cultivated a culture that encourages that and says, 'Hey we want you to reach out to people and help people.' So, I think that was huge there." (18, f)

Formal mentoring programs and more informal but organizationally driven "buddy systems" were also useful facilitators of learning. While informal mentoring relationships, initiated by the promoted leader, were discussed in the engaging others

category of learning facilitators, it should be noted that some organizations do in fact sponsor mentoring programs. These kinds of organization driven formal mentoring programs provide a process and matching system whereby leaders are either assigned a mentor from within the organization or allowed to choose from a list of organizational insiders who have been trained and belong to the internal program. One of the organizations from which I collected data had some formal mentoring programs available, although these were voluntary in nature and most of the participants interviewed from this organization were not part of these programs or even mentioned them in their interview. The buddy system is essentially a peer matching process that the organization initiates to help assist the newly promoted leader in their transition. It is very informal and the leader who identified it as helpful in his transition said that it is usually done over lunch once per month over the first few months of the new role. The buddy was someone from another division, as by design the organization tries to assign someone that you would not otherwise interact with, and they discussed topics and questions such as, "How did you handle your transition? How do you handle your manager?"

While only a subset of the leaders interviewed talked about other organizationally sponsored onboarding activities, the impact of these experiences was strong enough to bear reporting. Peer learning groups and new leader assimilation interventions were both found to be useful and productive facilitators to learning amidst a promotion. The peer learning groups were informal lunch sessions held bi-weekly with a specific group of peers, all working in the same type of role across the organization. Executives were

invited to present at these lunches to showcase a specific topic, process, or upcoming timeline that the participants needed to be educated on; peer to peer discussion and learning in an open forum of sorts was an essential component of the recurring event. One manager relays the importance and impact these sessions had on his transition experience:

> *So really that I would say is the biggest – it's almost as if the organization has realized that in this role you are going to get very little direction or guidance from your manager so there needs to be somebody who helps to try and keep you on track sometimes when things get too busy. This lunch is kind of not to be missed. They want you to be there so that if you miss it, you want to definitely touch base with somebody because there is always something fairly important being discussed. (4, m)*

Two of the managers interviewed had directly participated in a new leader assimilation intervention. In new leader assimilations (Manderscheid, 2009), an outside facilitator or an HR representative is typically the one to facilitate the session. The leader is invited to welcome their new team and ask for their direct and honest feedback and questions. Then the leader leaves the room and the facilitator leads the discussion and writes the main points, questions, and probes the discussion to summarize the key issues the group would like their new leader to address. This summary is presented anonymously to the leader and then the leader has an opportunity to respond directly to the group and answer as much as they feel comfortable addressing. One manager said the session was appreciated and helpful because, "it opens the door to things that you hadn't thought about. That's the whole point of it." (12, f). Another leader at the same organization also enjoyed the process and felt those participating were "really honest and forthcoming. Got some good feedback" (13, m) which he was able to use to help

acclimate to the new group he was promoted into. Both leaders felt it was a very valuable process. Unfortunately, it was not an intervention that was mandatory or built into the onboarding process for all role transitions; it appears to be more circumstantial based on if the leader knew someone who had done it so they knew to ask for this option, or if they had an HR representative who was proactive in offering such services.

Social Support

At the bottom of the internal socialization model, there is a box labeled social support and it underpins the entire process. Social support was clearly significant in the data and a major theme in the adjustment experiences of the every leader interviewed, in alignment with what would be expected based on the empirical validation for this critical variable (Saks et al., 2007).

> *I'd say I have a pretty good boss down here who I have been able to confide in that, "Hey I am struggling a little bit." Trying to get more guidance or more counsel for him in different areas or at different points in time when there was a struggle. I think the biggest think has honestly been just talking to some peers. Both experienced peers who have weathered a few storms and can kind of give you the guidance or here's how things went for me at one point in my career and they're at a much more comfortable place. I have a couple of peers down here who are in the same situation relatively as me, who are new customer managers. (16, m)*

Social support came from all levels of the organization and from non-work relationships as well. Leaders were asked how their promotion was announced and what kind of reaction they received. At a bare minimum, leaders received some level of surface support and congratulatory affirmation upon these announcements. However, at a much deeper level of engaged involvement, most leaders found that their boss was helpful and a critical proponent for their success during the period of transition. Many

leaders also talked about how helpful their peers had been, especially in coping with the new role demands and understanding new processes for the first time. As previously discussed, the predecessor also had an opportunity to provide a level of support that aided leaders' transitions more smoothly. Subordinates were also a valuable point of support; several leaders learned to rely on the expertise of their team while others found affirmation from direct reports with sentiments such as, "We're glad you were the one promoted," and "You make a great boss." This comment came from a leader promoted from his peer group:

> *One that sticks in my mind was a woman came to me and said I'm really happy to have you in this position just because of the expertise, that you know our jobs. I mean I think that was one of the things that they had struggled with in the past….I think I just bring a different kind of understanding of the role than [the previous boss] had. I think she appreciated that. (13, m)*

Others found solace in sharing some of the emotional tolls of promotion with their non-work family and friends, gaining an alternative perspective to the issues faced. Overall, the findings support the importance of social support amidst a transition.

In interesting component of support arose with the responsibility that one felt to ensure that their promotion support was realized in their successful transition.

> *I felt there are a lot of people who have really championed my growth here, my career projection and I just didn't want to disappoint them. So what if I finally got to this level and I disappointed? They were like, "Oh, my gosh, she sucks. What were we thinking?" and I just didn't want people to think that and to – I guess, kind of have a bad reflection on the people who helped me out. If it's a bad reflection on me, then apparently, I didn't do it and so that's the true reflection. I just don't want the people who helped me get there and now…their reputation is tarnished. (18, f)*

Other leaders, upon reflection, stated that they wished that had relied more on their support system in their new role, specifically their peers and predecessor.

> *Don't be afraid to communicate if you're feeling – if you're struggling with anything during the transition. Use resources. Your peers are some of your best resources for that. They've frequently been through some of that….Looking back now, I have a great group of peers right in my immediate group that might've had some suggestions for me. They might've had even been able to step in on some of the duties in my current role to help me feel a little bit less overwhelmed. I didn't feel comfortable doing that at the time, but, yes, I guess that might've been – now looking back I think they would've been fantastic resources to help me balance some of that. (8, f)*

Now that each element of the model has been embellished, one remaining theme that transcends the process merits attention. Time is a critical component of learning and development and thus is instrumental in the process of transitions. Many of the leaders interviewed expressed that time is a requisite to learning, and time in and of itself facilitates learning. Time provides insight after mistakes are experienced; time allows one to develop the reflection to see missed opportunities in hindsight. Time, or shortage of it, can also be a challenge. Learning and adjusting to a new role, particularly one with increased scope and responsibility takes time. One leader (1, f) succinctly advised those in transition: "So don't try to take on the world in five seconds." In essence, the passage of time is the expression of learning by experience. The following comments support this consideration of time:

> *You need to at least give it four or five months because that is when you really start understanding everything and you can actually figure out if you like it or not because I've seen people say oh, I hate this job. I mean, you've been there two weeks how do you know if you hate it already. You don't know anything. So definitely you need to be open-minded. You just need to be willing to put in the time in the beginning and to fully understand that there is always a learning curve; I don't care how good you are. (5, m)*

> *I think when you first get in a role, at least for me it's like you have a period of time where you feel like you are not contributing to the level that you want to contribute at because you are new to the business; you are new to this manager*

> *role, whatever. So there is a certain period of time, even if you are doing a lateral move you are going to have that on-boarding phase. So that is kind of the trigger. I don't know anything and I need to know something. I've got to learn, take the steps to learn what I do now so I can at least become 20% value added. Then slowly you work your way up to being close to 100, knowing what you need to know. (11, f)*
>
> *To give it time. That it's okay to rely on others for the first couple of weeks, that you are going to have to and not to be able to expect to have all the answers to everything and that's okay. (3, f)*

This presentation of themes, spanning all facets of the internal socialization model wraps up the results chapter. The intrapersonal experience sheds new light onto the individual experience of a promotion and internal socialization through the emotional, physical, and cognitive experiences. The challenges that lie within these experiences span the role transition itself, to a heavy emphasis on interpersonal challenges, and then also incorporating systems challenges. Mistakes and lessons learned are gleaned from these challenges and the intrapersonal experience of trial and error. Learning is experienced at the individual level, when engaging others in the process, and also from organization driven resources. All aspects of the internal socialization experience have some element of social support as well. Now, a discussion of these results will follow.

Chapter 6 Discussion

This study presents a contextually rich look at the internal socialization experience and introduces a model of internal socialization. Further, it contributes to the socialization and leadership development literatures and extends theory by broadening the understanding of *how* promoted leaders transition into roles of increased scope and responsibility. To my knowledge, there are no studies that have honed in on internal

socialization. The closest found was Cooper, Anderson, and Cash's (2012) qualitative study which provided a fresh look into organizational socialization through their investigation of adjustment tactics used by experienced organizational newcomers. They identify new strategies in their research like befriending, teaming, exchanging, and flattering in elaboration of social support. My study's results extend this further to also including building a strong relationship with the boss and seeking and learning from mentors and peer-facilitated learning sessions. Furthermore, my findings extend beyond social support in the workplace to encompass support received at home through family, friends, and other non-work relationships.

Another study with similar scope was written by Cooper-Thomas and Wilson (2011) elaborating the influences that specific tactics have on newcomer adjustment through the examination of individual tactics, individual differences, and role and organizational contextual variables. However, while they have focused on role and organizational variables, their paper does not encompass the role transition factors of job overlap and the importance of the predecessor on the transition experience that my study contributes. Additionally, the overarching systems in place within organizations, such as organizationally driven tactics, peer learning groups, or new leader assimilation interventions are not included in their findings.

A unique view inside this experience adds depth to the previously explored components of socialization and elaborates on the contextually specific challenges internally promoted leaders face. A discussion of the theoretical contributions of this

study continues next, followed by a discussion of the practical implications for this research, and then study limitations and future research direction follows.

Theoretical Contributions

The socialization literature has become heavily focused on independent variables and proximal outcomes like role clarity and self-efficacy and distal outcomes, for example performance, job satisfaction, or turnover. While these variables and outcomes are valuable, as proven in the more recent meta-analytic work (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007), the topic has lost some of the depth and richness that accompanies the human, phenomenological experience of role transitions. Saks and Ashforth (1997), among others (Ashforth et al., 2007; Ashforth, 2012; Bauer & Erdogan, 2012), have put out a call to bring back some of this richness, with attention to specific contexts and descriptive accounts.

This study extends research in two ways: (1) it provides an in-depth look into the individual experience of 24 organizational leadership transitions across different functions and organizations and adds a qualitative richness that was missing from the socialization literature. This deep dive into the phenomenon of socialization reveals key experiences, and important variables, that have been overlooked in previous studies and (2) it expands the context of socialization experiences explored to more comprehensively include *internal* transitions of increased scope and responsibility, resulting in a theoretical model of internal socialization and the identification of context-specific internal socialization variables.

As the results have showcased, the time following a promotion is filled with many emotions, physical, and cognitive changes. The internal socialization experience unfolds over time and new leaders experience challenges and learning along the way. Time was discussed as a component of this learning and insight. Ashforth (2012) establishes that "to fully understand the role of time in socialization dynamics it is necessary to understand the nature, flow, and impact of events" (p. 165). Adding richness to theory involves "capturing the unpredictability of events and consequences" and Ashforth (2007) suggests that qualitative interviews are perfectly suited to capture such thick descriptions (p. 163).

This study revealed several challenges, and in some cases these were unpredicted events that happened amidst the transition experience that were further explored and incorporated into the emerging theory. Saks and colleagues (2007) concluded that indeed researchers know that socialization tactics are important for adjustment, however what is not clear is *why* this is the case. This study begins to piece together a larger view of the socialization context, including the straining challenges that transitioning employees face and the corresponding tactics that are used to overcome these hurdles, further solidifying why specific tactics are important and how individual leaders are impacted by this experience of transition.

As another example of added richness, the intrapersonal experience that emerged from the data further elaborates the intersection of emotional, physical, and cognitive experiences of individuals in a role change, whether new to an organization or moving up within an organization, that other promoted leaders may likely encounter. These

descriptive accounts provide a unique view of the intrapersonal experience and insight into the strain and stimulation a promoted role can bring. In the context of leadership failure, this depth of understanding amidst a contextual situation of job promotion helps put the various factors into better perspective for future work in this area.

Moving on to the second theoretical contribution, socialization literature has been primarily focused on *newcomer* transition experiences, at the peril of other important and critical role transition points. The literature has also called for more research across domains and contexts (Ashforth et al., 2007; Bauer & Erdogan, 2012; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). This study begins to fill this gap by providing a contextual view of the *internal* socialization experience amidst a promotion role transition.

The results were used to develop a theoretical model that contributes to the socialization literature by uncovering hidden dynamics, such as the challenges of being in a peer promote situation and juggling two jobs during the role transition overlap. The emotional and physical experience of transition is more fully explored, further expanding the understanding of the impact and strain that role transitions bring. The early work of Nicholson and West (1988) contrasted different role transitions and found that internal promotions of increasing scope and magnitude were surprisingly the most stressful transition of the twelve types studied, yet did not have any answers for why this happened. The internal socialization model provides unique insight into *why* this type of transition is stressful, highlighting specific challenges that pose a strain on the adjustment process, and *how* leaders adapted in this context.

Contributions to Practice and Managerial Implications

The contribution this research has to the onboarding of promoted leaders is bountiful. While this study may direct improvements or even the creation of organizational onboarding or transition related interventions, the organizational superiors and HR practitioner supporting promoted leaders will also benefit from an increased appreciation for the internal process of assimilation and related challenges that arise, that these leaders are experiencing, in order to better support these individuals through coaching, more reflective performance feedback, and recommending additional network connections.

Organizational leaders, and most specifically human resource professionals, may find the experiences of these promoted leaders to be both insightful and disconcerting. From the insightful perspective, or the glass half full view, one sees that promoted leaders are empowered and excited to expand their horizons and take on bigger challenges on the job. They find the challenges to be rewarding and stimulating and in most cases receive strong support from those around them. On the other end of the spectrum, or assessing the situation at large as the glass half empty, one sees opportunities to build stronger processes around transition strategies.

In terms of simple fixes, organizations can reassess the administration of transition logistics. For example, they can address issues of ensuring the new office and computer equipment is running as well as the quite detrimental impact of having absolutely no onboarding or guidance whatsoever in terms of role expectations or timelines for transitioning out of the previous role. Organizations invest heavily in talent

development and there are some simple items like the aforementioned that could be arranged and guaranteed in advance.

Other organizational investments into tools and resources would receive a strong return on investment. For example, creating an organizational transition tool like a 30-60-90 day roadmap would prove useful. Several leaders in this study had such a resource available and cited it as extremely helpful in laying out basic transition points and expectations. Organizations could provide a similar document for the supervisor of a promoted leader to ensure there is accountability on both ends. A component of this 30-60-90 day roadmap should include consideration for getting to know one's boss and their expectations.

Managers of newly promoted leaders will find encouragement in having those early conversations with a new promote to clarify job expectations and partner with the leader to ensure they have the right resources to transition out of the previous role so that they may begin their newly promoted job with full focus and an empty plate of work. It takes time to learn a new job, and juggling a full workload with the old job while trying to learn the new job, and take on new responsibilities, is taxing. Peers should be encouraged to step in to help as well. Many promoted leaders said that they found invaluable support from their peer level, especially when it came to learning new processes or even knowing what was coming down the pipeline in terms of business cycles and delivering results in a new environment whether that be a new function or department. Future research could also examine the consequences of these measures.

Another suggested resource could be a reading list that is recommended for leadership transitions. This list could be compiled in a joint effort by HR reviewing the relevant business-press findings in collaboration with recommendations from organizational leaders, adding favorites from their personal reading lists.

Training courses are useful to newly promoted leaders. However, given the constraints of time during the transition period, it would be helpful for organizations to have a timeline for completion and list at the front-end the frequency of course offerings so that leaders can make informed decisions about when and where to take a course (in person or online) based on the work priorities they are juggling in the early days of their transition.

Finally, two organizational facilitated interventions may be helpful to incorporate into the greater onboarding process. Organizations may offer the option for all promoted leaders to have a facilitated new leader assimilation session within the first 90 days. This could correspond to the roadmap so that it is consistently offered as an option in all promotions. Additionally, establishing peer discussion groups, or peer learning groups to pull together leaders at various levels of the organization together may foster greater support and just-in-time learning. Ideally these peer learning groups would span divisions and functions, to allow greater collaboration and increase each leader's internal network.

Perhaps the most relevant implications of this study are for the leaders currently adapting to a new promotion, or those who plan to advance their careers in the near future. What can a newly promoted manager learn from this study? Hopefully, these

managers will first find comfort in the experiences of other transitioning leaders and know that they are not alone in the emotions and physical effects that they may struggle with, that the cognitive process of figuring out what you don't know can be taxing yet also stimulating. It is important to reach out to others for social support and to seek guidance and feedback. It is especially critical to quickly learn how to build positive relationships with one's boss, new peers, and direct reports.

However, for those promoted from within their current organization, specific challenges to be on watch for include possible conflict, tension, or resentment around a promotion from a group of peers who become direct reports. While this is not a predestined formula for problems, it should be handled carefully. Insights from leaders who have been through the trenches will prove helpful: be humble, reach out to experts within your subordinate team and leverage their knowledge and experience.

Taking the initiative to learn one's boss's expectations early and observe their management style and interactions with higher level organizational leaders will help newly promoted leaders navigate the new terrain of group dynamics. Lastly, while the timing and terms of the role transition are often out of the promoted manager's span of control, be mindful that a helpful predecessor could be an instrumental resource and initial guide for successful transition. If possible, request to have an overlap of training and job shadowing with the predecessor for at least one week and offer your replacement the same benefit. When in doubt, transitioning managers should reach out to their network and seek assistance and guidance from trusted mentors, peers, superiors, and human resource partners.

Limitations and Future Research

As with all research, this study has limitations. There are some specific points that should be considered when using the results of this study to plan for future research. First, that the sample of managers consists of a high proportion of first level managers is a limitation that should be considered when reviewing the results. Further qualitative and quantitative research in the area of internal socialization should seek to balance participants across levels, with emphasis needed on middle to senior management role transitions to better represent the challenges leaders in the upper echelon of organizations face today. That said, there is an opportunity to further examine differences between levels of role transitions. For example, studying middle manager level transitions and comparing that to the transition experiences of senior level leadership transitions would be interesting. What changes when? At what point is a promotion a "game changer" in terms of the demands, challenges, and stimulation in a new role and learning to adapt to this new context? A comprehensive, comparative case study could be useful to address the depth and breadth of richness required to more fully understand these differences.

Second, the sample consisted of organizational leaders in white collar roles and industries, and the dominance of typical professional management fields may also be considered a limitation. Future research would benefit from the study of internal socialization in more distinct settings which also offer opportunities for advancement such as penitentiary systems, hospitals, organizations within the entertainment industry (i.e., a film production company), or possibly even explore, in true qualitative fashion of extreme cases, intense adrenaline occupations, categorized as the most dangerous jobs in

the United States by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, such as deep sea fishing, astronauts, or firemen. Of course in the latter context, there are limited opportunities for advancing into senior level roles.

The components identified in the internal socialization model provide an opportunity for future research to empirically examine the effect size of consequences for these variables. For example, what is the impact that interpersonal challenges with peers and subordinates have on proximal outcomes such as social acceptance or self-efficacy? The magnitude of challenges experienced could be examined in relationship to overall stress that the promoted leader is experiencing. In terms of distal outcomes, it would be interesting to see how reducing challenges or improving internal socialization onboarding effects performance and especially organizational commitment, intentions to remain, and turnover.

When evaluating the various emotions that emerged from the internal socialization experiences of leaders interviewed in this study, it would be useful to quantitatively examine which emotions are most prevalent across a larger sample and then compare these to the emotions felt by organizational newcomers. The role of individual differences will also play into the investigation of emotions and all components of transition adjustment. These are more easily studied in quantitative work where independent and validated measures can be used to collect such data. Finally, the overlap of emotions with cognitive elements of transitioning deems further study. Research on the cognitive-emotional interactions in the brain (LeDoux, 1989) is

promising. Connecting progress in this cognitive area could add insight to the internal socialization processes.

Time and mindfulness are also two important factors to consider in reviewing this study and planning for future work. As previously discussed, the interview design of this study and reliance on personal accounts and reflections of one's personal adjustment amidst a promotion assumes that the leaders interviewed have been forthcoming about their experience, both the positive and less than positive pieces. Some individuals are more reflective by nature or more open and able to recognize specific physical symptoms, signals, feelings, and intentional thinking that assist in mentally processing the experience of transition as it happens. Mindfulness is about having an awareness of what is going on around you, in the moment, and how it is impacting your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011).

Timing is a component of this mindful awareness because people process their own experiences at different speeds as well as in different depth levels. Some people may need more time to ponder these experiences in order to articulate them clearly and some may not have the capacity to verbalize reflections on their experience at all. A web survey where critical incidents are collected either in the moment and then prompted at a later date for reporting the reflective learning or application on may be useful. A personal journal used to note key events, reflections, and learning may be another tool used for data collection, although this could be perceived by the participant to be more invasive. Quantitative work in this area may prompt more specific lists of experiences

and measure to what extent those experiencing an internal promotion encountered these specific events.

The unfolding experience of support over time also should be considered. While this was not addressed in the current study, given the single time point of data collection and accrued reflection of the experience that each leader faced, it warrants further consideration. For example, it would be helpful to understand how the interpersonal dynamics of the peer promote situation, including competitive strain and doubt in the newly promoted leader's abilities, play out over time, even including measures of undermining and the longer term career impact of these counter-productive workplace behaviors. Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Rubenstein, and Song (in press) call out the opportunity for support to be more fully explored in the dynamic socialization experience; they find that support declines over time. This study highlighted the benefit leaders found in having strong support from their peers, direct reports, and superiors in the organization in which they worked, in addition to non-work support amidst the promotion transition. Given the nature of qualitative work, and that single interviews in particular are more summative in nature, the quantity and quality of support over time was not measured, thus there is a ripe opportunity for this dynamic to be more fully explored in future research, with consideration of both internal and new hire socialization.

The peer promote situation is also an opportunity to explore workplace envy and social undermining (see Duffy, Scott, Shaw, Tepper, & Aquino, 2012) in future research of internal socialization. Duffy and colleagues (2012) state that while the effect sizes of

envy in the workplace are small, even cautioning that the impact of workplace envy may have been overstated in previous research, they do admit that "perhaps social undermining is more likely to follow a specific or 'hot' episode of envy (e.g., gossiping about a colleague immediately after the colleague receives an acceptance letter)" (p. 658). While not a focal point of the current study, this could be an interesting pocket to further explore while incorporating how others may further undermine or "cut down" a successful leader promoted from within the ranks (cf., the "tall poppy syndrome," Moulya & Sankaranb, 2000, p. 285.)

In summary, future research on socialization, and particular focus on internal socialization, should continue to explore the experience of individuals promoted from within their organizations as this is an exciting avenue to bring richness to the socialization literature. Perhaps the most significant void remains in accounts of senior level executives. While this is likely the most difficult sample to secure given the workload demands of c-suite leaders, insight into their transition is needed. One way to address the data collection challenge of recruiting leaders to participate in interviews during the critical time of their transition would be to relax the timing criteria and consider inviting senior leaders who have been promoted in the past two or three years to allow for a greater period of reflection on their experience while also surpassing that timespan of the first months on the new job, which is so demanding.

The sample size, while sufficient for a grounded theory qualitative study, is not adequate to translate these theoretical findings to the general population. Future empirical, quantitative research in the area of internal socialization should begin to

validate and test independent variables specific to the internal promotion context: predecessor training, predecessor support, length of role overlap, and peer promote and examine how these variables generalize to the population. Future research should investigate the additional proactive individual tactics were revealed in this study to determine if and how these tactics are adopted by other leaders in transition. This could be established through the generation of survey response items and exploratory factor analysis followed by confirmatory factor analysis. These internal socialization variables could then be integrated into future socialization research, further enhancing the scope and depth of investigation while also adding to the organizational impact of findings.

In conclusion, this study sheds light into a vastly unexplored context of internal socialization, providing a fertile foundation for future research to continue in this area. A model of internal socialization has been presented, contributing to the growing literature on socialization while filling some of the contextual holes. When organizations look within their leadership ranks to promote individuals upwards in the organizational hierarchy, the process of role advancement and transition is set into motion. However, as the experiences of the leaders in this study reveal, the pivotal promotion decision is just the beginning. Looking within the individual experience of internal socialization brings deeper insight into the emotional, physical, and cognitive effects of challenges and mistakes and a better understanding of what and who facilitate learning amidst this transition.

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Table 1
Socialization Practices Identified

	Socialization Literature	Practices Identified across 24 interviews
Individual	(Bauer et al., 2007) Newcomer Proactivity & Information Seeking	Proactive Individual Level Learning: **Books,*** Courses, Observe & **Listen*** Proactively Seeking Information: -Ask Questions and for -Ask for Advice & Guidance Proactively Seeking Feedback: -Ask for Feedback
	Training Programs Saks & Gruman (2012)	Several, Ad Hoc (examples*): people management skills, strategic negotiations, having difficult conversations, Interpersonal skills, webinar training
	Job Characteristics Saks & Gruman (2012)	Scope of work: - ***i.e., Figuring out how to work at a new level of impact*, when to take a stand*, impact the work has on others**** (discussed in challenges) Complexity of work /Challenging work **Overlap of two roles*** (discussed in challenges)

Engaging Others	Socialization Agents *Individuals who help to facilitate role adjustment* (Klein & Heuser, 2008)	Peers Supervisor **Superiors*** **--Proactively Managing Up*** Subordinates Clients Customers **Predecessor***
Organization Driven	Klein & Heuser (2008); Klein & Polin (2012) Inform *Activities that help the newcomer learn what they need to know to be successful in their new role* Communication Resources Training	C - Meet with boss, senior leader, HR R – Given a plan/opportunities for development, list of names of important people to meet with, workspace was set up T – Observe a fellow associate, others
	Orientation Programs Saks & Gruman (2012) *Event based activity*	**None**
	Klein & Polin (2012) Welcome *Practices, programs, and policies used to welcome the newcomer*	**30-60-90 Day Materials**
	Klein & Polin (2012) Guide *A hands-on personal guide to help navigate the transition*	HR representative Boss Buddy System Mentoring **New Leader Assimilation*** **Peer Learning Groups***

Figure 1

Process Model for Newcomer Socialization

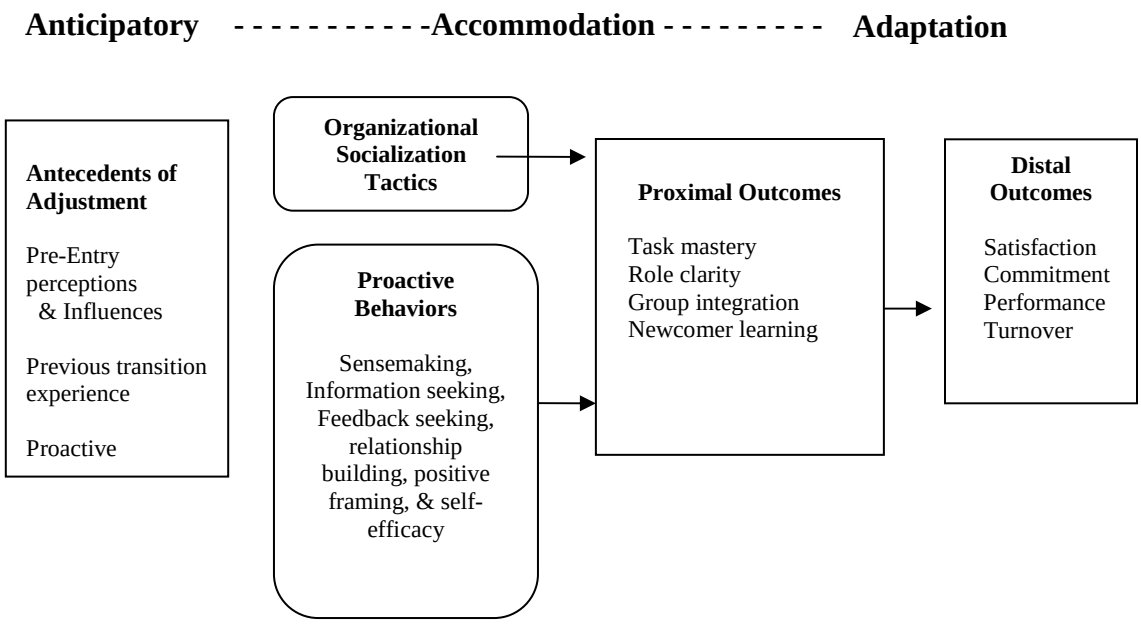


Figure 2. Adapted from: Bauer et al. (2007); Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg (2003); Saks & Ashforth (1997); Saks et al. (2007); Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller (2000).

Figure 2

Study Protocol and Procedure for Data Collection

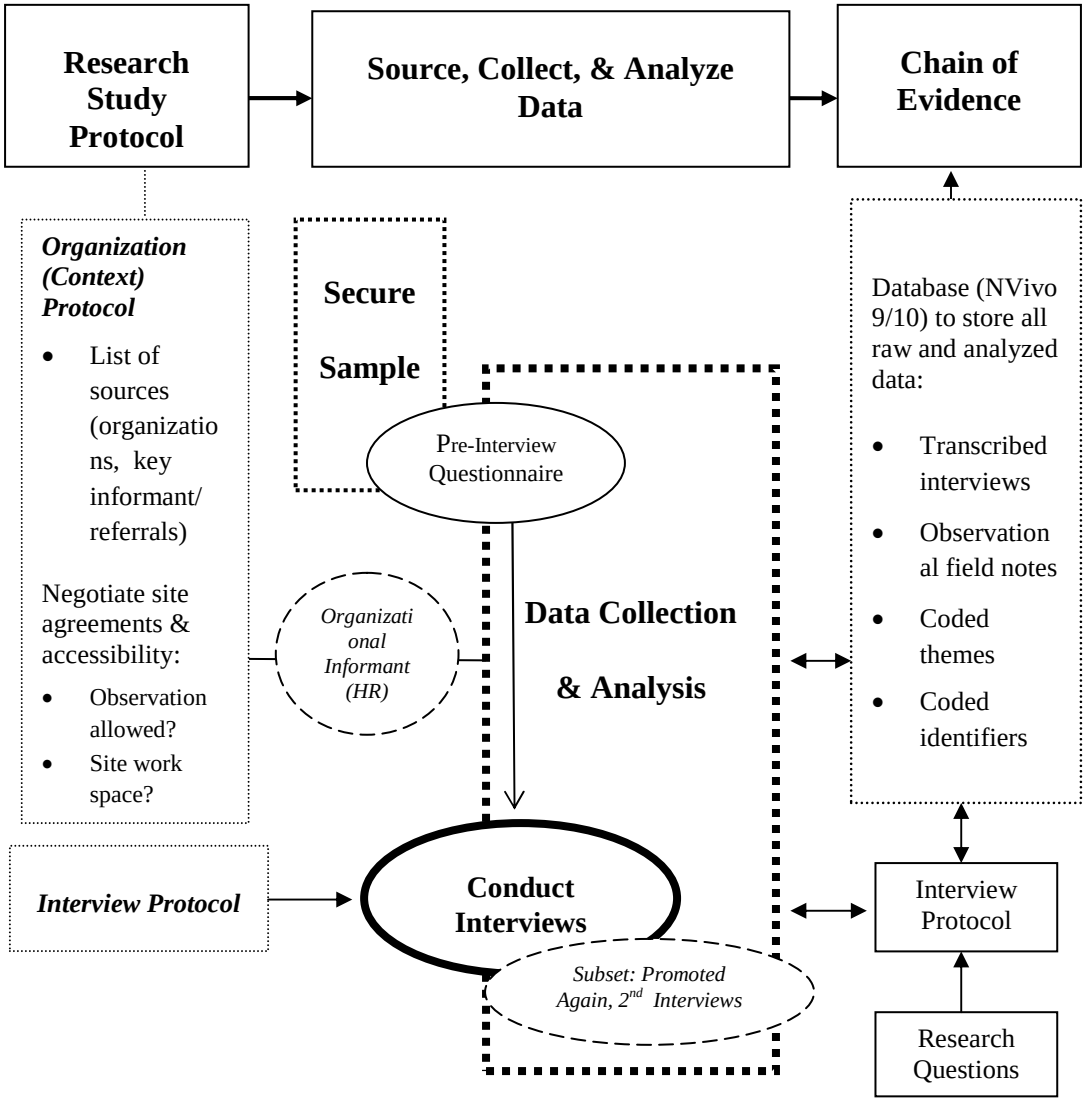


Figure 3

Procedure for Analyzing Interview Data

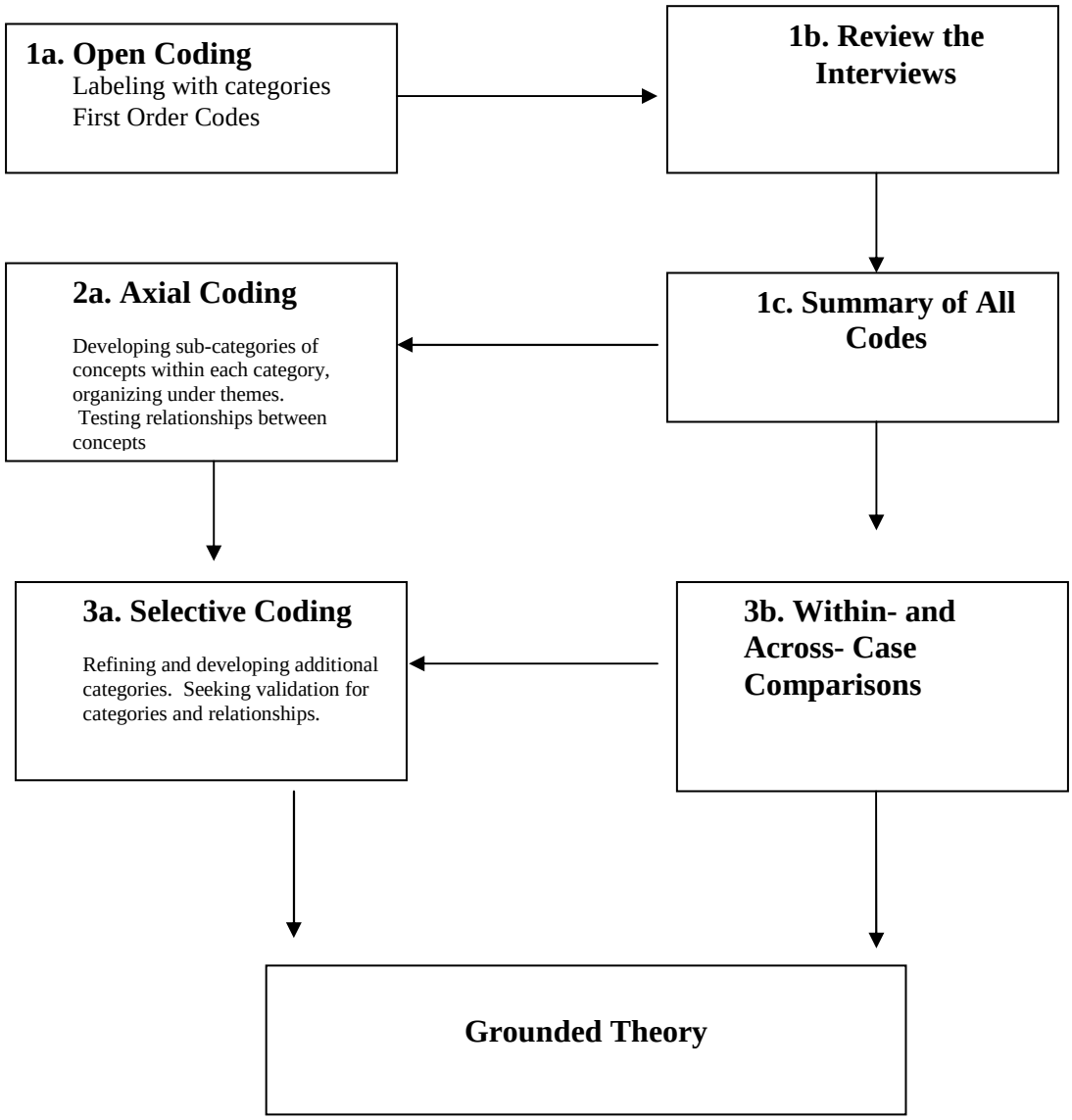
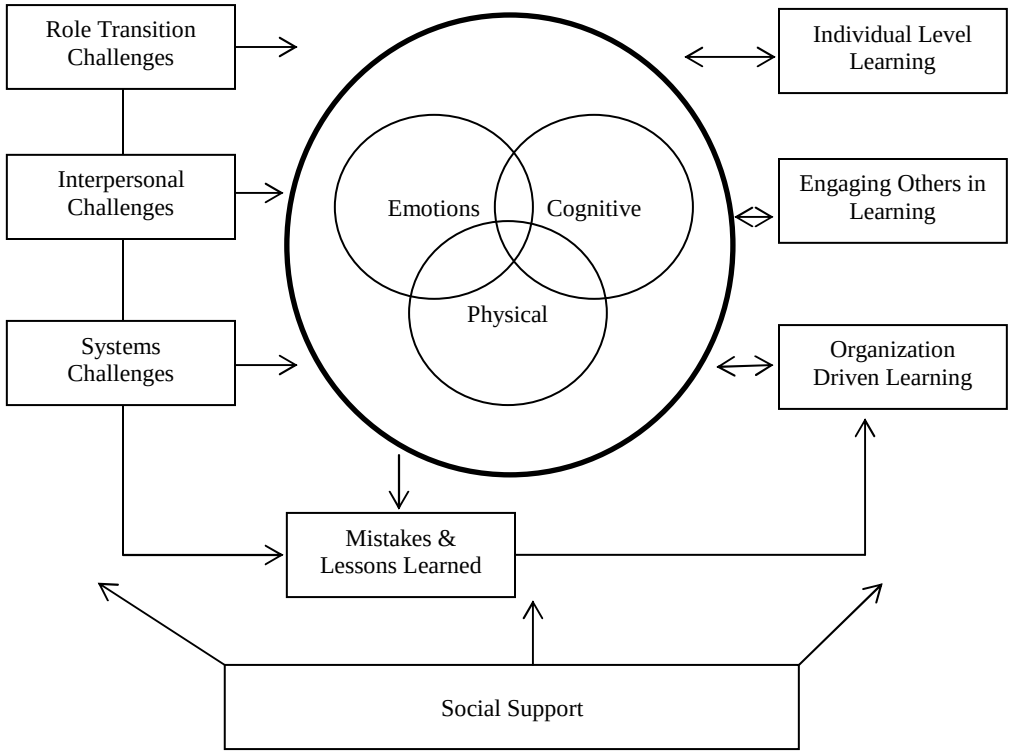


Figure 6. Adapated from " Building on the past: Enacting Established Personal Identities in a New Work Setting," by J.M. Beyer and D.R. Hannah, 2002, Organizational Science, 13(6), p. 640.

Figure 4

Internal Socialization Model



Appendix A

Interview Protocol

The focus of my research is on leaders in transition. I am exploring the experience of promotion. Therefore, the majority of my questions will relate to your specific transition experience since your last promotion….

To get us started, why don't we start with the context of your promotion. Thanks for completing the background questionnaire! *[Review Questionnaire briefly to build rapport.]*

Interview Questions *(and probes)*	*Follow-up questions posed if each category/theme mentioned*
(1) Reveal overall transition experience and present state of adjustment	
1. Tell me about your transition experience since your last promotion. • *Do you recall what you were feeling or thinking after the first weeks/first months on the new job?* What have you done to adjust to the new job? Are there any **specific incidents** that stand out in your mind? *[probe successes, challenges, and mistakes/mis-steps]* *Possible Probes if blank answer:* • *Think about how you accomplished work in your prior job and what is required of you now. Did you notice any differences in how you must accomplish your work now, in comparison to what was required of you in your last job? Specifically, what is different? When and how did you recognize these differences? How did that recognition impact your decisions, thinking, or behavior after that point?* 1b. Follow-up: How would you handle a similar incident today? 2. How was your **promotion communicated** within the organization? (What was your impression of how this was communicated?) 3. How did **others perceive or react** to your promotion? 4. What was your **transition timeframe** between your prior job and this promotion? • *Probe: Was there any carryover from your old job? Incumbent transition?* 4b. What career milestones or progression led to this promotion?	***Challenges*** • Why was this so challenging? • How did you overcome it? • How comfortable are you with these challenges today? ***Mistakes*** • What factors contributed to this mistake? • Could this have been avoided? • What would you do differently today? ***Learning & Adjustment Facilitators*** • What triggered this learning? • Why did you make that decision/take that approach? ***Success Factors*** • How or why did ____ work for you? • How did you

5. What were you **most excited about** and what was your **biggest concern** coming into this promotion? *Probe: Did it come to pass? Were your expectations fulfilled?* 6. What, if anything, was **surprising to you?** *(caught you off guard, unexpected circumstances)*? 7. How did you figure out 'what you didn't know' in your new job? 8. How did you make sense of what was going on? *Probes:* • *How did you figure out if something new was required of you in this role of increased scope?* • *What triggered your thinking, what changed your behaviors?* 9. How did you figure out what was needed to succeed in this promotion? *Probes:* • *How is this different from what you needed to do to succeed in your last job?*	recognize it was working/a success? ***Others?***
(2) Outline facilitators to learning and adjustment 1a. What **stimulated your learning** during this transition? [*If no precise answer, move to b]* 1b. Did you find **any particular person or specific tool** to be helpful during this job transition? *Probes:* • *People – relationship to you/your job? Key events? Specific tools – describe. Ask for a copy if they are available (i.e., onboarding roadmap, etc.)* • *What role, if any, did your boss play in your acquisition of the knowledge, attitude, and behaviors required for this role?* • *Were you assigned a mentor or coach? What kind of relationship was this (formal/informal)?* • *What kind of support did you receive, if any, from others in your organization?* 2. Did you **seek out any** superiors, peers, or informal mentors to aid you in this critical transition? 3. Tell me about any **onboarding or training** you experienced upon entering this promotion. 4. Is there anything the **organization could have done**, or did do, to help you adjust to your new role more quickly? 5. Were there any **non-work related contacts** or experiences that helped you transition into this role?	***Challenges*** • How did you learn from that challenge? • How did you overcome it? • How comfortable are you with these challenges today? ***Mistakes*** • What factors contributed to this mistake? • Could this have been avoided? • What would you do differently today? ***Learning & Adjustment Facilitators*** • What triggered this learning? • Why did you make that decision/take

Probes: • *Do you have a significant other or friend that has supported you during this promotion? (Social support? Peer relationships?) Do you talk about your work adjustment with them or reflect on key events in your day? Does this affect your learning, attitudes, perspective, or behaviors?* 6. Have you **observed other**s succeed or fail upon promotion? What did you learn through these observations? *Probes:* • *What factors led to their outcome?* • *Did this observation have any affect on you or your promotion transition?*	that approach? ***Success Factors*** • How or why did ____ work for you/others? • How did you recognize it was working/a success? ***Others?***
(3) Reflective insight on the internal socialization process 1. Are there any other things that you would **change about your adjustment** upon promotion if you could go back and do it again? 2. Is there anything that could have **helped you adjust**, or done so more quickly? 3. What are the **"critical factors" for success** in a promotion transition? 4. What **advice would you give** to your successor, or others transitioning after a promotion, given the learning you have gained from your transition experience? 5. Is there **anything pertinent** to the topic of promotion transitions that we haven't discussed today that you feel is important to note?	***Mistakes*** • Why would you handle it this way now? • How could the process (or your reaction) have been improved earlier? ***Success Factors*** • Why did ____ work so well for you or others? • How would ____ lead to a more successful transition? • Why is that important?

Appendix B
Pre-Interview Questionnaire *Interview scheduled for ___ at __ a.m./p.m.*

Please complete this questionnaire and either email it to the researcher prior to the interview or provide a hard copy at the beginning of the interview. This information will give the interviewer a "snapshot" of your background and experience as it relates to this recent job transition.

Name _____

Current Job Title _____

Previous Job Title (prior to promotion) _____

Promoted Function/Operating Group _____

Date you were informed of your promotion _____

First day on the new job _____

Number of direct reports now _____

Are you a manager of managers? No _____ Yes _____

Are you a senior leader (managing a function, operation group, division, etc.)?
No ___ Yes ___

Number of direct reports in your last job _____

Do you currently manage any people who were, prior to your promotion, in your direct peer group?
No _____ Yes _____

Tenure with the Organization _____ (in years; if less than 2 years, please use months)

Was a geographic relocation necessary for this promotion? No _____ Yes _____

If yes, how significant of a move was it?

Within 500 miles	*500-1000 miles*	*Over 1000 miles (within USA)*	*International Move*

Age

Under 35	*36-45*	*46-55*	*56-65*	*Over 66*

Education

Less than a Bachelors	*Bachelor's Degree*	*Master's Degree*	*Professional Degree*	*Doctorate*

Thank you for providing this background information!