

LEADERSHIP, PERCEPTIONS, AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS:

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

by

Joel Nelson

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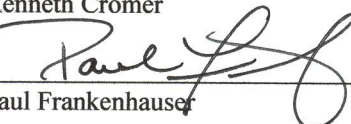
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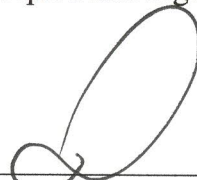
  
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## ABSTRACT

Identification of driving variables of turnover is essential for organizations and leaders. Previous leadership research is available regarding low job satisfaction, tenure, and turnover intentions but a gap existed in leadership literature regarding the effects a promote-from-within structure played in affecting job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The purpose of the quantitative correlational study was to highlight the variable relationships between tenure, perceptions, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions for a sample consisting of individuals working for managers who were previously peers. The findings, through conducting statistical analysis, highlighted significant correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intentions and significant correlation between perceptions' of managers and turnover intentions, which were both in line with previous research but also highlighted a disconnect from previous research by depicting no significant correlation between tenure and the other variables assessed.

## DEDICATION

Life is a journey of learning and you never know who will inspire you along the way. As a returning student, I owe more than words can say to the man who inspired and guided me to be much more than I thought possible. My father Mitch Pruiett was a Vietnam veteran and his sacrifices, both physically and emotionally, afforded me the opportunity to attend college. Under the Veterans bill as a survivor of a Vietnam veteran affected by Agent Orange, I received educational benefits to fund me through my undergraduate coursework. With his persistent nudging, I returned and obtained my master's shortly after graduating from my undergraduate coursework. A little less than a year later, I applied for doctoral studies and my father passed away but one of the last things he said was "I can finally go knowing my children will be ok. They have the tools to be successful. I have done my job." I wish you were here to see this.

To my mother, Maud Pruiett, it has been a pleasure taking this journey together. Having someone to work things out with and bounce ideas off has been a blessing no matter how stubborn and competitive I have been. I appreciate you, all that you have done, and continue to do to support and love me, regardless of my tact or lack of, you sometimes say.

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Finally, to my loving wife Lauren, I appreciate all that you have done to keep me sane over these past four years. Regardless of how I acted at the time, I appreciated the frequent breaks, meals, and vacations that could not wait. Your love, kindness, warmth, brilliance, and devotion inspire me to be more, to be a balanced, well-read, well-traveled and most of all to be kind and forgiving to others when I lose sight, even if that means I have to line dance.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Understanding organizational leadership strategies necessitates individualized research constructs, as each organization differs with unique characteristics that diminish employee satisfaction and increase turnover intentions. Retention of personnel is pivotal in the success of organizations and complacency regarding retention of quality employees impairs operations (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008, p. 50). Some of the issues associated with turnover intentions include diminished productivity, increased absenteeism, and low customer satisfaction (Levin & Kleiner, 1992). To correct the issues with turnover intentions, leaders develop and implement strategies to improve relationships with employees (Brimdage & Koziel, 2010). Unfortunately, without proper research, analysis, and understanding of ethics, leadership principles, moderating variables, and organizational culture leaders could implement ineffective strategies, thereby increasing skilled employees' intent to turnover employment (Dixon & Hart, 2010).

Repercussions associated with improperly addressing perceived issues within an organization that stem from increased turnover include costs associated with hiring, training, and outfitting new employees with the necessary tools and knowledge to perform daily tasks efficiently (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). Instead of a leader-oriented view of the mechanisms affecting turnover intentions of employees, the focus was to build on the research of Craig and Gustafson (1998) regarding employee perceptions of leaders' integrity. Accordingly, the information contained in the following chapter focuses on addressing background information, the problem statement, the statement of purpose, the significance of study, research questions, hypotheses, theoretical framework, scope of the study, and limitations/delimitations. The variables chosen for the quantitative correlational research study also follow in chapter 1.

## **Background of Study**

Contextual information regarding employee turnover intentions and leadership strategy is available, but gaps existed in the available literature regarding line-level employees' perceptions of first-level managements' decision-making and turnover intentions of line-level employees, as noted by Craig and Gustafson (1998), specifically from an employee perspective. A problem arising from the gap was the inability of management to mitigate issues by addressing the moderating variables associated with employee turnover that include job satisfaction and perceptions regarding direct managers ethical decision-making. Ultimately, costs incurred by an organization have a direct correlation to turnover, and are attributable to variables including a decrease of job satisfaction because of negative perceptions regarding the decisions made by first-level managers (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008).

Costs associated with turnover affect other elements of an organization including the disruption to current employees and increased advertising costs to find qualified employees to fill vacancies (Iqbal, 2010). Especially susceptible, are firms employing skilled entry-level employees necessitating industry specific skills obtained through lengthy training programs and outfitting newly hired employees with expensive tools to complete daily tasks. Unlike sales, administration, or telecommunication positions, firms hiring field technicians expend exorbitant resources to ensure field staff is competent to complete both dangerous and costly installations in customers' homes, businesses, and abroad. To ensure field staff is capable of completing tasks correctly and efficiently, firms employ lengthy training programs for field staff that cover pertinent information regarding installations.

Previous research highlighted variable relationships that attribute to turnover, but gaps existed in the available literature regarding management's effect on turnover, which is the vein

of leadership study that needed further research to address ways that organizations and management could reduce employee intent to turnover employment. Beyond the confines of the organization is how external stakeholders perceive an organization and high turnover can decrease customer, current shareholder, and potential investor perceptions of an organization, as well (Back, 2007). Outweighing the initial costs associated with hiring, training, and outfitting an individual employee are the long-term costs associated with the collective social perception of an organization with high turnover and poor employee relations (Back, 2007). From a large-scale perspective, the previously mentioned phenomenon was common in expansionary initiatives by organizations that attempt to globalize operations but lose stakeholder confidence because of factors such as poor treatment of employees or other stakeholders (Fisher & Lovell, 2009). Premeaux (2008) addressed the recent shift in leadership and organizational focus to consider the greatest good that benefits society the most from a utilitarian perspective.

On a smaller scale, Wheeler, Gallager, Brouer, and Sablynski (2007) discussed the opinion that job fit is a contributing factor in job satisfaction and perceptions of workers, which are issues in a promote-from-within structure when turnover of line-level employees is high. The differentiating characteristics of a promote-from-within structure are important to the research because of the industry and organization chosen to conduct the field research uses a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management vacancies. One of the phenomena important to addressing the hiring structure of the firm is the possibility of underdeveloped or underperforming individuals taking on a management role because top talent leaves an organization prior to promoting into a first-level management role (Cocheo, 1998). Another view by Chan (2006) is that external candidates have greater opportunity for promotion beyond the first-level management role, as internal candidates have a low probability of advancing

within an organization beyond the first-level management position because of job fit and experience misalignment with organizational objectives.

Wheeler et al. (2007) discussed the importance of job fit similar to the assertions of Chan (2006), and shared the perspective of how managers from external applicant pools are more successful at the first-level management level in the ability to promote beyond the first-level management role within an organization. Contrary to the view of Wheeler et al. (2007) and Chan (2006), Sonnonberg (1994) discussed the relationships between employees and managers in the context that ethical decisions and the success of leaders are irrelevant regardless of job fit (p. 14). The perception noted in recent literature suggesting ethical leadership is necessary and attributable to performance in the workplace thereby making managers moral leaders, which is applicable to the current research proposal (Collins, 2006, p. 19). Taking the stance that job fit and employee perception of management's decision-making are relevant to employee satisfaction and turnover intentions necessitates a thorough description of the specific problem (Craig & Gustafson, 1998). In the following paragraph, the problem statement incorporates elements including the general problem, specific problem, method, and general population for the current study.

### **Problem Statement**

Research regarding leadership strategies is available and current information regarding leadership principles focuses on organizational culture, empowerment, and gaining buy-in from subordinates through measures including intellectual stimuli and adopting individualized considerations for employees (Hoffman & Frost, 2006). The general problem addressed was that the cost associated with hiring, training, and supplying necessary tools and knowledge to newly hired employees adds strain to an organization (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008, p. 50). The



aforementioned issue led to the development of the specific problem that perceived ethical concerns with management decisions were increasingly attributable to employee turnover intentions (Motivated Employees, 2009). The use of a quantitative, correlational research design and method was to examine relationships, if any existed, between employees' perceptions of management's decision-making with turnover intentions within a Northern California service provider. The moderating variables chosen for the analysis included job satisfaction, employee perceptions, and tenure with an organization, as prior research indicated the variables affected the decision to turnover employment (Tuzun, 2007; Coder, 2007)

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of the quantitative, correlational study was to address the variable relationships, if any existed, between the independent variables including job satisfaction and tenure with an organization and the dependent variable turnover intention. The study included an analysis of the variables as follows: (a) employee perception of leader's ethical decision-making and job satisfaction (b) employee tenure with an organization and job satisfaction (c) job satisfaction to turnover intention of employees. The correlational structure of the analysis of variables was appropriate, as relationships between the independent variables and dependent variable turnover intention formulated the basis of the study. Additionally, the proposal addressed a gap in the literature regarding leadership activities, because previous research centered on different moderating variables in organizations that hire from external applicant pools and previous research did not consider the unique elements of promoting-from-within an organization to fill first-level management roles. The service department used to gather the necessary data for the research proposal was in Northern California consisting of approximately

171 line-level technicians, and the independent variables included perceptions, tenure, and job satisfaction, as they related to turnover intentions.

### **Significance of the Study**

Leadership is at the fore in the current study and interactions between employees and a direct manager indicated a need to improve relationships between the two groups. Costs associated with a reduction in job satisfaction may lead to increased thoughts to turnover employment, which negatively affects an organizations culture, and decreases organizational productivity (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008, p. 50). Because of the perceived gap in the literature regarding organizations using a promote-from-within structure for filling first-level management roles, the research added to the current understanding of leadership strategies by identifying unique circumstances management in a firm using a promote-from-within structure encounter. Compared to a firm using external applicant pools to fill first-level management roles, firms using internal candidates could experience higher turnover at the line-level because of lower levels of job satisfaction and poor perception regarding managers by the line-level employees. The discoveries from the research may spur further leadership research regarding variables not addressed in the research, as Craig and Gustafson (1998) spurred the current research by addressing areas for future research by recommending inclusion of different variables.

Additional research regarding employee perceptions of management may increase the understanding of the ramifications for implementing a promote-from-within structure compared to using external applicant pools with focus on ethics, decision-making, and the perceptions of subordinates. The discussion by Chan (2006) centering on the belief that external applicants are better candidates for first-level management positions and that external candidates have more chances for promotion from the first-level management roles were under scrutiny in the research.

The perception of organizational leadership is in line with the discoveries presented by Cocheo (1998) and the phenomenon of talented individuals leaving an organization to seek promotions elsewhere when current situations stagnate in the workplace. Conversely, Hsiao, and Kleiner (2002) discussed the concept that internal candidates are usually a good fit for the first-level management positions, as internal candidates know the ins and outs of organizational processes and competencies. Offering a clear delineation between the issues and efficiencies between organizations using a promote-from-within structure to organizations hiring from external applicant pools may help future researchers with the variables chosen to research.

The focus of the research proposal regarding management and turnover intentions of line-level workers was to help identify moderating variables that decrease job satisfaction and increase turnover intentions. Ultimately, the benefit for leadership was to offer strategies to adapt current capacities and to reduce the effect moderating variables play in turnover intentions because of the costly outcome of turning over employees in the service industry when specialized skills are necessary to complete work. Unlike sales, administration, or hospitality, line-level workers in the chosen service industry possess industry specific knowledge and skills necessary to complete sometimes dangerous and highly technical work in a timely and efficient manner. Losing competent and efficient workers in the chosen industry increases the costs associated with recruiting, training, and outfitting new employees in the short-term. In the long-term, the effects to an organizations brand value and stakeholder perceptions are potential threats to an organization that are associated with high turnover (Fisher & Lovell, 2009).

### **Nature of the Study**

The initiative employed a quantitative method and correlational design with the rationale to analyze the prescribed independent variables including job satisfaction, perceptions, and

tenure compared to the dependent variable turnover intentions. Unlike other leadership research, the initiative considered the interaction of line-level workers and first-level managers in a promote-from-within service organization, which were differentiating characteristics from previous leadership research. Similar to the research conducted by Pettijohn, Pettijohn, and Taylor (2008), the research addressed the perception of line-level workers regarding the ethical choices by first-level management. The difference between the two studies was that the industry and skill-set necessary to be a field employee and the inclusion of first-level management in an organization using a promote-from-within structure. The gap in the literature was the omission of specifically addressing organizations in the service industry with promote-from-within structures, which differentiated the education, knowledge, and skill-set of the first-level managers from previous research.

The use of the Likert-type scale surveys to gather information from respondents was useful, as the raw data collected centered on the prescribed variables to study. The quantitative method of analysis mirrors similar leadership research regarding the prescribed variables of job satisfaction, perceptions, tenure, and turnover intentions with correlations to perceptions of management's ethical decision-making (Pettijohn et al., 2008). Following previous researchers' designs increased the comparative attribute of the research and will other researchers with additional analysis regarding the variables (Craig & Gustafson, 1998). Furthermore, testing the hypotheses necessitated quantitative analysis of the raw data and drawing correlations from the analysis mirrored previous work by leadership researchers with the delineating characteristic of the research (Feinberg, Ostroff, & Burke, 2005).

The decision to use a quantitative method and correlational design hinged on information gathered from Creswell (2005) including the discussion that focused on specific variables and

measuring associations between variables. Additionally, the predictability aspect of the discoveries regarding variables was beneficial, because the current discoveries were intended to transcend the specific population and industry to other skilled labor service industries using a promote-from-within structure for first-level management roles. Predictability of the prescribed variables was at the fore especially, for the leadership concepts and allowing leaders to use the discoveries to correlate a specific set of predictable outcomes. The quantitative design focused the study generalizations through statistical analysis of collected data to highlight patterns, whereas, qualitative design focus is on perceptions, concepts, and phenomenon (Mansourian & Madden, 2007).

Similar to the description given by Nafukho, Graham, and Muyia (2009) regarding the selection of a quantitative method and correlational design, the method chosen for the study will enable researchers the ability to make comparisons across groups and individuals. Additionally, the correlational design was appropriate because the data analysis was statistically significant by drawing correlations between the prescribed independent variables and the dependent variable. The gathering tools, as mentioned previously, are Likert-type scaled surveys formulated to probe respondents regarding perceptions of managers integrity and how employees' perceptions increased turnover intentions (Craig & Gustafson, 1998).

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions identify the independent and dependent variables and call attention to the correlations the research design highlighted. The formulation of the questions addressed the relationships between the independent variables including perceptions of leader's decisions, job satisfaction, and tenure with the dependent variable employee turnover intentions. The questions were as follows:

1. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's perception of management's ethical decision-making and job satisfaction?
2. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's tenure and job satisfaction?
3. In what ways, if any, does the combination of perception of leader's decisions, job satisfaction, and tenure relate to employee turnover intentions?

Initial review of the literature spurred the formulation of the previously mentioned research questions and the questions focused on the importance of the variables regarding management and workers in an organization using a promote-from-in structure for first-level management. Differentiating between promote-from-within structures and hiring from external applicant pools necessitated research of the two strategies and a thorough understanding of the literature available regarding the strategies of filling first-level management roles. Previous research regarding the two strategies offered conflicting viewpoints regarding the usefulness of the strategies. For instance, Chan (2006) offered the viewpoint that external candidates were better choices for first-level management roles and apt to promote further in an organization than an internal candidate promoted from a line-level position into a first-level management position. Along the same vein of thought, Cocheo (1998) described a scenario involving talented individuals within an organization usually leave prior to promotion, leaving under qualified and lower skilled workers for the organization to choose from necessitating recruitment from external applicant pools for talented leaders.

Conversely, Hsiao, and Kleiner (2002) discussed a different scenario involving the promotion of internal candidates into first-level management roles offering advantages, such as the employee understanding a broad scope of the organizations operations, familiarity with organizational culture, and an understanding of process intricacies. Hsiao and Kleiner agreed

with the assertions of Cocheo (1998) and Chan (2006) with respect to the obvious flight of top internal candidates in most circumstances prior to internal promotion within an organization. The aforementioned issues with the strategy of promoting from within an organization can cause issues but the specific concern important to the research is the effect a promote-from-within structure has on the decision-making of first-level management and how employees perceive the decisions of first-level management.

### **Research Hypotheses**

According to Creswell (2005), “hypotheses are statements in quantitative research in which the investigator makes a prediction” and in the following section, the predictions for the research follow (p. 117). Information regarding the independent variables including job satisfaction, perceptions of managements’ decisions, and tenure found while conducting research highlighted interesting concepts and discoveries pertinent to the research. For instance, Sarker, Crossman, and Chinmeteeptuck (2003) discussed how the length of time with an organization affects workers job satisfaction. The previous consideration is why both of the variables made it to the research to study the effect of perceptions of manager’s decision-making interact with the two other variables. The purpose of the hypotheses was to channel the direction of the proposal with emphasis on the variables chosen for the proposal and to offer potential answers to the questions posed earlier in the proposal (Creswell, 2005). Therefore, the following hypotheses described the direction and predictions of the proposal:

H1<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between perceptions of a manager’s ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

H1<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between perceptions of a manager’s ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

H2<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

H2<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

H3<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

H3<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

H4<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

H4<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Understanding of leadership strategies was at the fore in the research with the formulation of strategies to limit costly turnover in the service industry attributable to moderating variables affect turnover intentions of line-level employees. Transformational leadership strategies incorporate leadership techniques that mitigate negative perceptions of leaders and increase employee buy-in by empowering employees with the necessary tools and knowledge to complete work efficiently and on his or her own (Bass, 1985). The foundation of the research centered on transformational leadership strategies presented by Bass (1985) by highlighting the importance of knowledge, people management and a movement from traditional top-down organizational leadership styles to flatter organizational models. Building from the transformational leadership base Wheeler et al. (2007), discussed the importance of job fit and



job satisfaction, considered an important element in decreasing turnover intentions (Sarker et al., 2003).

Chhabra and Mishra (2008) made the recommendation to switch from recruitment to retention strategies to retain top talent and to promote from within an organization, which is a strategy to ensure first-level managers understand the organizational culture, processes, and competencies. Even though the preceding elements are important, other sources regarding leadership highlight how top talent usually leaves an organization prior to promotion, which means that underperforming individuals tend to fill management roles in a promote-from-within structure (Chan, 2006). Conversely, issues arise from seeking external candidates to fill first-level management roles including candidates lacking knowledge regarding internal capacities, length of time to train external candidates, and length of time to recruit from external applicant pools (Cocheo, 1998).

The role of the promote-from-with structure played in the research was to highlight the interactions with a former peer with line-level employees and the issues that can arise with the perception that the first-level manager was not making ethically sound decisions regarding daily operating constraints. The perception of the leader's decisions combined with moderating variables including job satisfaction and tenure was the interaction of interest regarding the effect to employees' intent turnover employment. In other research with different organizational variables attributing to the discoveries, correlations address how independent variables affect turnover intentions (Dixon & Hart, 2010).

Focusing the direction of the research to an organization in the service industry with skilled and knowledgeable workers added another facet to the discoveries by Pettijohn et al. (2008) regarding the sales industry and ethical behavior of managers, how the behaviors affected

employee perceptions, and turnover intentions. The ideas proposed by Goldman and Tabak (2010) were important to the research, because of the description of how an organization can increase job satisfaction by fostering an ethical climate in the workplace. The concept of a positive ethical climate played a significant role in reducing turnover intentions according to previous leadership research conducted regarding employee turnover intentions (Goldman, Tabak, 2010).

The idea of an ethical climate and the correlation to a leader's ethical decision-making is something an organization must ingrain as a core competency (Belak, Duh, Mulej, & Stukelj, 2010). Incorporation of transformational leadership strategies is in-line with the concept of empowerment, increasing buy-in from subordinates, and the concept supports the decision-making process in making sound and ethical decisions to increase employee job satisfaction and decrease turnover intentions (Hart, 2005). To understand the ramifications of using a promote-from-within structure in an industry with high turnover of talent increases the chances of promoting an individual not suited for a first-level management position, which could increase the probability that the individual will make ethical errors regarding decisions that will affect the organization and employee satisfaction. The aforementioned issue with errors in ethical judgment may attribute to an increase in turnover intentions, as prior research discoveries highlight (Pettijohn et al., 2008).

Organizational leadership must understand the ramifications of the decisions to incorporate a promote-from-within structure at the first level within an organization and the possible direct correlation to the costly turnover of skilled workers (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). Without a thorough understanding of the limitations surrounding the decision to promote-from-within to first-level management positions, an organization can incur unneeded costs associated

with continually building a talent bench that will continue to turnover and increase costs (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). Conversely, the issues with recruiting, hiring, and training external candidates for first-level management offers issues as well. Specifically, the amount of time needed to find a qualified candidate, lack of knowledge regarding the processes and lack of cultural awareness that an internal candidate will possess, which means hiring from external applicant pools also poses issues (Cocheo, 1998). Ultimately, a thorough understanding how the two hiring structures affect knowledge regarding leadership strategies and ethical decision-making is the premise of the research and builds on the early research of Craig and Gustafson (1998) regarding job satisfaction and employee perceptions of manager integrity.

The research focused on leadership strategies with emphasis on ethical elements of decision-making of first-level management, how the decisions affected perception of line-level workers, and contributed to turnover intentions of line-level workers in an organization using a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management roles. The correlational design of the research proposal was to address relationships between the independent variables including job satisfaction, perceptions, and tenure with the dependent variable turnover intention. The intent of the research proposal was to use the discoveries to advance the body of knowledge regarding leadership strategies and to help leadership foster ethical climates within organizations conducive to making ethical decisions by leadership when faced with ethical dilemmas. Long-term ramifications of the research include the reduction of costs associated with costly turnover, specifically in highly skilled occupations necessitating well-trained and knowledgeable field technicians to complete sometimes dangerous and complicated installations.

### Definition of Terms

Interpretation of terms in the following discussion can skew the intended meanings of the terminology used throughout the research analysis, and is the purpose of the following definitions of the key terms. The following definitions serve as a guide for the specific terms used throughout the paper unless otherwise stated in the text.

***Ethical climate.*** The term ethical climate refers to organizational values shaped by managements' decisions and actions, as managers act as models for ethical behavior in the workplace (Belak et al., 2010). Fogel (2007) described building ethical climates, as necessitating supportive leadership strategies to foster an ethical climate within an organization.

***First-level manager.*** The term first-level manager refers solely to managers in the organization under investigation that manage entry-level field technicians who complete installations directly for the end customer and have no subordinates.

***General Job Satisfaction survey (GJS).*** The surveying tool fashioned by Kiefer, Harris-Kojetin, Brannon, Barry, Vasey, and Lepore (2005) focuses on capturing employee perceptions regarding job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

***Integrity.*** The term integrity used synonymously with ethical throughout this document is a key element under investigation and centers on common beliefs of a group of individuals often framed by an organization in codes of conduct (Craig & Gustafson, 1998).

***Perceived Leader Integrity Scale (PLIS).*** The surveying tool fashioned by Craig and Gustafson (1998) centers on gathering data regarding the perceptions of workers regarding direct manager integrity and decisions made in the workplace.

**Perceptions.** The term perceptions refer to a belief of an individual and for the research, the perceptions under investigation relate to how field technicians perceive ethical behavior of his or her direct manager.

**Tenure.** The term tenure refers to length of time with an organization, unlike the use of the term when considering academic terms for tenure. For instance, Hansen (2008) described tenure in the terms of academia and the length of time is dependent on the institutional guidelines when a professor reaches tenure, whereas, Sarker et al. (2003) discussed tenure as the length of time with an organization. Following the definition by Sarker et al., the use of tenure refers to length of time, measured in days, months, or years with an organization. For the research, the measurement for range of employment is in years.

**Turnover intentions.** The concept turnover intentions refer to the intent of an employee to leave his or her current position. The term turnover intention does not to convey that the individual has left the organization. Similar to the use of turnover intentions by Hart (2005), turnover intentions consist of active plans to leave an organization by an employee (Dixon & Hart, 2010).

### **Assumptions**

The research included assumptions regarding the perception that the participants would answer the questions in the surveying tools honestly and accurately, without worry of reprisal from leadership within the chosen organization. The second assumption regarding the research was that the research conducted regarding leadership strategies, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions was exhaustive. Additionally, the assumption was that regardless of shift the employees work within the installation department, a representative sample of the population would respond to the surveys (Gerard, Buchholtz, Yeh, & Orilio, 2009). The final assumption

regarding the proposal was that by convenience and census sampling the population, the discoveries will represent a cross-section of the population. Generalizability of the discoveries was an important consideration when conducting research but limiting factors regarding the sample population inhibited the option for random sampling of the population and generalizations regarding the discoveries. The decision was made to use a census methodology to collect data.

### **Scope of Study**

The scope of the study included collection of data using surveying tools completed by line-level participants in Northern California facilities working for one organization in the service industry, and correlational analysis of the raw data. The variables chosen to research included independent variables perceptions of workers, job satisfaction, and tenure with the dependent variable, turnover intentions (Creswell, 2005). The population chosen to research included skilled line-level employees from one organization in a service industry and addressed the perceptions of the line-level workers regarding the decisions made by first-level management. The correlational analysis addressed the hypothesized correlation between the perceptions of workers and turnover intentions with moderating variables of job satisfaction, perceptions, and tenure with an organization. Additionally, the organization chosen for the research used a promote-from-within structure for the first-level management positions, which increased the variability of leadership strategies by the leaders (Bloodgood, Turnley, & Mudrack, 2010).

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

The research had limiting factors contributing to focusing the study to a realistic population, which included limitations on the population to workers and management in

Northern California operations of one organization in the service industry. Additionally, the limitations to the research included first-level management and line-level technicians only in an organization using a promote-from-within structure for selecting first-level managers. The geographical constraints chosen limited the sample population to facilities scattered throughout Northern California because of the additional labor codes and costs associated with conducting business in California and different labor laws regarding working in California. Furthermore, an external constraint on the research was the economic climate with higher unemployment rates might have skewed the discoveries, because of the many differing characteristics of workers in a downturn. The time constraints regarding the research imposed by the organizational leadership limited the time available to sample both shifts used by the firm, which increased the time needed to gather data (Jenkins & Jensen, 2010).

The industry chosen also limited the research with respect to generalization of any discoveries to other industries or organizations outside of the firm or to firms using external applicant pools to fill first-level management positions with the organization. Because of the high turnover rates within the chosen organization, the tenure variable was another limitation of the research and the worker tenure distribution was proportionally higher with shorter tenure employees. Generalization of the discoveries was important, but the limiting factors associated with the organizational structure, time, and geographical constraints necessitated a revision to the sampling constructs to incorporate a convenience/census sampling methodology (Creswell, 2005).

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The quantitative correlational research study may further understanding of leadership, ethical ramifications regarding perceptions of workers, and turnover intentions by increasing

leadership knowledge of identifiers that diminish employee satisfaction and increase turnover intentions. Fostering ethical climates may reduce costly measures organizations currently take to hire, train, and outfit new employees because of unnecessarily high turnover rates in the service industry (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). In the preceding section, the discussion focused on the research's significance, nature of the study, questions and hypotheses, conceptual and theoretical framework, unique definitions, and scope and limitations to aid in addressing important concepts and theories guiding the research (Creswell, 2005).

The discussion also covered the method and design of the research focusing on quantitative analysis of the correlations between the prescribed variables including job satisfaction, perceptions, tenure, and turnover intentions of line-level workers in a service industry (Creswell, 2005). Supporting information contained in the preceding chapter highlights the previous discoveries regarding leadership strategies, job satisfaction and turnover intentions with emphasis on perceptions of workers regarding management's decisions (Dixon & Hart, 2010). The ethical basis of the research centered on the interaction of line-level employees and first-level managers in an organization using a promote-from-within structure specifically for the first-level management position and addressing the benefits and drawbacks of the structure was important in the final analysis (Gosh & Waldman, 2010). In chapter 2, each of the sources used to ground the research follow with explanations regarding the basis for choosing the supporting documentation.



## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In chapter one, the discussion of the problem and purpose highlighted variables and assumptions for correlations between the prescribed independent and dependent variables while calling attention to the sample population in a service organization in Northern California. The purpose of describing the aforementioned variables, method, and research design was to build up to the literature and substantiate the preceding information with the following literature review. Understanding the independent facets of the proposal necessitates research of the individual components of germinal work regarding the variables and research design chosen. To gain the information necessary to base the current work, supporting information regarding the facets were found using key word searches in available databases housing articles and texts by specialists in leadership research. The research centered on leadership strategies, job satisfaction, tenure, and turnover intentions. Because the research used a quantitative design, basing the research on pertinent discoveries of other researchers was imperative to establish the direction and focus (Creswell, 2005).

In the following review of the literature regarding leadership strategies, job satisfaction, tenure with an organization, and turnover intentions, the information flows chronologically beginning with germinal work, to current understandings, beneath each subheading. The chronological ordering of the resources helps to integrate differing views on topics to illustrate the changes in perception regarding leadership strategies and focus over time. Documentation of the changes in leadership styles is at the fore in the following literature review and the considerations for developing the subsections center first on leadership strategies, second on historical to current trends regarding ethics and finally to discuss the importance of the variables chosen for the proposal.

## **Documentation**

An important element regarding the resources found to base the research was that the majority of materials fall within a publication window of five years to represent the most current information regarding leadership strategies and viewpoints. Germinal resources in the document may fall outside the five-year window for the primary resources, as the documents contain original content regarding leadership strategies and perceptions. The chronological design of the literature review highlights originating thoughts in leadership research through current information with the latest updates and revisions to leadership strategies and organizational views. In addition to the historical documentation of changes in leadership strategies is the importance of focusing the material to the current gap in available leadership literature. Specifically, the focus is on a firm that uses a promote-from-within structure and how the perceptions of decisions made by first-level managers may increase turnover intentions of line-level employees.

The primary consideration in the leadership strategies subsection is to cover the development of leadership strategies, to focus on current trends in transformational leadership strategies, and to compare and contrast differing leadership styles to transformational techniques. The discussion follows a chronological order of references regarding transformational strategies, leadership styles, and adaptability strategies to overcome organizational challenges regarding job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Leadership is at the fore and identifying how integrating strategies to mitigate internal capacity issues is beneficial to organizations. The second consideration in the literature review is to address the historical and current trends in ethical decisions regarding organizations. Perception is a key component in the discussion of ethics in the research and delineating between perception and reality is essential to the study, as variables

shape understanding, such as upbringing, culture, religious beliefs, age, ethnicity, gender, and geographic location. A restatement of the questions regarding the variables chosen to research was also important for discerning the selection methodology of the resources contained in chapter 3.

1. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's perception of management's ethical decision-making and job satisfaction?
2. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's tenure and job satisfaction?
3. In what ways, if any, does the combination of perception of leader's decisions, job satisfaction, and tenure relate to employee turnover intentions?

Properly identifying specific variables and producing a thorough description of the population of the study aided in understanding discoveries stemming from the research. Furthermore, an understanding of the historic events shaping the viewpoints of the population was an imperative element of the study, as an understanding of the discoveries made for leadership should improve the ability to adapt strategies to mitigate issues within an organization. The final objective of the literature review was to highlight discoveries of other scholars and researchers regarding leadership research and the variables chosen for the research. Literature regarding the variables chosen exist but not in the fashion or industry proposed for the research. Specifically, the gap in the literature excludes discussion of line-level workers interactions with first-level managers in a promote-from-within structure delineating the research from other research initiatives.

### **Leadership style delineation**

Delineating between the differing leadership strategies is the first consideration in the literature review, as leadership is at the fore of the research. The reason for conducting the

analysis is to formulate recommendations for leadership throughout the service industry and global market (Levin & Kleiner, 1992, Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). In the following section, the discussion centers on leadership style delineation by highlighting specific leadership styles including transformational, charismatic, transactional, and top-down leadership strategies. The intent is to help in the recommendations process, as accommodation for the subtle nuances and primary differences between the specific leadership strategies is important to remember when formulating strategies. Many of the strategies implemented by a style overlap others because they cannot be completely separate but specific characteristics differentiate the styles, as the literature will reveal. Additionally, moderating variables associated with the individual studies below help address additional avenues researchers explore in pursuit of identifying issues with the leadership strategies.

### **Transformational Leadership**

The foundational information regarding transformational leadership stems from the general concepts by Burns (1978) and the discussion of leadership strategies. Advancing the understanding of transformational leadership were the individuals who built on the original ideas of Burns (1978) by delineating between the important characteristics of transformational leadership strategies and transactional strategies. The initial research and ideas regarding transformational leadership styles would pique the curiosity of many researchers and building on the original concepts of Burns (1978) researchers, such as Feinberg et al. (2005) measured correlations between moderating variables of transformational leadership strategies and agreement among subordinates. The discoveries by Feinberg et al. are important to the discussion of transformational leadership because of the correlation of leadership styles and effects on employees.

Similar to the discoveries of Feinberg et al. (2005) are the important discoveries by Hoffman and Frost (2006) who offered a delineation of transformational leadership components including intellectual stimuli, charisma, and individual considerations. Each of the components can overlap into other strategies, most notably with the charismatic element in transformational leadership strategies overlapping with charismatic leadership strategies.

The charismatic element of transformational leadership is something to expand on, and is a contributing factor in the decision to choose the interaction between line-level employees and first-level managers. First-level managers in an organization using a promote-from-within structure may have strategic and leadership deficiencies compared to individuals from external applicant pools (Cocheo, 1998; Chan, 2006). Specifically, the interaction between first-level managers and employees where the manager was once a peer is of interest in the research. The under researched dimension of leadership strategies forms a gap in the literature, and is one of the primary elements of why the research is important to leadership.

Molero, Cuadrado, Navas, and Morales (2007) discussed how transformational leadership affects employee satisfaction and performance, which is also important to the research because leadership is at the fore and the main element of the research. The discoveries from the research initiative by Molero et al. are useful because the discoveries establish a baseline comparison between transformational and transactional leadership styles by comparing previous research discoveries and theories. The discoveries by Molero et al. also pointed to a close relationship between transformational leadership and different types of leadership, including democratic, task-oriented and relations-oriented leadership styles, which are not the main leadership strategies under investigation but no less important to mention how elements of each overlap.

McLaurin and Amri (2008) discussed both similarities and dissimilarities between transformational, transactional, and charismatic leadership styles. For example, McLaurin and Amri discussed how transformational leadership incorporates strategies including empowerment of employees, use of role models, and creating a vision to shape a work environment. Additionally, the researchers discuss gaining employee buy-in, which are important elements to the research because of the moderating effect of empowerment and creating a vision has on job satisfaction. Additionally, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and individual considerations play a significant role in transformational strategies, which are no less important to leadership but are not the focus of the research (McLaurin & Amri, 2008). The reason for the inclusion of the previously mentioned information is to delineate between the transformational elements chosen for the proposal.

Zagorsek, Rimouski, and Skeletal (2009) discussed transactional and transformational leadership styles because of the way the two leadership styles affect organizational learning and how organizational learning is dependent on the situation and circumstances. Of interest is transformational leadership techniques and how correlations exist between leadership styling, behavior, and information transfer aspects within an organization, which is beneficial mentioning because of the promote from within structure the firm employs and the necessity to differentiate from a firm hiring from external applicant pools. Organizational learning is an important broad topic for improving leadership practices, and is one of the primary considerations in the research. Mancheno-Smoak, Endres, Potak, and Athanasaw (2009) highlighted some interesting discoveries regarding job satisfaction and transformational leadership important to the research because of the relevant discoveries with one of the independent variables chosen to research, which is job satisfaction.

In Mancheno-Smoak et al. (2009) study, the researchers used statistical modeling to measure correlations between independent variables and a dependent variable, which is useful to formulating the research and analysis structures in the research. The researchers gathered raw data using a questionnaire that targeted human resources and managers working for fortune 500 organizations in the United States. The researchers' discoveries point to support of the initial beliefs that cultural values do affect job satisfaction and the usefulness of transformational leadership strategies (Mancheno-Smoak et al.). The discoveries are helpful because of focusing the research to centralize the geographical study to Northern California to reduce the effect of differing values that may alter or affect the outcome of the research.

### **Charismatic Leadership**

As previously mentioned, charismatic leadership strategies are important to the research because of the overlapping elements that play a significant role in gaining buy-in from employees. Jaykody (2008) incorporated cultural dynamics into the study of charismatic leadership styles and the underlying principles that differentiate the leadership style from others. The information highlighted by Jaykody helped differentiate charismatic leadership styles from the others leadership styles chosen to incorporate in the literature review. Additionally, Jaykody highlighted how the information is relevant to other industries and cultures but notes that cultural differences do play a significant role in how viable the strategies are, which was similar to the information McLaurin and Amri (2008) shared. The previously mentioned element was important, as the perspective regarding how relevant the discoveries are throughout an organization or market relies on the ability to generalize the theories.

McLaurin and Amri (2008) also discussed both similarities and dissimilarities of charismatic and transformational leadership styles while substantiating why transformational

leadership strategy may suit well for leadership to gain employee buy-in and to decrease costly turnover. McLaurin and Amir also referenced previous information regarding the basis for each strategy of leadership by breaking down each of the underlying elements and cross-examining the definitions and intent of each style. The information helps delineate between the strategies, which ties back to the discussion of job fit and the different hiring practices implemented by firms that includes hiring from external applicant pools and promoting from within an organization to first-level manager positions (Cocheo, 1998; Chan, 2006). The charismatic element was important and explaining the concept was important to the research because of how charisma plays a significant role in transformational leadership (Jung & Sosik, 2006).

Humphreys, Zhao, Gladstone, and Basham (2010) offered descriptions of charismatic leadership, and some of the drawbacks of the leadership style, necessitating delineation from transformational leadership strategies because of the overlapping elements. The previous information was useful in the discussion of charismatic leadership and developing a stance regarding transformational leadership strategies in the research because of the description of the weaknesses of charismatic leadership strategies. Without consideration for stronger leadership strategies better suited to gaining buy-in from workers, noted as important for success and further job advancement by Cocheo (1998) and Chan (2006), managers may lose organizational cohesion (Humphreys et al.).



## Transactional Leadership

Early concepts of transformational and transactional leadership strategies looked to differentiate the two strategies into two differing views of leadership. For the research, the overlapping elements are the most important element and assessing specific attributes of managers in a promote-from-within structure compared to external applicants is necessary (Bass, 1985). Furthering the discussion of leadership Molero et al. (2007) offered two primary goals for the research conducted that includes a comparison of transformational leadership with other leadership styles and demonstrating how transformational and transactional leadership affects employee satisfaction and performance. Because leadership is a primary theme in the research and tying the information back in with realistic recommendations is pertinent to the research initiative, the information shared by Molero et al. is excellent in demonstrating the important interconnections and similarities between transformational and transactional leadership strategies. For instance, the researchers use a statistical model (quantitative) and use a questionnaire to gather raw data in the analysis of the variables, which is similar to the research and the variables chosen for the research. The discoveries from the initiative led the researchers to draw some conclusion about the variables usefulness by comparing the discoveries to the research regarding job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Creswell, 2005).

In another resource regarding leadership, Zagorsek et al. (2009) discussed transactional and transformational leadership styles and how they affect organizational learning, which is important for the research because of the decision to focus on the relationship between first-level managers and line-level employees. The primary interest regarding the research is in the analysis of the interactions between first-level managers in a firm implementing a promote-from-within strategy and line-level employees. Organizational behavior and information transfer are

important within organizations, an analysis of how leadership styles affect information flow within an organization, and the way individuals act within an organization using a promote-from-within structure compared to a firm hiring from external applicant pools (Chan, 2006).

Transactional elements permeate an organization and leadership theory, as transactional interactions between managers and workers happen every day in the workplace and firms using a promote-from-within structure is more in line with transactional leadership strategies than transformational at the first-level interaction between managers and subordinates (Laohavichien, Fredendall, Centrell, 2009). Understanding the interactions is paramount in formulating strategies best suited to gain buy-in from workers although each interaction is dependent on the hiring practices and capabilities of management staff to cope with changing environments (Cocheo, 1998).

### **Top-down Leadership**

Of the leadership strategies chosen to discuss, top-down strategies permeate organizations with stringent hierarchies and are significant elements in organizations that promote internal applicants from the line-level into first-level management roles (Semler, 2008). An important discovery discussed by Semler (2008) was the common theme of employees wanting leadership and guidance rather than the traditional top-down management style. Semler's (2008) conceptualization of leadership and how perceptions of workers regarding leaders affects relationships within the workplace are important concepts to the research because they offer a differing viewpoint regarding top-down leadership strategies with offering the alternative, which is the flattening of hierarchies. Debate wages regarding hierarchal design of organizations and researchers and strategists disagree about the preferred structure an organization uses similar to the contrary perception of Carnell (2005) and the discussion of how

businesses complete tasks efficiently, which is said to be through a top-down approach for initiatives. Carnell strongly believes in the top-down approach to business, whereas Semler (2008) discussed flattening hierarchies and mentions strategies in-line with transformational and charismatic attributes but does not directly mention transformational strategies as successful tools and strategies for organizations to run efficiently.

Along a similar vein, Jenkins and Jensen (2010) discussed how length of time with an organization affects job satisfaction, which is important to understand how job satisfaction and leadership strategies may affect workers in an organization using a promote-from-within structure. The comparison includes discussion of organizations hiring from external applicant pools to fill vacancies at the first-level management area within an organization. As mentioned previously by Semler (2008) complicated hierarchies are a common structure with firms using a promote-from-within structure and workers are less apt to identify with stringent top-down leadership strategies in comparison to an environment that fosters trust, leadership, communication, and participative environments. Essential to tenure, which is an independent variable chosen for the analysis, is the concept that individuals who have longer tenure with an organization witness multiple initiatives to change the culture and direction of an organization, which can skew the perception of the identity of an organization and increase turnover. The previously mentioned concept is an issue with continuity within an organization and an issue with establishing a singular view of an organizations direction with stakeholders. Top-down leadership strategies and stringent hierarchies hinder an organization and staff to foster an environment that may diminish turnover intentions and reduce costs associated with high turnover of employees (Semler, 2008).

Hoover's (2010) discussion of leadership and decision-making encompasses the driving factors behind certain decisions made by leadership, which is an important element of the research, as the study of differing hiring practices is at the fore of the investigation into leadership strategies. One of the differentiating characteristics of the current study from previous leadership research is the focus on how promote-from-within line-level management's decision process differs from leadership chosen from external applicant pools and how the decisions affect the perceptions of line-level workers. The desire of conducting the proposed initiative is to determine if the decision-making process of leadership in a firm using a promote-from-within structure negatively affects turnover intentions of workers, if so leadership can address the information and make adjustments to reduce costs associated with turning over employees. The possible discoveries are important because of the gap in the literature, and the relationships between managerial decision-making and organizational structure, as are the discoveries highlighting potential links between hierarchal structures and decision-making of first-level managers in an organization using a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management positions (Hoover).

### **Historical Overview and Current Views**

An understanding of historical documentation through current understanding of organizational behavior is important to the research, as the population chosen for the initiative has evolved and new understandings regarding the population must correspond to previous understandings. For instance, the understanding of ethical climate continues to evolve as further research regarding the topic surfaces and additional variables considered in the delineation of terms and theories affect research. In the following section is a discussion of historical and current information regarding ethical climate, perceptions of ethics, and hiring practices.

## **Ethical Climate**

The discussion of ethical climates is important to the research and Hart (2005) stated that turnover intentions are associated to ethical climates in the workplace. Adding to the research regarding ethical climates Belak et al. (2010) helped to differentiate the two types of hiring practices previously mentioned and address the decision-making processes. The variables chosen for the research includes job satisfaction, perceptions, tenure, and turnover intentions. Hart (2005) incorporated useful variables and ideas that the research builds on while addressing perceived gaps in the current literature regarding leadership strategies compared to hiring practices and organizational structure. Similar to the research structure for gathering raw data Hart (2005) surveyed participants using a surveying tool for participants to fill in with pertinent information regarding perceptions of the organization and leadership strategies. The discoveries by Hart (2005) pointed to the ethical climate in the workplace as an important factor regarding intentions to leave nursing, but Hart also noted that the discoveries do not pertain to turnover, only intentions to turnover.

The discussion of ethical climates is interesting and important to the proposed research, as perceptions of leaderships' ethical decision-making directly correlate to the ethical climate of an organization (Belak et al., 2010). The distinction between the variables and the proposed relationships offered by Belak et al. are also enlightening and provide a path to hone the proposal regarding leaderships' role in modeling behaviors.

Martin and Cullen (2006) discussed the framework of ethical climates and the researchers attribute the focus of study to Victor and Cullen's earlier research (1987, 1988). Martin and Cullen also discussed possible gaps in the study of ethical climates and the relevance of numerous variables that may contribute to negative outcomes, which includes the study of

dysfunctional behavior, which may contribute to issues with unethical decision of managers. The theory of dysfunctional behavior regarding first-level management is an interesting but the variables chosen and the focus of the study centers on the interactions of line-level employees and first-level managers, which may highlight dysfunctional behavior of first-level managers within the organization chosen for the study. Martin and Cullen's discoveries may prove beneficial in addressing the perception issues with the decision processes of the first-level management staff, if they independent variables correlate to the dependent variable turnover intentions.

Even though the discoveries are from a different industry, the variables and construct of the study by Fogel (2007) are similar to the research and the definitions given by Fogel will only help ground research with substantial work regarding leadership strategies. One of the important discoveries by Fogel pertains to the proposed correlation between positive and supportive leadership strategies and the positive effects to building an ethical climate within an organization. The views by Fogel related to other fields, as the research focuses on the service industry, and the interactions between line-level workers and direct manager. The interaction between the two groups is important because of the gap in leadership research regarding behaviors of management and perceptions of employees.

Similar to the article by Pettijohn et al. (2008) is the article by Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander (2009) the discussion of leadership's role in fostering an ethical climate mirrors theories expressed by Pettijohn et al. Mulki et al. stated, "Managers are considered to be a key source of guidance for ethical behavior," that is an important concept in understanding the premise for the research (p. 125). The description by Pettijohn et al. of clear expectations and following standards leads to fostering an ethical climate within an organization ties back to the

earlier discussion (Mulki et al., 2009). Additionally, Mulki et al. discussed the limitations of available research, which necessitates further research to build on the discoveries. For example, Mulki et al. mentioned the addition of organizational levels and individual attributes may improve understanding of perceived relationships between managers and subordinates, which is a beneficial concept in the research regarding leadership strategies and organizational structures that may increase costs associated with employee turnover.

### **Perceptions of Ethics**

The discussion of ethical climates is interesting and important to the proposed research, as perceptions of managers' decisions directly correlate to the ethical climate of an organization (Belak et al., 2010). The distinction between the variables and the proposed relationships offered by Belak et al. are enlightening and provide a gauge regarding managers' roles in modeling behaviors within an organization. Understanding the different leadership techniques and styles a manager from a firm using a promote-from-within structure compared to a manager from an external applicant pool is imperative and mirrors the discussion of researcher discoveries including Wheeler et al. (2007), Chan (2006), and Sonnenberg (1994). Wheeler et al. discussed job fit as one of the necessary elements to fostering an environment conducive to meeting the needs of workers, which fits well with the discussion regarding applicants for first-level management positions from internal or external applicant pools.

The introduction of an important tool and concepts offered by Craig and Gustafson (1998) spurred interest in the perceptions element regarding ethical decision-making and Craig and Gustafson highlighted avenues to explore regarding leadership research unstudied at the time of the researchers' work. Focusing back to the discussion of top-down leadership strategies, Semler's (2008) discussion regarding perceptions of workers affecting relationships between

managers and subordinates is important in the discussion regarding the differing leadership strategies external applicants may use compared to internally promoted managers. The concept of improving the relationships by focusing on the areas where leadership can make an impact is important to organizations, as proper research may unveil important information about the industry or organization unique to the organization or industry that may improve relationships and efficiencies. Perceptions by workers regarding manager's decision-making from an ethical standpoint formulate an important element of the research and the element forms the basis for the proposed leadership research.

Pettijohn et al. (2008) discussed a salesperson's perspective of ethical behaviors and the influence on turnover intentions in a sales industry, which is similar to the research in the discussion of how perceptions of managers' decisions may increase turnover intentions. The selection of the sales force is similar to the workforce selected for the research and the reasons given for the selection are similar to the reasons to the direction of the research. When deciding to focus on line-level technicians' interactions with first-level managers within an organization using a promote-from-within structure for filling first-level management positions highlight relationships within an organization. The contrast between discoveries mentioned by Pettijohn et al. are important to the research, as the similarities help to frame the research. Gleaning information and ideas for conducting the research from previous work is helpful, as previous research regarding leadership strategies helps to spur further research regarding the chosen variables, which differentiate the research and fills a perceived gap in the literature regarding leadership strategies.

On one side of turnover intentions is the need to understand the driving factors that led employees to consider turning over employment and on the other side is the need to address the



differentiating factors between managers from internal applicant pools and applicants from external applicant pools. The differing element is if a manager from either pool is more advantageous and the elements that make the manager more successful within an organization stem from experiences the other candidate lacks. Brundage and Koziel (2010) discussed strategies for mitigating turnover within a firm by focusing on performance management and compensation, which are both strategies an organization, leadership team, or individual manager may implement. Unlike driving specific metrics or attempting to increase performance through transactional means, mentoring is also a key element Brundage and Koziel mentioned as an alternative approach, which ties nicely into transformational leadership strategies, empowerment, and facilitation while increasing attention on the organizational culture and building a talent bench. The aforementioned elements affect employees' perceptions of how managers engage employees and gain buy-in, either through transactional or transformational strategies (Polychroniou, 2009).

Mentioned previously was Hoover's (2010) discussion of leadership and decision-making encompasses the driving factors behind certain decisions made by leadership, which is important to understanding the ramifications of managers decisions. One of the differentiating characteristics of the research is the focus on how promote-from-within first-level managers' decision process differs from leadership chosen from external applicant pools and how decisions affect the perceptions of line-level workers. Current literature regarding leadership strategies and workers perceptions of first-level managers focuses in organizations that hire from external applicant pools, which skews the discoveries regarding firms promoting from within the organization into first-level management positions (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). The purpose of the research is to examine if the decision-making process of first-level management in a firm

using a promote-from-within structure negatively affects turnover intentions. The information is important to organizations and leaders because of the costs associated with turnover, as are the discoveries highlighting a link between hierarchal structures and strategies of leadership (Hoover, 2010).

### **Hiring Practices**

Breaking down barriers to effective communication throughout an organization is essential to effective communication and the transfer of knowledge. Strategies for hiring first-level managers are unique to an organization and are important to fostering the work environment previously mentioned. Ineffective managers is an issue for a firm but so are the costs associated with turnover, as is the basis for the proposed initiative and the variables chosen to analyze (Chan, 2006). The method an organization chooses to fill first-level management positions poses risks and rewards dependent on the individual candidates chosen to fill vacancies. The variables regarding the selection process include choosing someone from internal applicant pools that may have knowledge of the firms processes and procedures but lack management experience and conversely to select an external applicant with management experience but little knowledge of the firms processes and competencies. Both methods pose risks, necessitating an organization to take care when considering a method dependent on the organizational structure, experiences, and abilities to recruit suitable candidates for first-level management positions (Bielski, 2007).

Furthering the discussion of hiring practices, an understanding of the differentiating characteristics between an organization using external applicant pools and a firm that uses a promote-from-within structure is imperative to the research. Researchers note differences between the promoting-form-within and hiring from external applicant pools (Chhabra &

Mishra, 2008; Wheeler et al., 2007). For instance, Chan (2006) discussed the viewpoint that external candidates work and promote well while internal candidates show lower probability of successfully advancing further within an organization beyond the first-level management role. The notion that highly qualified candidate's turnover employment to find better pay or opportunities leaves less qualified candidates to fill management vacancies in firms using a promote-from-within structure, which is an interesting concept by Cocheo (1998) regarding first-level management positions. Considering either option necessitates firms to consider a variety of variables when deciding on the preferred method for hiring or promoting first-level managers and costs associated with advertising, recruiting, and training qualified candidates play a significant role because of the financial strain on organizations (Calvasina, Calvasina, & Calvasina, 2008).

Time constraints are factors in the method an organization will use to fill first-level management positions and the convenience factor of hiring internally reduces costs and lag time between the vacancy of a management position and finding a candidate to fill the position (Bhandari, Scheller-Wolf, & Harchol-Balter, 2008). For instance, Cocheo (1998) discussed how going outside the organization can take considerable time to find an adequate replacement but conversely sometimes an organization does not have the resources to train internal candidates to become viable managers, which increases the chance of turning employment for the under skilled management staff. Hsiao and Kleiner (2002) built on the concept of promoting internal candidates by mentioning benefits such as internal candidate's familiarity with the processes and organizational culture, which are important factors to consider in the decision to hire internally. Conversely, Hsiao and Keiner mentioned a primary drawback of promoting from within an organization is that usually top talent leaves an organization and less qualified employees remain

with the organization and eventually considered for promotion to first-level management positions.

Regardless of hiring practice, both strategies have beneficial and negative attributes that may help or hinder successful integration into an organization, and is why the focus of the current research is on perceptions of line-level workers regarding first-level managers rather than focusing on one specific hiring strategy. The importance of the mentioning the hiring practices of the current firm is to highlight the possible ramifications of choosing to promote internal applicants into first-level management positions compared to hiring from external applicant pools. Building on previous comments, researchers note benefits of hiring first-level managers from internal applicant pools to first-level management positions. The benefits include staff knowledgeable of the firms' processes, organizational culture, and the reduction of initial costs associated with marketing, recruiting, and training external candidates (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008; Wheeler et al., 2007). The drawbacks associated with hiring internal applicants for first-level management positions includes internal candidates previous work is not a valid predictor for success, often top talent leaves an organization prior to promotion, and relationship issues with subordinates (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008; Sims & Kroeck, 1994).

### **Variables**

In the following section, the variables discussed in the previous chapter formulate terms of context and importance to the research. Because the study uses a specific population, organization, and variables, the following discussion helps to identify unique attributes of the population and specific vocabulary use throughout the following document. For example, delineation between turnover and turnover intentions will help in identification of the difference between the two concepts because intention to turnover is not the act of turning over

employment, rather a want to turnover employment. Additionally, the discussion centers on the variables chosen for the research proposal, which are, job satisfaction, perceptions, tenure, and turnover intentions. The description of the variables chosen for the initiative is important for grounding the concepts and phenomena associated with the terms helps identify and frame the use of the concept throughout the rest the proposal.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Recent research highlights trends regarding job satisfaction and a salespersons perspective of ethical behaviors and the influence on turnover intentions, which is similar to the research (Pettijohn et al., 2008). The information is beneficial to cover in the description of the variables chosen for the research and the selection of the sales force is similar to the workforce selected in the research. Pettijohn et al. (2008) did not use the same moderating variables or industry to conduct the research, which differentiates the two studies. The contrast to the research by Pettijohn et al. is interesting and helps to frame the job satisfaction element in the research. In the research conducted by Pettijohn et al., participants' answers to the Likert-type survey measured job satisfaction, but the researchers note limitations of the research initiative and identify gaps to bridge in future research. The gap described by Pettijohn et al. and the aim of the research is to bridge current gaps in leadership literature, specifically addressing the perceptions of decisions of first-level managers by direct subordinates in a firm using a promote-from-with structure.

Talent management is a focus of the study, as is the general focus is on leadership strategies, so incorporating leadership strategies to increase an organizations talent bench and retain top talent are important in mentioning job satisfaction. Chhabra and Mishra (2008) discussed the importance of talent management and employee retention, both talent management

and employee retention are important to developing recommendations and to spur further research, which is another important aspect of the proposal, as it applies to the variables chosen for the analysis. Focusing on the purpose of the study, cost associated with turnover is one of the key factors in conducting the research and Chhabra and Mishra (2008) discussed the issues with high turnover, retention strategies, and delineating the need to focus on retention first and recruitment second.

Adding to the discussion of talent management are Okpara and Wynn (2008) and the discussion of how an ethical climate affects job satisfaction. Leadership's role in positively affecting commitment and job satisfaction stems from fostering an ethical climate, which is a contributing factor in controlling turnover (Okpara & Wynn). Furthermore, Okpara and Wynn stated, "findings imply that organizational leaders can favorably influence organizational outcomes by encouraging, engaging, and rewarding ethical behavior," again influencing job satisfaction and turnover (p. 939). The final comments by Okpara and Wynn pertain to broadening and expanding on the research the two researchers conducted to include additional variables, where the recommendation to include tenure and perceptions of workers play an important role in the research.

In research conducted by Mancheno-Smoak et al. (2009), the researchers used statistical modeling to measure correlations between stated independent and dependent variables. The researchers gathered raw data using a questionnaire that targeted human resources employees and managers working for fortune 500 organizations in the United States. The researchers' discoveries point to support of the initial assumptions that cultural values do affect job satisfaction and the usefulness of transformational leadership strategies. Transformational strategies are at the fore and gaining buy-in from subordinates is an important topic for

organizations and managers, especially in a firm using a promote-from-within structure where first-level managers may manage subordinates once peers of the manager. The strategies implemented to gain buy-in will work with varying success dependent on leadership strategies and individual personalities and traditional top-down leadership compared to transformational strategies may not be as effective. To understand the ramifications of using a promote-from-within structure compared to hiring from external applicant pools necessitates bridging the gap in the current literature with the current discoveries using the firm and variables chosen for the analysis (Okpara & Wynn, 2008).

Dixon and Hart (2010) also made recommendations to further the research topic regarding leadership strategies as they pertain to gaps in the leadership literature, as Dixon and Hart's research included a focus on leadership and turnover intentions left gaps in the literature and questions to answer. Job satisfaction is only one element attributed to turnover intentions by researchers and dependent on the tenure and perceptions of workers, the moderating effects of the independent variables on turnover intentions remain under researched. On the other side of turnover intentions is how managers deal with issues to reduce problems within a firm that may negatively affect workers and increases turnover.

The research by Brimdage and Koziel (2010) outlined strategies the researchers propose for mitigating turnover within a firm by addressing performance management and compensation, which are top-down leadership strategies but still focus on job satisfaction (Semler, 2008). The approaches relating to performance management and compensation may have short-term benefits attributed to gaining buy-in and increasing job satisfaction. The long-term effects of when an incentives end is met with a decline in the metrics and the return of poor morale, which is important to mention when discussing job satisfaction (Johnson, Dickinson, & Huitema, 2008).

Mentoring also is an important element Brimdage and Koziel discussed that tie into transformational leadership strategies, empowerment, and facilitation while increasing attention on the organizational culture and building a talent bench. The aforementioned strategies help in discussing the gaps in the literature regarding first-level management and perceptions of workers by increasing the ability to develop strategies regarding the interaction between first-level managers and subordinates in the service industry with firms using a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management vacancies.

### **Tenure**

Turning to the discussion of the independent variable tenure and the possible effect on job satisfaction Sarker et al. (2003) discussed length of time (tenure) as a variable that affects job satisfaction, which is important to the research. Sarker et al. focused on tenure and job satisfaction is beneficial in mentioning and forges a baseline assessment of the two independent variables in a context similar to the fashion the variables interact in the research. The moderating variables play a significant role in determining the validity of the discoveries of previous researchers regarding the independent variables because of the differentiating effects that a firm using a promote-from-within structure adds to the analysis and perceptions of workers with job satisfaction and tenure play. Sarker et al. addressed tenure as a variable that affects job satisfaction but to the extent tenure plays in a firm with high turnover the length of time needed to be a significant factor reduces in a firm with high turnover.

Similar to the discussion by Sarker et al. (2003), Lovett and Cole (2003) also measured job satisfaction but focus on job differentiation and how the two variables interact. The reason the information by Lovett and Cole is of interest is the discussion regarding tenure and the jobs completed by individuals within a firm, which is one element under investigation in the research



and the information adds to the depth of understanding regarding the two variables. The research centers on line-level employees interactions and perceptions of first-level managers within an organization that promotes internal applicants, which differentiates the discoveries of the initiative by Lovett and Cole from the research. Additionally, Lovett and Cole stated that other variables may also affect job satisfaction and to expand the scope of the research to include additional variables.

Jenkins and Jensen (2010) discussed tenure and leadership strategies and how the variables interact, which is similar yet dissimilar to research. A common theme in the research by Jenkins and Jensen is the belief that the length of time with an organization affects job satisfaction, which is similar to the information reported by Sarker et al. (2003) previously mentioned. The qualitative analysis by Jenkins and Jensen regarding the experiences between team members highlights how commitment is a variable affected by tenure, which affects job satisfaction. The main point Jenkins and Jensen attempt to convey is that tenure is important but a collective view or decision is not realistic and organizations can suffer from the blinding effect of tenured individuals. This phenomenon described by Jenkins and Jensen is important to describe in the proposed research initiative because it counters other information available regarding tenure, including the perspective by Sarker et al. (2003) regarding an increase in job satisfaction with extensive length of time with an organization.

### **Turnover Intentions**

The final variable is the dependent variable chosen for the research, which is turnover intention. Turnover is a costly issue with an organization, and is why turnover intentions serve as the primary focus (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). Levin and Kleiner's (1992) discussion of turnover and variables leading to absenteeism are parts of the qualitative analysis the researchers

conducted regarding contributing factors of turnover, and how leadership can decrease issues by understanding the reasons employees become unsatisfied with work conditions and duties. The concepts of Levin and Kleiner are important to the research because the researchers present a previous mindset on leadership strategies and ways to reduce issues with employees. Even though absenteeism is not a focus variable in the research, turnover is a pertinent variable and the recommendations are pertinent today. Levin and Kliener presented a belief pertinent to the research when the variables are controllable by leadership but identification is important to correcting the issues.

Furthering the discussion of turnover intentions is Tuzun (2007), who has an interesting spin on the concept of turnover intentions, as the premise for the proposed research initiative is to study a service provider and turnover intentions of line-level workers. With regard to the surveying tool used to gather raw data regarding turnover intentions a clear delineation should be present to differentiate between the issues with management and personal choice to leave the organization to advance a career or to change fields for better opportunities. The preceding delineation is important because not clearly discussing the difference to individuals participating in the initiative could skew the discoveries of the initiative. This is a contemporary study and helps define an otherwise ambiguous or easily misunderstood term turnover intention, which is essential to the research to define. Along another vein of thought, Coder (2007) discussed triggers for identifying elements that could lead to employee turnover, which is important for the research and leadership to understand how to read the signs that may lead to increased turnover.

Another researcher adds to the information regarding turnover intentions by discussing the proposed correlation between positive and supportive leadership strategies and the positive effects to building an ethical climate within an organization (Fogel, 2007). The previous

discussion regarding ethical climates relates to the discussion of turnover intentions because of the interaction of interest between first-level managers and subordinates, as the perception of the line-level employees regarding turnover intentions is the focus of the research. Fogel focused on supportive leadership and the recommendation to foster an ethical climate within an organization is pertinent to the discussion because of the ramifications of using a promote-from-within structure to hire first-level managers and the effectiveness of the strategy. Referencing back to the earlier discussion regarding promote-from-within structures, researchers note that often tenured employees, not top performers, promote into first-level management positions because top performers often leave a firm to seek better opportunities elsewhere (Hsiao & Kleiner, 2002).

Unlike the research of Fogel (2007), Dixon and Hart's (2010) research centered on workgroups, leadership styles, and diversity with the intent to discern correlation to turnover intentions of workers. Furthermore, Dixon and Hart make some poignant recommendations to further the research topic of leadership and to fill gaps in their study of leadership and turnover intentions by broadening the research initiative to follow up with a qualitative assessment of perceptions regarding working conditions and including other leadership styles. The recommendation by Dixon and Hart can include a broadening of the research regarding leadership strategies by including additional variables that may affect intent to turnover employment that the researchers neglected to include in the original analysis. Ghosh and Waldman (2010) added to the discussion of turnover intentions by addressing correlations in the discussion of leadership regarding turnover. Turnover intention is a key element in the research and highlighting current correlations between the variables is beneficial to strengthen the proposal.

The research by Ghosh and Waldman (2010) incorporated a quantitative analysis of the proposed relationships between variables and the researchers deduce that incentives and a standard promotion structure yield more favorable results than other structures. The idea of Ghosh and Waldman regarding the variables is contrary to the perceptions regarding transformational leadership strategies and long-term goals for an organization (Semler, 2008). The information is important because of the contrasting view focuses on short-term gains by increasing incentives for increases in performance. The concepts are successful in the short run but fall short in the long run, compared to transformational strategies that would focus on workers, empowerment, and working relationships (Brimdage & Koziel, 2010; Molero et al., 2007). Turnover intentions of employee's stems from the opportunities available to workers, working environments, and relationships with management staff and without the proper mix of leadership strategies and opportunities for growth, turnover will continue to plague organizations unwilling or unable to adapt strategies to combat the issue.

On the other side of turnover intentions is how leadership deals with issues to reduce problems within a firm that may negatively affect workers perceptions of management and increases turnover. Brundage and Koziel (2010) outlined leadership strategies the researchers propose for reducing turnover intentions within a firm by addressing performance management and compensation, mentioned previously as top-down strategies that associate with short-term benefits. As for long-term transformational strategies, mentoring is a key element Brundage and Koziel discussed, which helps with empowerment and facilitation while increasing attention on internal capacities and building a talent bench within an organization. Reduction of turnover intentions necessitates formulating long-term strategies to less turnover intentions and researchers mention strategies like diversification of work and fostering a positive organizational

climate conducive to innovation and experimentation to combat issue with costly turnover (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Chhabra & Mishra, 2008).

### **Perceptions**

First-level management positions are important to successful daily operations in the service industry because of the pivotal role a first-level manager plays in exercising strategies conceived higher within the organization and the issues involved in relaying information to line-level employees in an effective manner (Fleming, 2008). Confounding the issues with relaying important information to line-level employees is that turnover decreases an organizations talent bench, which increases the necessity and frequency of training. Costs associated with turnover impede operations and lessen available resources that could be allocated to other elements of the business to improve processes and increase efficiencies (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). The gap in the literature regarding leadership strategies centers on how perceptions of workers regarding the decision made by a manager along with tenure and job satisfaction correlate to turnover intentions. If an optimal balance between the variables were achievable by moderating the variables, the cost reduction associated with lowering turnover would be beneficial to firms in the service industry.

Perception of managers by workers represents a variable in the research focusing on how an employee discerns a situation and how the individual perceives how ethical a manager's decisions are, which is dependent on the organizations ethical climate among other elements (Belak et al., 2010). Neubert, Carlson, Kacmar, Roberts, and Chonko (2009) built on the earlier concepts of leadership and the role first-level manager's play within an organization because first-level manager relaying important information to subordinates, otherwise diffused or vague if not initiated at the first-level interaction with line-level employees. Something to clarify is the

distinction between managers' perceptions of workers and workers perceptions of ethical behaviors and decision-making by managers, the later is the important concept to the research, unlike the research regarding manager sentiment regarding employees (Rooney, Gottlieb, & Newby-Clark, 2009).

Current researchers including Howard and Cordes (2010) discussed the mechanisms that affect perception, which could lead to employee withdrawal and negatively affect employee job satisfaction, which are predictors to turnover intentions. Some of the negative outcomes addressed by Howard and Cordes included turnover intentions, absenteeism, and work alienation, similar to the current discussion of turnover intentions and the correlations to employee satisfaction and tenure with an organization in the service industry. Howard and Cordes also discussed the correlation between perceptions of injustice and turnover intentions, which is an interesting and insightful discovery to discuss regarding perception that ethical decision-making also correlates to turnover intentions and ethical climates within an organization. Some of the stated issues with turnover include the increase in expenses to hire, train, and outfit new employees and Howard and Cordes discussed unfair practices as contributing factors in intentions to turnover but the gap exists linking the concept of fair to ethics (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008).

### **Conclusion**

The focus of the study is to identify correlations between the prescribed variables, if any exist, by codifying responses of participants from a survey and statistically analyzing the results. The preceding information regarding leadership strategies, job satisfaction, perceptions, tenure, and turnover intentions is to gain a solid foundation for the research and to ground the theories and ideas with previous discoveries of leadership research and organizational behavior. The

literature points to some stark discoveries regarding leadership strategies and turnover intentions but gaps in the literature regarding employees' perceptions, first-level management strategies, and hiring practices leave room for further exploration of the prescribed variables and correlations, if any exist. The aim of the research is to deepen the understanding of leadership strategies by widening the scope of the current research to examine the effect of promoting first-level managers from within an organization compared to references of hiring from external applicant pools (Ghosh & Waldman, 2010). The comparison of hiring practices increases the understanding of leadership strategies and illustrates issues, if any exist with promoting from within an organization as it pertains to perceptions of line-level workers and their direct supervisors decisions (Hoover, 2010).

Coder (2007) suggested a correlation between employee satisfaction and intentions to turnover but tenure is also an important variable in job satisfaction with moderating variables of job differentiation and change possibly add to the intent of line-level workers to turnover employment (Lovett & Cole, 2003). The interconnectivity of the previously mentioned variables leaves gaps with respect to analysis of leadership hiring practices and how a promote-from-within structure differentiates from a model where first-level managers are from external applicant pools (Bloodgood et al., 2010). Even though thorough research exists in the focus of leadership with turnover intentions and job satisfaction, the research includes additional variables to delineate the discoveries and adds to the current body of knowledge regarding leadership strategies and organizational development.

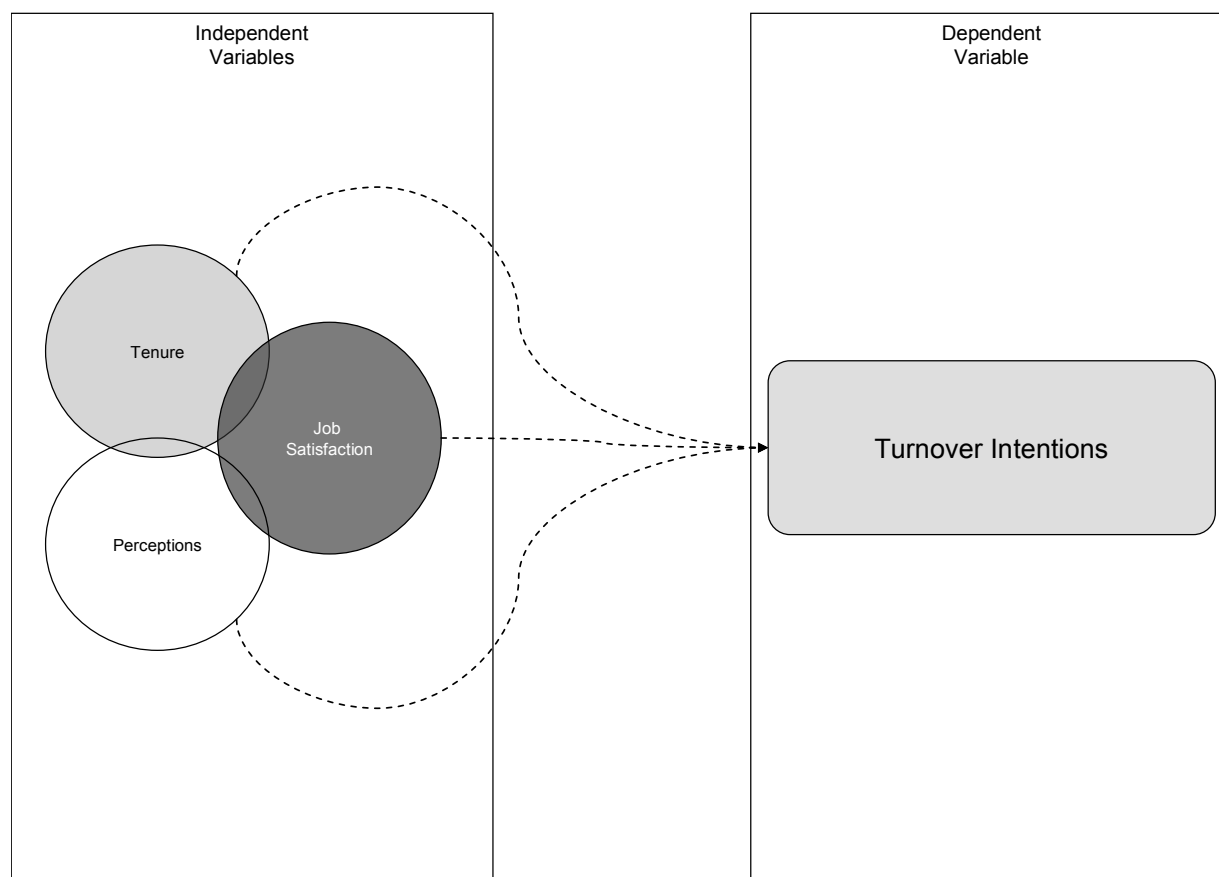


Figure 1. Perceived Variable Correlations for Study

### Summary

The purpose of the study was to address perceived correlations between the prescribed independent variables (job satisfaction, perceptions of workers, and tenure) and the dependent variable (turnover intention). An understanding of leadership strategies and the differing attributes a first-level manager in an organization using a promote-from-within strategy uses compared to a first-level manager in an organization that hires from external applicant pools is important. For organizations and leaders alike understanding of the differences includes a discernment of education, experience, and leadership strategy differences that contribute to job satisfaction and effectiveness (Wheeler et al., 2007). The aforementioned variables play a significant role in the costs and operational efficiencies associated with staffing and training an



organization, necessitating research for key words including leadership, perceptions, tenure, and turnover intentions in the preceding section (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). In the next chapter three, the discussion changes focus again from supporting documents and resources to a thorough discussion of the research method chosen for the research. In the discussion of the method, appropriateness of the method with supporting documentation for choosing the research design and method follows.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

The purpose of the quantitative correlational study was to examine variable relationships, between the independent variables including perceptions of management's decisions, job satisfaction, and tenure with the dependent variable turnover intentions of line-level employees within an organization. The organization chosen for the research was in a service industry and the firm used a promote-from-within structure for first-level management, which was an important element of the research. The design and method of the study are important in chapter 3 and a restatement of the information covered in previous chapters helps to delineate between important and unimportant elements regarding the research initiative. Starting in chapter 1, the discussion centers on the structure of the research initiative and highlights each element of the proposal. In the chapter 2, the discussion centers on supporting research, important elements include leadership theories, strategies, ethical climates, and the variables chosen for the research. The literature chosen in chapter 2 forms the base of the research initiative and addresses the framing aspects of leadership, variables, and strategies used in contextual form throughout the document.

Chapter 3 includes the justifications for choosing the methods for the research including subtopics regarding ethical considerations, research design, research questions, population, informed consent forms, sampling framework, confidentiality, geographic location, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, validity, reliability, and a summary to recap the information covered in the chapter. An important element in chapter 3 is the discussion of the method selection process, how the method corresponded to the variable analysis of the quantitative correlational structure, and the potential relationships between the independent and dependent variables mentioned previously. The first subsection of the chapter highlights some

important considerations regarding the proposal and the organization selected to conduct the research.

### **Research Method and Design Appropriateness**

Describing the method and design regarding research is important because of the relevance to the type of data collection and analysis of the variable relationships between the independent and dependent variables chosen for the quantitative research. Therefore, the following information is necessary to explain the research constructs and variables. The study incorporated a quantitative correlational structure and the rationale for choosing the structure for the initiative was to aid in the analysis of sample data gathered using Likert-type surveying tools regarding the variables chosen for the initiative. Referencing back to the research questions was the reason for selecting a quantitative correlational method and design to answer the questions by testing the hypotheses regarding the relationships between the prescribed independent and dependent variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Three questionnaires helped in the data gathering process necessary for the research initiative including the Perceived Leader Integrity Scale (PLIS), General Job Satisfaction (GJS), and a demographic survey fashioned specifically for the research initiative (Craig & Gustafson, 1998; Kiefer et al., 2005).

Building from previous leadership research, the decision to focus the research to employee perceptions of leaders and how the perceptions increase turnover intentions stems from the issue of costs associated with high turnover in the service industry and why with a wide array of leadership research available organizations continue to experience high levels of turnover at the line-level. Craig and Gustafson's (1998) development of the Perceived Leader Integrity Scale and research helped solidify the decision to pursue the vein of leadership research, as the researchers mentioned avenues to explore by selecting other variables to study regarding the

PLIS development. The literature review highlights elements that frame the proposal by centering on the variables and moderating elements of the chosen firm's structure for hiring first-level management.

The quantitative method of the research was appropriate for the study because the codified raw data exhibited the strength of the perceptions of participants in the survey, rather than, a qualitative approach to draw conclusions in a subjective manner (Cozby, 2007). Specific statistical analysis of variable relationships was the focus of the research that Neuman (2006) described as the core element of quantitative research. Similar to research of Lin, Lin, and Lin (2007), the primary concentration of the research was to measure the relationships statistically between the independent and dependent variables, thereby necessitating a quantitative method.

A qualitative method was not appropriate for the research because the goal for the research was to measure specific relationships between prescribed variables that was not the intent of qualitative research (Creswell, 2005). The intent of the research was to focus on variable relationships, whereas qualitative research focuses on exploration of phenomenon and other unknown attributes of organizations or elements of society (Salkin, 2006). Quantitative methods, as chosen for the research, generally follow linear paths from identification of a problem through gathering pertinent data to the analysis of variable relationships (Neuman, 2006).

According to Creswell (2005), correlational designs are useful in measuring the degree of association between variables, which was the focus of the current research proposal and linear relationships played a significant role in selecting the correlational design (Burns & Grove, 2005). Unlike quantitative, qualitative methods are exploratory and inductive, which was less pertinent to the research, as the quantitative method chosen for the research helped identify

trends and relationships between variables (Creswell, 2005; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The surveying tools chosen for the research stem from previous leadership research specifically addressing ethics for the Perceived Leader Integrity Scale survey (PLIS) and job satisfaction for the General Job Satisfaction Scale survey (GJS) (Craig & Gustafson, 1998; Kiefer et al., 2005). The demographic questions (5) included a question regarding tenure with the organization, which is another important independent variable for the research.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The research questions addressed important elements of the research and helped to frame the initiative by addressing specific questions regarding the topic of leadership. In the case of the research, the variables included perceptions, tenure, job satisfaction (independent), and turnover intentions (dependent), which necessitated questions to ask regarding the potential variable relationships that narrow the focus of the research into confines realistic to measure (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). Creswell (2005) noted how research should include logical questions that a researcher aims to answer through conducting analysis to substantiate or refute the hypotheses. The three following questions served as the basis for conducting the proposed initiative regarding the aforementioned variables to determine correlation between the independent and dependent variables.

1. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's perception of managements' ethical choices and job satisfaction?
2. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's tenure and job satisfaction?
3. In what ways, if any, does the combination of perception of management, job satisfaction, and tenure relate to employee turnover intentions?

To frame the research, the research hypotheses set the framework for the study by addressing potential outcomes. The four following hypotheses highlight the possible variable relationships essential for the analysis in the research:

H1<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between perceptions of a leader's ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

H1<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between perceptions of a leader's ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

H2<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

H2<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

H3<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

H3<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

H4<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

H4<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

### **Population and Geography**

Because of the limitations of time, organizational constructs, and availability of subjects willing to participate in the study, the general population of the study consisted of participants within one service organization in Northern California. The geographical constraints limited the study to include participants from Northern California, reaching from coastal towns through the

central valley. Even though the organization chosen for the study had locations scattered throughout the United States the decision to conduct a convenience/census sample of the population scattered throughout Northern California hinged on the previously mentioned constraints. Conducting a convenience sample and limiting the geography to Northern California locations meant the researcher could deliver the surveying packets and discuss the proposal in person to each potential participant (Creswell, 2005). The sample population included highly skilled line-level workers and the firm used a promote-from-within structure, which were differentiating characteristics from previous research regarding the variables. As previously mentioned in the description of the variables selected for the research, differentiating between the two primary types of hiring practices for first-level management positions was important to the construct of the research.

In addition to the previously mentioned population was that the participants worked out of facilities scattered throughout Northern California, which necessitated delivering the surveying tool in person to discuss the research proposal with potential participants and to ensure the technicians received the packages. Because of the organizations stipulation for conducting the research which limited contact with workers to personal time, contacting participants in person meant waiting for the end of the workday, which varied by technician and by day of week. Unlike management staff in the chosen organization, line-level workers do not have access to the Internet during a workday nor do they have assigned e-mail addresses and obtaining personal information including home addresses was against the company policy, which necessitated contacting the sample population in person. The best days to contact participants were Wednesday and Saturday because the organization used two, four-day work shifts that overlapped on Wednesdays or Saturdays. On Wednesdays or Saturdays, the entire staff was

present to participate in a weekly training, which was an opportunity to communicate with the entire staff about the initiative, constructs, and participation. Unaccounted for vacation and sick time reduced the number of participants an undisclosed number.

### **Sampling Framework**

Creswell mentioned that in correlational analysis a minimum of approximately 30 responses are necessary to determine correlation. Of the approximate 360 total technicians (total population) 30 completed surveys would be the minimum number for correlational analysis but a 30% response rate of the convenience sample or approximately 90 technicians was the goal (Creswell, 2005). In conjunction with the convenience sample was the hope to use a systematic sampling approach to reach 90 responses by taking the  $n^{\text{th}}$  participant. The proposed 90 responses divided by the sample population of 360 requires 25% or every 4<sup>th</sup> individual contacted to respond (Salkind, 2006). Choosing the convenience sampling method for the research alleviated issues associated with the limitations the population had regarding remote technicians and organizational constraints regarding the release of personal information. Contacting remote technicians was an issue because of limited visibility during a workweek, as a remote technician works out of his or her residence and frequents the facility only to replenish materials or for mandatory meetings.

At the request of the organizations leadership, the survey package included a statement discussing the independent nature of the research and confidentiality information for participants. None of the potential participants fell under protected groups including those less than 18 years of age, pregnant, imprisoned, or cognitively disabled, which were important considerations for the selection of the organization and population for the proposal. The previously mentioned elements formed the initial basis of the sampling framework for the proposal.



The selection of the three questionnaires to gather data offered benefits including high probability participants would be truthful because of anonymity, the ability to complete the questionnaire alone or at the premises, and the wide geographic base of participants. The aforementioned elements helped to reduce time and costs compared to conducting face-to-face interviews (Salkind, 2006). Delivering the survey packets in person was a goal of the research, as the interaction with the participants offered an opportunity to convey information regarding the purpose of the study firsthand. Participants had the option either to fill in the package immediately or to send the completed packets to the researcher via mail using the supplied preaddressed and stamped envelope in every package.

Because of the high turnover in the firm, the general population of technicians fluctuates, affecting the number of line-level technicians available to survey. The issue with high turnover confounded random sampling techniques and led to the decision to use the convenience sampling approach to ensure a representative sample of the population responded. Of the Northern California locations, each location had a varying number of staff to survey, depending on the shifts, necessitating careful consideration of the participants' availability. Either Wednesday or Saturday were the most promising days to reach the technicians because of the overlapping four workday schedules the firm uses for the installation department, as previously mentioned. The additional constraint of the variability of a workday necessitated the option to send in responses for line-level employees returning to the office late at night and unwilling to complete the survey package onsite.

Short questionnaires historically received higher responses rates (Yetter & Capaccioli, 2010). The surveying tools used to collect data are included in Appendix A, B, and C. The demographic questions centered on education, ethnicity, tenure, and gender to delineate between

groups within the sample population and the demographic survey is in Appendix A. Appendix B is the General Job Satisfaction Scale (GJS) and the survey contains five questions that focus on job satisfaction and intent to turnover. The GJS is an adaptation of the Job Diagnostic Survey with the intent to capture job satisfaction of workers. The GJS has varied application across industries including manufacturing, service-oriented, and nursing focuses (Hackman, Oldham, Janson, & Purdy, 1975; Royal, 2009). The multiple-choice construct of the surveying tools limits variation of the answers when compared to open-ended questions that allow participants the opportunity to expound perceptions.

### **Informed Consent**

When considering research, researchers consider participants and if potential participants fall in any protected groups. Proper documentation and approvals are important to the current research proposal, as was obtaining consent by the organization to conduct the research and making sure the organization was aware of the purpose of the study and the ramifications of the discoveries. Proper documentation included obtaining approval from the reviewing boards to ensure the study did not infringe on human or organizational rights to privacy. Additionally, a signature from at least the director level within the organization regarding the initiative was necessary prior to conducting research within the organization and individual consent forms were necessary from potential participants.

The request to use the premises documentation requesting the use of the Northern California locations to conduct the study delivered to the regional director in November 2010 mentioned the facilities and options regarding the research. The paperwork included a request for approvals from the appropriate individuals regarding the use of the facilities to administer the surveys and to contact potential participants. The signed consent form received in January 2011,

included in Appendix D contained a signature of the director of installation operations. As an employee of the firm, the researcher discussed the proposal and submitted the surveying tools for approval prior to obtaining written approval to conduct the research.

As previously mentioned, consent forms are necessary to survey participants and a consent form for participant participation fashioned to outline the survey requirements, participant rights, researcher relationship to the organization as an employee, and constraints of the initiative is in Appendix E. In the acknowledgement paperwork, the documentation mentioned the use for the data, how long it would take to complete the surveys and assurance of anonymity for the participants because anonymity was an important element of the research. Another important element of the consent form was the acknowledgement that the participants could withdraw from the survey without recourse, as participation was voluntary. The final information on the acknowledgement form covered the steps to ensure anonymity of the individuals and storage procedures of the documentation. The final consideration regarding selection of the population was that participants were above the age of 18 and did not belong to protected groups.

Other important elements to the research initiative included the privacy of the organization, participants, and disclosure of the researcher's intent for conducting research. The researcher excluded the organization's name in the finalized documents and ensured anonymity for the participants by codifying answers and removing identifying information from the data. The organization chosen to conduct the research recognized any discoveries made through conducting the research as exclusively for the researcher and separate from initiatives of the firm. The consent form signed by organizational leadership (Appendix D) allowed access to the premises to conduct the research, but did not permit the use of the organizations name. Storage

of the surveys and data was a consideration when conducting research. The surveys shall remain at the researcher's residence for the period of three years in a locked cabinet. At the end of three years, shredding the survey documentation ensures anonymity for participants.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The organization selected to conduct the research operated in the service industry and provided installation to customers using field technicians to complete installations in customers' homes. The organizations structure and gap in leadership research regarding firms using a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management positions were the two primary considerations in choosing the firm to conduct the study. The organizational structure and service offerings differentiated the organization from sales and other retailers that offered services to the end customer because of the highly trained and skilled field staff. Turnover for similar organizations is considerably more expensive because of the extensive training and tools necessary to prepare the field staff to conduct installations.

Stressors associated with the research centered on the perceptions of the potential participants regarding reprisal for answering the questions contained in the surveying tools honestly. To reduce the negative perceptions regarding the proposed study and surveys, the researcher iterated to every potential participant the measures in place to ensure anonymity and the coding and storage procedures associated with the collected data. The coding system includes a master sheet that contained numerical values instead of personal identifiers to mask person information and no personal information made the finalized document. All of the survey answers in the master sheet contain numerical values instead of written responses. Along with the coding elements of the data, communication regarding the processes in place to ensure anonymity was important to increasing the likelihood of receiving replies from participants.

Communicating the researcher's role with the organization and mentioning how no personal or organizational identifying information will make the published document was important to communicate.

Describing the relationships between the organization, potential participants, and researcher was important to alleviate concerns regarding the data collection process, analysis, and discoveries. As an employee of the organization, ensuring participants were aware of the researcher's relationship with the firm was an important consideration necessitating incorporation of the statement into the consent form. Additionally, organizational leadership requested the addition of a statement in the consent form highlighting the purpose of the research as independent from organizational initiatives. Important elements to consider regarding the research center on the sampling and storage procedures for the data including codifying responses, which was important to ensure anonymity for participants. Potential participants have no concerns regarding reprisal for not participating or withdrawing from the initiative. In the instrument section below, further details regarding the surveys distinguished the specific elements of the tools and highlighted the format used to collect data.

### **Instrumentation**

The decision to use two existing surveys stemmed from the availability of previously validated research tools regarding the variables chosen to research and the ability to build on available leadership research by using valid and reliable instruments to gather data. The variables chosen to research include turnover intentions, tenure, perceptions, and job satisfaction, which necessitated the instruments to reflect the prescribed variables. The 31-question, 4-point Likert-type Perceived Leader Integrity Scale survey (PLIS), created by Craig and Gustafson (1998) focused on employee perception of leaders. The 5-question, 7-point Likert-type scale

General Job Satisfaction survey (GJS) created and tested by Kiefer et al. (2005), focused on job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The GJS was an adaptation of the Job Diagnostic Survey by Hackman et al. (1975) and question 2 and 5 required reverse coding for answers. The two previously mentioned existing surveys in tandem with a 5-question demographic questionnaire, fashioned for the research initiative, regarding tenure and other identifying characteristics of the sample population.

The use of Likert-type surveying tools was so respondents could answer a question with an approximate belief regarding the question posed, similar to Thurston scaled surveys (Salkind, 2006). The questionnaire, on University of Phoenix letterhead distinguished the questionnaire as independent research, rather than research conducted for an organization (Salkind, 2006). To mitigate the potential for conflicts of interest, no one will view the answer sheets besides researcher. Codifying submissions prior to combining and conducting analysis eliminated the possibility of inadvertently identifying participants.

In the package delivered to the participants, a preaddressed and stamped envelope accompanied the consent form and survey so the participants could either send the completed package back to the researcher directly or complete the packet immediately. The finalized document summarized the combined information without individual identifiers for any of the participants or the organization. Clearly stating the considerations in the documentation and conveying the information to participants helped response rates.

Craig and Gustafson's (1998) PLIS was available in the public domain at the following location [www.sbrcraig.com/plis](http://www.sbrcraig.com/plis) and in an e-mail received, Dr. Craig (2011) mentioned that a consent form was not required to use the PLIS, as the tool was available and free for use to by independent researchers (Appendix F). Kiefer et al. (2005) modified GJS was available in the

public domain at <http://aspe.hhs.gov>, and documentation regarding the validity of the instrument was available at the same location. The three surveying tools were used in tandem to collect the data necessary to conduct the correlational analysis for variable relationships between the prescribed variables.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Validation of the tools selected for the research hinged on the previous work regarding the surveys chosen to collect data for the prescribed variables. Creswell (2005) mentioned the importance of validating the surveying tools to ensure the questions are reasonable and realistic to gather data pertinent to the research. Some of the internal elements that can help increase reliability include standardization of surveying conditions, concise questions, and an increase in sample size (Creswell, 2005). In the research, the three elements previously mentioned were primary concerns for the sampling methodology chosen. The two surveying tools (PLIS, GJS) incorporated into the research initiative were valid. Craig and Gustafson (1998) mentioned that the PLIS demonstrated convergent validity because of the positive relation to job satisfaction. Kiefer et al. (2005) validated the GJS by construct validity by correlating tenure, performance, and level within an organization.

Reliability of an instrument refers to consistency of the information obtained from a surveying tool (Creswell, 2005). The PLIS 31-item version was a condensed version of the 77-item version Craig and Gustafson (1998) initiated leadership perception research originally. Craig and Gustafson noted a .95 MULTILOG estimated marginal reliability for the 31-item version and a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of .96 to reduce the number of questions and improve response rates in future initiatives. The broad consistency range of the GJS scale compared to the PLIS, which was lower than the .96 of the PLIS ranging from .74 to .80 (Kiefer et al., 2005).

### **Internal Validity**

An internal threat to the validity of the research was the perceptions of the potential participants regarding the research structure and procedures. Careful considerations regarding the communication of the expectations and data handling procedures with every potential participant limited the effect of the fear of reprisal from the organization regarding the answers by participants. The decision to use a convenience/census sample method for the collection of data from participants diminished the generalizability of the discoveries but the availability of the sample population, time constraints, and organizational limitations were the driving forces behind the decision (Creswell, 2005).

### **External Validity**

Neuman (2006) described validity as trueness of data used for an initiative and to increase the level of external validity, the sample population came from a wide geographic area and included responses from different locations to ensure multiple perspectives regarding direct managers' actions represented in the data. Neuman also discussed how external validity pertains to the generalizability of the discoveries from an initiative to a broader group and the research focused on the importance of collecting replies from a diverse group of participants but from one organization and used a convenience/census sample methodology, which diminished generalizability of the discoveries.

### **Data Analysis**

Prior to data analysis, the first consideration was to clean up the raw data by identifying missing answers and to remove incomplete submissions (Creswell, 2005). Cleaning the data was important for ethical reasons and to describe how inconsistencies were handled (Creswell, 2005). No consideration regarding duplicates was necessary because of the delivery method of the



survey packet to the potential participants eliminated the possibility of duplicate submissions. The submissions were input into the SPSS software and entries were double-checked for missing data. A visual inspection of the data ensured the responses were complete (Creswell, 2005).

Sample size was important to the research initiative to reduce Type I and Type II errors that may occur from improper sample size. Rejection of a null hypothesis when the hypothesis is valid is a Type I error and a Type II error is the acceptance of the significance when significance does not exist (Creswell, 2005). In correlational analysis, the most common way to calculate sample size is to use a sampling error formula, as the formula stems from defining characteristics that differentiate the sample. The most common computation for analyzing correlations is the Pearson correlation coefficient, which is useful in describing linear relationships between variables (Creswell).

The purpose of the quantitative correlational initiative was to examine the variable relationships between the independent and dependent variables, which necessitated data collection and the statistical analysis of raw data regarding the variable relationships. The analysis included responses to 31, 4-point Likert-type questions from the Perceived Leader Integrity Scale survey (PLIS), 5, 7-point questions from the General Job Satisfaction survey (GJS), and 5 responses to demographic questions regarding the sample population selected for the research. The proposed correlational analysis of the PLIS and GJS surveys incorporated Pearson coefficients, as mentioned previously, and descriptive statistics regarding the demographic questions.

### **Summary**

The information contained in chapter three focuses on the research method and emphasizes the direction, population, and elements of the research that differentiate the research

from other initiatives regarding leadership strategies. Another element discussed in the preceding sections includes a description of the gap in the literature regarding leadership strategies and a restatement of the research questions and hypotheses helped to narrow the scope of the research. Other important elements in the previous discussion include a description of the population, sampling strategies, analysis techniques, reliability issues, and constraints with conducting the research. Creswell's (2005) discussion of methodology encompassed the reasons for the research design and method chosen for the current study and the discussion of Neuman's (2006) theories summarized validity and reliability issues with completing research.

Discussion in the preceding chapter also identifies important elements of the research, such as the consent forms, method and design appropriateness, and data analysis procedures. Inclusion of the important elements helps to ensure internal and external reliability of the procedures and discoveries that highlight correlations between the independent and dependent variables chosen for the research. A thorough description of the procedures, variables, and population play a significant role in the analysis stage of the proposal. In chapter 4, the discoveries follow regarding correlations between the independent and dependent variables and an explanation of the discoveries.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of the quantitative correlational study was to measure the variable relationships between prescribed independent variables with the dependent variable turnover intentions. The independent variables include tenure, job satisfaction, and perceptions regarding direct managers of employees. The study was conducted to increase the awareness of the differentiating characteristics of the sample population from previously conducted research regarding employees and perceptions of direct managers by focusing on the relationships between employees and managers within an organization using a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management roles. In chapter 4, the findings of the research follow a brief description of the data collection process. The sample consisted of 171 field technicians scattered throughout Northern California. Pearson coefficients, regression analysis, and descriptive statistics were used to analyze for statistical significance of the data gathered. In addition to the numerical data are tables and graphical representations of the information for further interpretation.

### **Data Analysis Methods**

Data were collected from field technicians per the stipulations outlined by the organizations leadership at the end of the employees shift after the employee clocked out for the night. Potential participants were contacted after work hours regarding participation in the research to discuss the survey and purpose of gathering the data. Three survey's were used to collect the necessary data for the research including 5 demographic questions, 5 questions regarding job satisfaction using the General Job Satisfaction Survey (GJS), and 31 questions using the Perceived Leader Integrity Survey (PLIS). The decision to administer the surveys in

person stemmed from the conviction that the response rate would be higher because of the ability to discuss the topic and reasons for the research with potential participants.

The original 360 potential participants diminished because of changes to organizational practices regarding promoting from within the organization to fill first-level management positions. Entire facilities were excluded from the collection process because external candidates assumed first-level management roles. Of the 171 potential participants contacted, all met the criteria outline by organizational leadership. The sampling methodology outlined by Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) was used to sample the participants by conducting a census of the sample population. Out of the 171 potential participants contacted, 41 completed the survey and 130 declined to participate in the study for various reasons. The response rate of 23.98% was lower than initially anticipated. Various variables contributed to the lower than expected response rate including the amount of time it took to describe the initiative, the verbiage in the surveys, sensitive matter of the questions, and the time of night when some of the potential participants were contacted.

Salkind (2003) mentioned the need to secure a minimum of 30 respondents for statistical significance and the decision was made to drop the systematic sampling methodology when the determination was made that the general population dropped because of the change in the hiring standards within the organization. Because the population was under 200 and similar with no comparison to additional group's necessary, the 41 responses sufficed for the analysis (Gay et al., 2009). One benefit of conducting the surveys in person was participants were thorough and all surveys were complete. Conducting the surveys in person was also beneficial, as questions regarding the verbiage were answered immediately. Researcher bias was addressed by conducting a census sample of the population and by discussing the research with every

participant. The procedures for contacting participants were the same in every interaction and the information shared was contained in the contact letter regarding the research and use of data (Creswell, 2007).

## Findings

### Demographics

Information regarding the field technicians was gathered to illustrate common traits and to describe the central characteristics that demonstrated correlation to turnover intentions. Specifically, tenure with the organization was a primary independent variable of the proposal. The demographic questions included information regarding gender, age, education level, ethnicity, and tenure with the organization. Not surprisingly, of the 171 technicians contacted about taking the survey only 1 was female. Of the 41 technicians that participated in the survey, all 41 were male. Males dominate the industry selected for the research, which is apparent in the sample population and skewed response rate from males.

Table 1

*Gender (N = 41)*

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	41	100.0%
Female	0	0.0%

An interesting aspect of the sample population was that over half of the participants noted that they had some college experience, with only 17% mentioning no college experience at all, illustrated in Table 2. The population differed from other industries because the work completed was highly technical, dangerous at times, and physically demanding. The danger element of the

job is a natural barrier to entry of many potential candidates and the screening for candidates includes an in-depth training program, field mentorship, and knowledge assessment before release to complete work alone.

Table 2

*Education (N = 41)*

Category	Frequency	Percentage
High School	7	17.1%
Some College	22	53.7%
Associates Degree	10	24.4%
Bachelors Degree	2	4.9%

Caucasians (43.9%) dominated the sample population at nearly half of the respondents with Asian (24.4%) and Hispanic (17.1%) rounding out the top three represented ethnic groups surveyed, which is depicted in Table 3. Because of the geographical constraints regarding location of the data collection, the ethnicity distribution is very close to the organizational ethnicity distribution. Employing a wide range of individuals with diverse backgrounds is important to the organization especially when considering ethnically saturated areas within the operational boundaries.

Table 3

*Ethnicity (N = 41)*

Category	Frequency	Percentage
African American	3	7.3%
Asian	10	24.4%
Caucasian	18	43.9%
Hispanic	7	17.1%
Other	3	7.3%

Referencing back to the education demographic question, the responses to approximate age align with the timeline necessary after high school to attend college. Additionally, the prospect that the downturn in the economy displaced some of the workers makes sense in the age distribution in the obvious decline past 39 years of age, depicted in Table 4. The majority of the participants fall in the 23 through 39 age range, which also substantiates the rigorous physical requirements of the work that forces older employees into less physically demanding positions.

Table 4

*Age (N = 41)*

Category	Frequency	Percentage
18-22	2	4.9%
23-29	17	41.5%
30-39	21	51.2%
40-49	1	2.4%

The obvious shift in tenure clearly shows that more than 75% of the sample population worked for the organization for less than 5 years. The numbers following 5 years drop of significantly by 12% into the 6-7 year range and 24% to the 8-9 range. No one in the sample population worked for the organization in the line-level capacity for more than 10 years, which is telling both of the physical nature of the work and possible burnout regarding the position. On both accounts, the perception is speculative, as burnout and physical limitations were not the focus of the research.

Table 5

*Tenure (N = 41)*

Category	Frequency	Percentage
0-1 years	10	24.4%
2-3 years	10	24.4%
4-5 years	12	29.3%
6-7 years	7	17.1%
8-9 years	2	4.9%

### **Perceived Leader Integrity Scale**

Following an outlined scaling method by Northouse (2004), the PLIS answers were sorted into groups that categorized the answers into three levels including “High Ethics” at 31-35, “Moderate Ethics” at 36-66, and “Low Ethics” with the range 67-124. The higher the number scored (1 through 4) shifted the responses from the “Not at all” response to the “Exactly” answer. The formulation of the answers was determined in the creation of the PLIS tool by Craig and Gustafson (1998) and the researchers used the .97 Cronbach’s alpha during



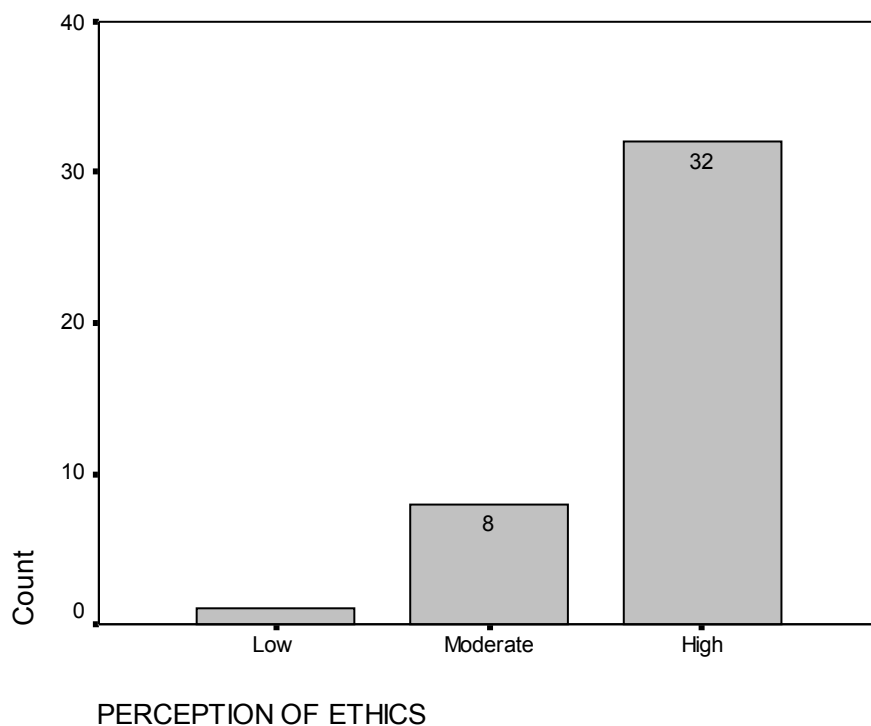
development of the PLIS. The ranges developed by Northouse are depicted in Table 6 and the ranges were used for the analysis to describe the level of ethics of the managers in question.

Table 6

*PLIS Groups*

Score Range	Description
31-35	High Ethics
36-66	Moderate Ethics
67-124	Low Ethics

Grouping the answers and creating a distinction between highly ethical, moderately ethical, and low ethical behavior was essential in the analysis process for addressing correlations between variables. Conducting the analysis in SPSS offered the opportunity to look at the answers in a variety of ways including graphical perspectives of the groups for perceived ethics. The responses highlighted the perception that direct managers were highly ethical, as illustrated in the graphical representation of the grouping in *Figure 2*.



*Figure 2.* Perceptions of ethics count

The outcome of the descriptive statistics analysis regarding the PLIS data collected and grouped into the three subgroups highlighted that the minimum was 1 signifying low ethics, the maximum was 3 signifying high ethics, and the mean was 2.76. The Standard deviation for the PLIS was .48890, which is highlighted in the table 7 for the same N=41.

In Table 7 the generalizations regarding the correlations discussed by Salkind (2003) outlined the strength of correlations between variables using Pearson correlations and was the basis of the analysis regarding the independent and dependent variables selected for the research. The closer to 1.00 the outcome is from the data analysis, the stronger a variable relationship is between the variables measured.

Table 7

*Interpretation of Pearson Correlations*

Correlations Between	Are said to be
.80 and 1.00	Very strong
.60 and .80	Strong
.40 and .60	Moderate
.20 and .40	weak
.00 and .20	Very weak

(Salkind, 2003)

Using the variable relationships outlined in Table 7 as a guide for the variable relationships, the Pearson correlational analysis produced the information depicted in Table 8. Each of the three independent variables was measured with the dependent variable turnover intentions. Job satisfaction demonstrated a moderate correlation to turnover intentions and perceptions of leaders' ethics demonstrated a strong correlation to turnover intentions. Tenure was the only independent variable that did not demonstrate a significant correlation to turnover intentions, which is contradictory to previous research regarding the variables (Pettijohn et al., 2008; Chhabra & Mishra, 2008; Okpara & Wynn, 2008; Dixon & Hart, 2010).

Table 8

*Correlations to Dependent Variable Turnover Intentions*

Independent Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig (1-tailed)	Correlation
Tenure	-.03	.49	Very Weak
Job Satisfaction	.48	.00	Moderate
Ethics	.64	.00	Strong

In the three graphical representations (Figures 3, 4, and 5), the data were graphed using scatter plots and a regression analysis was conducted to produce the (broken line) linear regressions. As illustrated in the table 8, the independent variables job satisfaction and perceptions demonstrated correlation to the dependent variable turnover intentions. Tenure did not demonstrate correlation to turnover intentions.

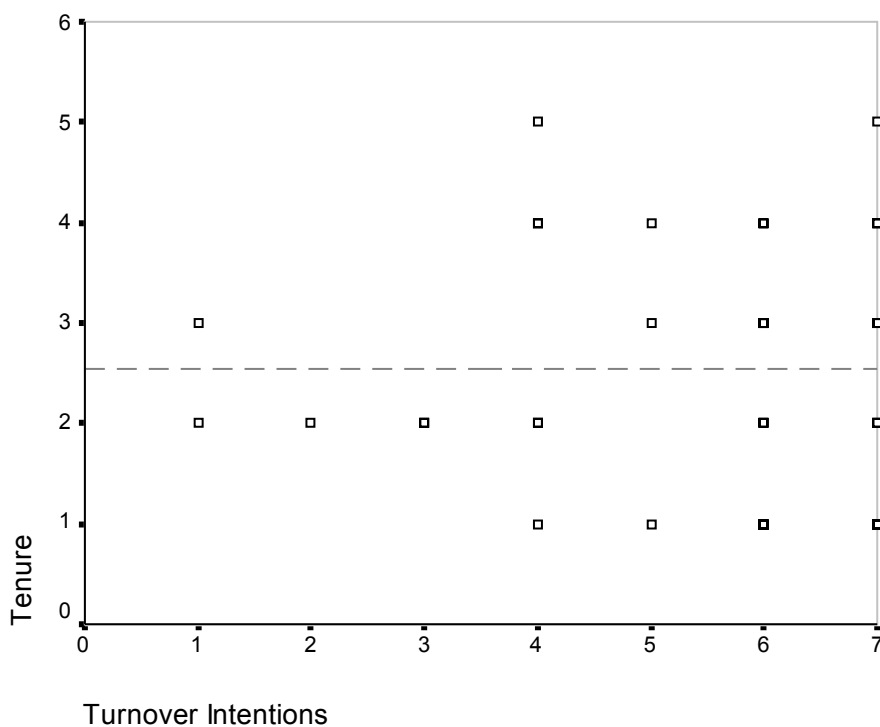


Figure 3. Turnover Intentions & Tenure

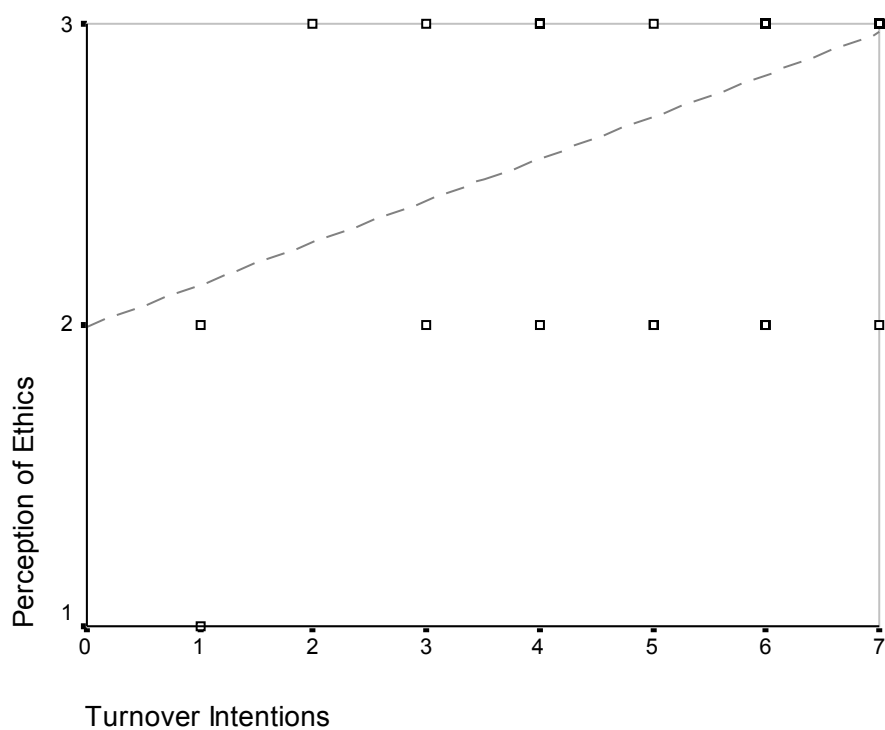


Figure 4. Turnover Intentions & Perceptions

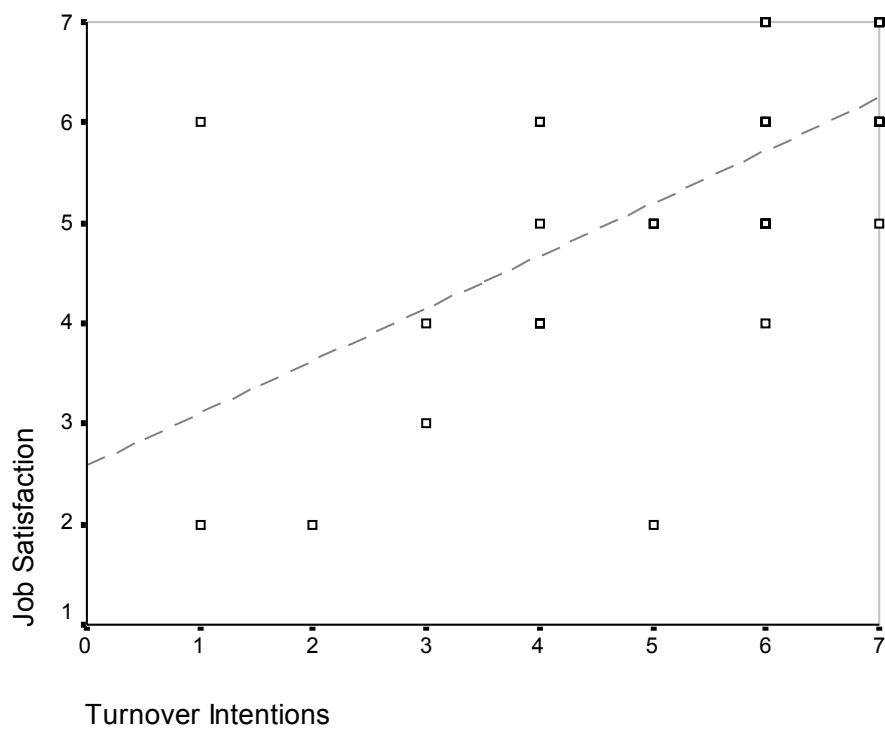


Figure 5. Turnover Intentions & Job Satisfaction

Table 9 depicts the descriptive statistics regarding the independent and dependent variables. Tenure illustrated by 6 groups with 1 signifying 0-1 years, 2 signifying 2-3, 3 signifying 4-5, 4 signifying 6-7, 5 signifying 8-9, and 6 signifying 10+ years. The mean of 2.54 signifies that the average tenure with the organization is between 3-5 years. Job satisfaction was analyzed using the information from the GJS, which was on a 7-point scale, with a 5.44 mean score highlighting relatively high job satisfaction regarding the sample group. The mean for perception of ethics surprisingly was high at 2.76 signifying the perception of highly ethical managers. The final variable depicted in Table 9 is turnover intentions. The mean for turnover intentions was on a 1-7 scale and landed at 5.46, which is relatively high given the job satisfaction mean and previous research noting job satisfaction as an indicator of turnover intentions.

Table 9

*Descriptive Statistics of Variables*

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tenure	2.54	1.19
Job Satisfaction	5.44	1.38
Ethics	2.76	0.49
Turnover Intentions	5.46	1.67

**Research Questions**

The study centered on three questions regarding tenure, perceptions, and job satisfaction and how the three independent variables affected the dependent variable intent to turnover employment. The formulation of hypotheses regarding the variables chosen to research was

based on previous research regarding similar industries and participants but the difference in the sample population chosen was how the first-level managers were promoted into management positions from that of a peer. Previous research did not differentiate between internal promotions and external candidates filling first-level management roles. The difference in hiring preference was the key to the interaction with line-level employees and perceptions regarding leadership within an organization. In industries with high turnover, ascertaining variables that contribute to reduced job satisfaction and turnover is essential to reducing costs and maintaining talent benches. The three following questions formed the basis for conducting the research.

1. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's perception of management's ethical decision-making and job satisfaction?

H1<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between perceptions of a manager's ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

H1<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between perceptions of a manager's ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

Based on the correlational coefficient of 0.24 and the significance of  $p=0.14$  between the independent variables of perceptions of manager's ethical decision-making and job satisfaction, the hypothesis was confirmed. Comparing Salkind's (2003) descriptions of Pearson Correlational strengths, a 0.24 correlational coefficient fell in the weak category. Additionally, a  $p=0.14$  was above the  $p=0.05$  threshold for significance, which led to the support the null hypothesis and rejection of the alternative hypothesis for the first research question.

2. What is the relationship, if any, between an employee's tenure and job satisfaction?

H2<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

H2<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

Similar to the first question, tenure and job satisfaction demonstrated a weak correlation in the sample with a correlation coefficient of -0.03 and a significance of  $p=0.88$ , which identified the relationship in the very weak category in the Salkind (2003) Pearson correlational significance chart. As in the case of the first research question, question two regarding the relationship between the variables of tenure and job satisfaction demonstrated a weak relationship, thereby accepting the null hypothesis and rejecting the alternative hypothesis.

H3<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

H3<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

Unlike the previous two hypotheses, the third demonstrated correlation between the two variables under consideration including job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The correlational coefficient of 0.64 was substantial and landed the coefficient in the strong category according to the Salkind (2003) coefficient groups. In addition to the high correlational coefficient was the significance of  $p=0.00$  that was below the  $p=0.01$  threshold, which made the correlation significant. The discovery regarding the strong correlation led to the determination that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was supported.

3. In what ways, if any, does the combination of perception of leader's decisions, job satisfaction, and tenure relate to employee turnover intentions?

H4<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

H4<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

The final research question centered on the interrelationship regarding the independent and dependent variables chosen to analyze. The results from conducting a regression analysis on



the three independent and dependent variables demonstrated strong relationships ( $r=0.72$ ) between the variables, which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and support of the alternative hypothesis. The discovery came after the initial relationships were established regarding job satisfaction and turnover intentions, so the outcome was not surprising though the primary relationship holds between job satisfaction, perceptions of managers, and turnover intention without regard for the independent variable tenure. Of the three independent variables identified as possible causes for high turnover intentions in instances managers were promoted from that of a peer position, the variable relationships were different from previous research conducted regarding the tenure variable, as tenure was found to be a non-factor in turnover intentions regarding the sample population.

### **Summary**

The analysis of the independent variables to determine interrelationships helped address a key element in the overall relationship through regression analysis. Without conducting preliminary Pearson's bi-variable correlations, the perception may have been that all three of the independent variables demonstrated correlation to the dependent variable turnover intentions, which the independent variables did not. The two variables demonstrating correlation to the dependent variable were perceptions regarding ethical behavior (0.65) and job satisfaction (0.48). Tenure did not demonstrate significant correlation to the other variables studied, which was interesting given the significant drop in the number of seasoned employees. The same results occurred in an ad hoc analysis with the 21 tenured employees with more than three years experience. The analysis was conducted to substantiate the findings and to ensure the findings were not skewed because of the high relative number of participants with less than three years with the organization. Referencing back to the small sample of employees over the age of 40

being just 2.3% of the sample and only 4.9% of the sample having over 8 years experience, the burn out and high turnover elements of the job may be attributable for the drop off.

In chapter 4, a detailed account of the procedures regarding the collection of data was mentioned along with a description of sampling constructs regarding the research. The SPSS software package was used to conduct the analysis, create tables, and to illustrate the data in graphical representations throughout the chapter in an attempt to highlight the correlational strengths between the variables. Each of the previously mentioned questions was answered by addressing the hypotheses and supporting the corresponding answer with statistical significance. Chapter 5 covers an overview of the research conducted, limitations regarding the structure, and opportunities to expand on current leadership research. The concluding comments are at the bottom of the chapter in the conclusions section.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the quantitative correlational research study was to determine if correlation existed between the independent variables perceptions of ethical behavior, tenure, job satisfaction and the dependent variable turnover intentions. The general problem led to focusing the research to an organization and industry with high turnover at the line-level. The general problem addressed was that the cost associated with hiring, training, and supplying necessary tools and knowledge to newly hired employees adds strain to an organization and identification of variables attributing to turnover are critical for organizations to address (Chhabra & Mishra, 2008, p. 50).

Focusing the research was the decision to look at relationships between line-level workers and first-level managers in instances the managers were previously peers and then promoted into a management role. Previous leadership research did not show a clear delineation between hiring practices or the affect on workers perception of managers. The hypothesis testing included an analysis of the relationships between the independent variables. A combination of the independent variables was analyzed against the dependent variable turnover intentions. Four distinct questions were posed that focused the research to the variable relationships outlined in the research model with the perception of the independent variables overlapping and demonstrating correlation to turnover intentions. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the discoveries highlighted in chapter 4 with a comparison to previous research, limitations, implications, recommendations for further research, and concludes with in a summary.

### Findings

The SPSS software package was used to analyze data gathered regarding the research initiative focusing on turnover intentions as the dependent variable. The primary driver for

conducting the research stemmed from the gap in leadership research literature defining a sample of employees managed by a previous peer or someone promoted from a similar position into a first-level management role within the organization. Previous research did not delineate between firms promoting from within to first-level management roles and organizations that hired from external applicant pools to fill first-level management vacancies. Even though two of the variables demonstrated correlational significance to turnover intentions, the third (tenure) did not demonstrate significant correlation to either of the other two independent variables nor to the dependent variable turnover intentions. An initial observation was that because of high turnover within the firm and previous research identifying tenure as a significant variable associated with job satisfaction and turnover intentions, the sample was skewed with newer employees.

The decision was made to filter the data to participants with more than three years experience with the firm and to rerun the analysis. The ad hoc results for the 21 respondents meeting the criteria for the ad hoc analysis demonstrated similar low correlations, as did the total sample population. The 0.01 correlational coefficient falls into the weak category for the analysis between tenure and job satisfaction. The -0.09 correlational coefficient falls into the weak category for the tenure and turnover intention measurement, as well. Even though tenure for the sample population did not provide significant correlation to the other variables, the two other independent variables (perceptions and job satisfaction) did depict correlation to turnover intentions.

### **Research Question 1 and Hypotheses**

The first research question centers on two independent variables including employee perceptions of managers' ethical decisions making and job satisfaction. The two hypotheses drafted to study the relationship follow:

H1<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between perceptions of a manager's ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

H1<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between perceptions of a manager's ethical decision-making to employee job satisfaction.

Based on the Pearson analysis of the correlational significance between the two variable relationships, the outcome was to support the null hypothesis based on the weak correlation coefficient. Interestingly, perceptions of a manager's ethical decision-making and turnover intentions did demonstrate positive correlation but the two independent variables job satisfaction and perceptions of a manager's ethical decision making did not. Referencing back to the discussion in chapter 2 regarding perceptions of managers' decision-making Wheeler et al. (2007) mentioned job fit as a strong indicator of an individuals ability to meet the challenges of a position. The key element of the research conducted was the delineation of promoting from within an organization to fill first-level management roles from previous leadership research conducted. Semler (2008) mentioned that perceptions of employees were important for managers especially in organizations using a promote-from-within structure to fill management rolls. The insignificant variable relationship between perceptions of a manager's decision-making and job satisfaction came as a surprise when conducting the analysis, as the discoveries refute prior research.

Pettijohn et al. (2008) research focusing on sales associates' perceptions of managers depicted correlation between the variables but again promotion strategies were disregarded in the research. Similar to the research by Pettijohn et al., turnover intentions demonstrated correlation to perceptions of managers. The variable relationship is important to understand how the sample differs from previous research conducted regarding the variables because of the relationships the

line-level workers have with direct management staff. Hsiao and Kleiners (2002) concepts regarding managers success hinging on familiarity with an organizations culture and job responsibilities is important to consider in an industry with high technical knowledge requirements when considering the outcomes of the analysis.

High turnover affects both the line-level and management roles within the organization and is a consideration in the time and number of managers an employee will encounter. Okpara and Wynn (2008) discussed a key element in the analysis, specifically addressing poor ethical climates negatively affecting job satisfaction. Okpara and Wynn also discussed how high turnover decreases the ability of an organization to stabilize an ethical climate and in turn decreases job satisfaction of employees.

The second set of hypotheses focused on the variable relationship between the independent variables tenure and job satisfaction. The two hypotheses drafted for the variable analysis follow:

H<sub>20</sub>: No correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

H<sub>2a</sub>: Correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction.

Unlike previous research conducted, the results from the analysis depicted weak correlation between tenure and job satisfaction. The discoveries prompted the decision to support the null hypothesis that no correlation exists between tenure and job satisfaction. Sarker et al. (2003) discussed how tenure with an organization depicts strong correlation to job satisfaction but the researchers did not define the sample to include hiring practices or level within an organization. The differing characteristics between the samples may include hiring practices into first-level management positions and opportunities afforded employees for advancement within the organization. One of the differentiating characteristics of the sample

chosen to conduct the research was the severe physical requirements of the job for a line-level employee that is obvious in the tenure table in chapter 4 and significant drop off in tenured employees past the fifth year of employment.

Jenkins and Jensen (2010) also note that tenure with an organization affects job satisfaction. Unlike Sarker et al. (2003), Jenkins and Jensen (2010) do not agree with the perception that tenure has a positive correlation to job satisfaction. Instead, Jenkins and Jensen mentioned a correlation but not a positive one. Unlike either of the two sets of researchers, the current analysis did not produce correlation between tenure and job satisfaction. Tenure and turnover intentions also did not depict significant correlation, even in the ad hoc analysis with more tenured employees.

### **Research Question 2 and Hypotheses**

The second research question focused on the variable relationships between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The following hypotheses were drafted to guide the variable analysis:

H3<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

H3<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions.

The substantial coefficient correlation of the variables was similar to previous leadership research conducted. Interestingly, the two variables depicting significant correlations center on the idea of ethical climates and Fogel (2007) mentioned the importance of management to substantiate the precedence of conducting and modeling ethical behavior. Because of the high turnover associated with the line-level and first-level management roles, establishing a strong ethical climate was something the firm struggled to accomplish. The primary independent variable considered in the analysis was job satisfaction because of the research available already

that substantiated a clear correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Semler, 2008; Pettijohn et al., 2008; Chhabra & Mishra, 2008; Okpara & Wynn, 2008; Mancheno-Smoak et al., 2009).

Important to the analysis was the discussion of leadership strategies and delineation between command and control models of leadership and transformational strategies that empower employees (Brimdage & Koziel, 2010; Molero et al., 2007). Brundage and Koziel mentioned the short-term benefits associated with command and control leadership strategies but also note the negative long-term and limiting effects of the leadership strategy. Not a consideration in the analysis was the qualitative perspective of the employees that shaped the answers given regarding perceptions of managers within the organization, which was something that could help answer the interesting discoveries regarding the sample and why job satisfaction fell in line with previous research but tenure fell short of previous research outcomes.

### **Research Question 3 and Hypotheses**

The final research question covered the variable relationships between the three independent variables including tenure, perceptions, and job satisfaction with the dependent variable turnover intentions. A regression analysis was used to determine the variable relationships and the hypotheses drafted for the analysis follow:

H4<sub>0</sub>: No correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

H4<sub>a</sub>: Correlation exists between a combination of the independent variables and employee turnover intentions.

The regression analysis produced positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables ( $r=0.72$ ). The primary strength of the relationship stemmed from the



variable relationships between job satisfaction and perceptions with turnover intentions and an important element to mention is the weak correlation coefficient obtained when conducting the individual analysis of tenure with the other variables. The ad hoc analysis with the 21 participants meeting the tenure constraint of working for the organization for four years or more did not significantly change the correlational coefficient to turnover intentions (-0.09). Table 8 in chapter 4 depicts the Pearson coefficients noted previously for reference. The weak relationship of tenure to turnover intentions was an interesting discovery and contrary to previous leadership research, which could be associated with the management hiring practices, small sample size, or other variables not accounted for in the research (Sarker et al., 2003; Lovett & Col, 2003). Tenure was discussed as a strong indicator of job satisfaction and turnover intentions in available leadership research but the analysis provided a significantly different view of the sample population.

### **Limitations**

Limitations did affect the research initiative including sample size, sampling method, and geographical constraints regarding the sample population. The participation rate was limited because of external and internal limiting factors discussed in chapter 4. The factors included the requirement by the organization to wait to conduct the survey until after the work shifts of the line-level employees and the late shifts the employees worked, time requirements of filling in the three surveys, and the face to face interactions (self-imposed) to administer the survey attributed to the lower than expect response rate. Because of hiring changes within the organization, the number of facilities originally anticipated for collection decreased, as external candidates were hired to fill first-level management positions which shrunk the general population and

necessitated the decision to use a census sampling method to contact the potential participants (Gay et al., 2009).

### **Recommendations**

Clearly identifying a sample population is important to limit overgeneralizations regarding discoveries, which was apparent in the research discoveries. Previous research regarding tenure, job satisfaction and turnover intentions depicted tenure as a driving variable in job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Unlike previous findings, tenure depicted insignificant correlation to job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The primary differentiating characteristic of the research was the clear delineation between hiring practices and the sample population that consisted of employees who work for a former peer.

Focusing the research initiative to one organization within an industry with high turnover and delineating between hiring practices was the first example doing so to fill a vital gap in the available leadership research. Refinement of the data collection procedures and sample population will help improve the generalizability of the discoveries to the general population. The main discovery that differed from existing leadership research was the clear disconnect from previous research regarding tenure as a correlational variable to job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Unlike previous research regarding leadership, the current analysis of the variables depicted weak correlation for the tenure variable to the other variables measured. The weak variable correlation to the other variables does not offer conclusive evidence that tenure is not a significant contributor to turnover intentions but for the specific sample, tenure did not play a significant role in the intent to turnover employment.

The specific problem addressed in the opening chapter regarding management decisions being increasingly attributable to employee turnover intentions is an apparent issue (Motivated Employees, 2009). Unfortunately, the current research addressed specific variables previously attributable to turnover intentions and the only significant variation is that tenure was not found to be a significant contributor to turnover as previous research described. Because of the difference, one recommendation is to conduct a sample on both groups of employees instead of focusing on employees who have managers promoted from within the organization to substantiate the findings. A comparison of the perceptions between the two groups could be beneficial to describe the differences between the two groups. Definitively stating that promoting from within an organization into first-level management roles is the primary delineating attribute causing the variation is not possible without further research regarding the variation and expanding the sample population beyond the geographical and organizational constraints used for the research (Tuzun, 2007; Coder, 2007).

Areas to consider for leaders stemming from the research and other sources available are the pros and cons regarding promoting from within an organization compared to hiring from external applicant pools, as discussed in chapter 2. Establishing an ethical climate is an obvious benefit for an organization and high turnover of valued employees decreases a firm's ability to foster an ethical climate (Belak et al., 2010). Fogel (2010) described how the foundation of an ethical climate stems from the support from leadership, is negatively affected considering the effects of losing top talent because of turnover (Cocheo, 1998; Chan, 2006). Transformational leadership strategies play a significant role in the success of individuals in industries with considerable amount of change, which is a key attribute of the organization and industry chosen for the research. McLaurin and Amri (2008) mention the need for intellectual stimulation,

inspirational motivation, and individual consideration. In an organization with high turnover and promoting from applicant pools that are diminished because of burn out and high turnover, finding managers from internal applicant pools poses a risk to perpetuating poor ethical climates. Possibly branching out and finding less technically qualified external candidates would bolster the ethical climate within an organization by bringing in new perspectives and leadership strategies (Belak et al., 2010; Chan, 2006).

### **Implications**

The numerous resources regarding turnover intentions demonstrate the continued need to explore leadership strategies and hiring practices. Addressing the gap in leadership literature regarding variables affecting turnover intentions within the service industry and within an organization using a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management positions identified one attribute of the population that was unlike similar research. Unlike previous research, tenure had weak correlational coefficients to the other variables addressed in the research initiative. For leadership within organizations using a promote-from-within structure, the discovery can lead to identification of variables that affect job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Wheeler et al. (2007) discussed the importance of job fit and identification of variables contributing to turnover as important to building an ethical climate and strengthening a talent bench by retaining tenured employees.

The discoveries addressed in chapter 4 and earlier in chapter 5 highlight the need for an organization to foster an ethical climate and for management to demonstrate ethical behaviors, as negative perceptions regarding managers does contribute to higher levels of turnover

intentions at the line-level. Regardless of hiring preference, perceptions of employees regarding a manager are mirrored in organizations using either hiring strategy (Dixon & Hart, 2010).

### **Further Research Considerations**

Leadership research is never complete, as sample populations change and working conditions evolve to meet environmental, geographical, and consumer changes. Organizations continuously seek to make improvements and to streamline operations to be more efficient, worker friendly, cost effective, and to meet challenges head on. At the fore are the researchers that strive to identify the challenges by conducting exhaustive field and laboratory studies. For researchers seeking to expand on the research initiative, the following recommendations may be useful: 1) expand the sample population 2) include more organizations with similar industry constraints 3) replicate the discoveries 4) include qualitative probing questions regarding relationships 5) change the sampling technique to increase response rates 6) develop a shorter questionnaire to reduce time needed to collect data 7) sample employees from both pools (promote-from-with and hired from external applicant pools).

The first recommendation is to expand the sample population. The intent in the recommendation is to increase the number of responses received. Because of the sensitive nature of the study and the organizational constraints regarding the collection process, the number of responses was lower than expected. One consideration would be to branch out and include other segments of an organization besides solely the field staff to include warehouse and office administration employees in the study as well. The second recommendation is to include more organizations in the study. The recommendation lends well to the first recommendation to increase the sample population. By adding more organizations, identifying industry wide trends

would have generalizability beyond the organization. The recommendation also plays in to the perception that geographically constraining the study played a role in the answers received and expanding the study to the national level could produce interesting results.

The third research consideration plays into the applicability of the discoveries by replicating the discoveries when using a different sample population. Unlike previous research conducted, tenure demonstrated very weak correlational coefficients to the other variables including turnover intention. Researchers could use the discoveries to test similar organizations and organizational structures to determine if the sample was the reason for the shift in turnover intentions or because the research gap addressed by focusing the study to measure relationships of employees in an organization using a promote-from-within structure to fill first-level management positions was the reason for the different outcome.

The fourth research consideration is to change to a qualitative structure or to incorporate qualitative questions in a mixed methods approach to conducting the field research. The current initiative focused solely on the variable relationships without regard to exploring more in-depth the perceptions of participants. Without asking probing questions, multiple participants offered perceptions regarding direct managers. Specifically, a common theme regarding which manager should be rated was mentioned numerous times. High turnover did not only affect the line-level employees but also the management staff. Probing questions could have expanded the dialogue to include perceptions of working conditions and how many managers a typical employee may have had over the length of employment with the organization. The fifth research consideration is to incorporate different strategies to collect responses from participants. One of the primary reservations regarding participation in the survey was that the responses were collected at the end of the day when employees were trying to leave for the night. The participants mainly

complained about the time it would take and surveys taken home were not returned to the researchers. Inclusion of an online survey could have increased the number of responses because of the sensitive matter and time requirements.

Only the potential participants that took the survey on the spot submitted the survey. Future researchers may want to create an online portal and include an access key to take the questionnaire at the participant's leisure, which may increase the response rate. The driving factor behind the decision to contact potential participants in person was to convey the reasons for conducting the research. The general perception was that participants wanted to read the description offered in the cover letter more than discussing the reasons for the research. Simply delivering a concise introductory letter with online login information could increase the response rate. The final research consideration is the implementation of a condensed survey tool. Craig and Gustafson (1998) offer a short form to the PLIS that would significantly lessen the time necessary to fill in the survey. Some confusion regarding the meaning of words used in the PLIS also stymied respondents. Clarification of the verbiage used in the survey may also decrease the time necessary to complete the survey and increase response rates.

The final recommendation for future researchers centers on conducting research that compares the two groups of workers perceptions regarding management. By sampling employees with bosses that were once peers and comparing the findings to employee perceptions regarding bosses hired from external applicant pools, the benefits of the comparison could be beneficial. Instead of comparing the findings to previous leadership research, the researchers could compare to similar samples within the same industry and gain a better understanding of the differences between the two groups and contributors to turnover intentions.

## Conclusions

The discoveries for the current research initiative highlighted the variable relationships between perceptions of managers' decision-making, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. The variable demonstrating no significant correlation to the other variables was tenure with the organization, which was surprising given the perspectives regarding significant correlation to job satisfaction and turnover intentions in previous research (Pettijohn et al., 2008; Chhabra & Mishra, 2008; Okpara & Wynn, 2008; Dixon & Hart, 2010). Sarker et al. (2003) discussed tenure as a moderating variable for overall job satisfaction, which is contrary to the discoveries in the current research and analysis of the variable relationships. Even in the ad hoc analysis, no significant correlation was found between tenure and the other variables. The first question was answered by addressing the hypotheses through correlational testing where the null hypotheses was substantiated by rejecting the alternative hypothesis because of the significant variable relationship depicted through the use of Pearson correlations. To answer the question, what is the variable relationship between perceptions and job satisfaction? The answer was that a significant correlation exists between the two variables.

The second question relates to the variables tenure and job satisfaction. The answer to the second question, no significant correlation exists between the two variables. The third question centered on the combination of the independent variables compared to the dependent variable turnover intentions. Similar to the first question, the third question has an affirmative answer that the independent variables did demonstrate significant correlation to the dependent variable turnover intentions. Pearson correlational coefficients were used to analyze the bivariate relationships and a regression analysis was conducted on the combination of the independent variables in comparison to the dependent variable turnover intentions. The



demographic questions served twofold in the research initiative, as tenure was a primary moderating variable considered in the analysis stage of the initiative.

Education, ethnicity, age, and gender served only to define the sample population and offer perspective of the sample population. The descriptive statistics were useful to break down the information and to produce the graphical representations of the data in chapter 4. The PLIS responses were grouped by level of ethics (High, Medium, and Low) to gauge the analysis similar to previous research (Northouse, 2004). The outcome of the analysis highlighted the variable relationship between perceptions of managers and turnover intentions. The service industry experiences high turnover and organizational leadership must address issues within a firm to reduce costs associated with turnover (Calvasina et al., 2008). The current research identified two significant relationships between the variables chosen for the initiative and one variable that did not demonstrate correlational significance at all. Future researchers and leaders alike can build on the concepts developed in the research and refine the processes to address other variables that also contribute to turnover intentions.

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## APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY

Please circle one answer for each question below that best describes you:

Gender:	Male	Female	
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Education Level	Some School	High School Diploma / Equivalent	Some College	Associates Degree	Bachelors Degree	Some Graduate School	Masters Degree	Ph.D. Or Higher
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Ethnicity / Race	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	Native Alaskan or American Indian	Asian	Other	
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Age	18-22	23-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
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Time with organization (Years)	0-1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10+	
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## APPENDIX B: GJS SURVEY

General Job Satisfaction Scale							
Instructions							
Please circle one number for each question that reflects your opinion the closest.							
	Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Disagree Slightly	Neutral	Agree Slightly	Agree	Agree Strongly
1. Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I frequently think of quitting this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Most people on this job are very satisfied with the job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. People on this job often think of quitting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## APPENDIX C: PLIS SURVEY

The following items concern your immediate supervisor. You should consider your immediate supervisor to be the person who you feel has the most control over your daily work activities. Circle responses to indicate how well each item describes your immediate supervisor.				
Response choices: (1) = Not at all; (2) = Somewhat; (3) = Very much; (4) = Exactly				
	Not at all	Somewhat	Very Much	Exactly
1. Would use my mistakes to attack me personally	1	2	3	4
2. Always gets even	1	2	3	4
3. Gives special favors to certain "pet" employees, but not to me	1	2	3	4
4. Would lie to me	1	2	3	4
5. Would risk me to protect himself/herself in work matters	1	2	3	4
6. Deliberately fuels conflict among employees	1	2	3	4
7. Is evil	1	2	3	4
8. Would use my performance appraisal to criticize me as a person	1	2	3	4
9. Has it in for me	1	2	3	4
10. Would allow me to be blamed for his/her mistake	1	2	3	4
11. Would falsify records if it would help his/her work situation	1	2	3	4
12. Lacks high morals	1	2	3	4
13. Makes fun of my mistakes instead of coaching me as to how to do my job better	1	2	3	4
14. Would deliberately exaggerate my mistakes to make me look bad when describing my performance to his/her superiors	1	2	3	4
15. Is vindictive	1	2	3	4
16. Would blame me for his/her own mistake	1	2	3	4
17. Avoids coaching me because (s)he wants me to fail	1	2	3	4
18. Would treat me better if I belonged to a different ethnic group	1	2	3	4
19. Would deliberately distort what I say	1	2	3	4
20. Deliberately makes employees angry at each other	1	2	3	4

21. Is a hypocrite	1	2	3	4
22. Would limit my training opportunities to prevent me from advancing	1	2	3	4
23. Would blackmail an employee if (s)he thought (s)he could get away with it	1	2	3	4
24. Enjoys turning down my requests	1	2	3	4
25. Would make trouble for me if I got on his/her bad side	1	2	3	4
26. Would take credit for my ideas	1	2	3	4
27. Would steal from the organization	1	2	3	4
28. Would risk me to get back at someone else	1	2	3	4
29. Would engage in sabotage against the organization	1	2	3	4
30. Would fire people just because (s)he doesn't like them if (s)he could get away with it	1	2	3	4
31. Would do things which violate organizational policy and then expect his/her subordinates to cover for him/her	1	2	3	4

Thank you for your participation

## APPENDIX D: PERMISSION TO USE PREMISES

## UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX

## PERMISSION TO USE PREMISES, NAME, AND/OR SUBJECTS

(Facility, Organization, University, Institution, or Association)



Check any that apply:

I hereby authorize Joel Nelson, student of University of Phoenix, to use the premises (facilities identified below) to conduct a study entitled: Leadership, perceptions, and turnover intentions: A correlational study

I hereby authorize Joel Nelson, student of University of Phoenix, to recruit subjects for participation in a study entitled: Leadership, perceptions, and turnover intentions: A correlational study

I hereby authorize Joel Nelson, student of University of Phoenix, to use the name of the facility, organization, university, institution, or association identified above when publishing results from the study entitled: Leadership, perceptions, and turnover intentions: A correlational study

Signature

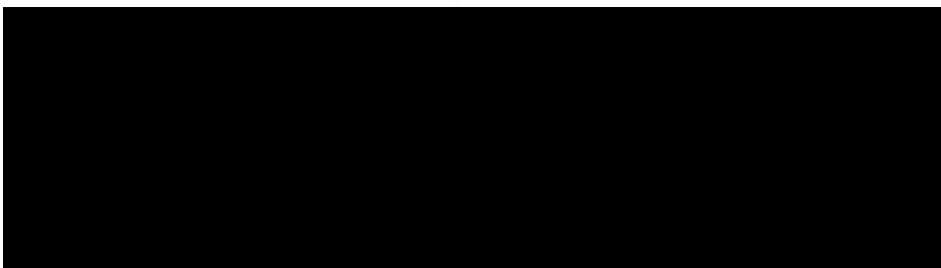
Name

Date

1/20/2011

Title

Director





## APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT

## UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX

## INFORMED CONSENT: PARTICIPANTS 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER

Dear Technician,

My name is Joel Nelson and I am a student at the University of Phoenix. A requirement of my current degree program is to conduct research and to complete a dissertation outlining the discoveries. I am contacting you to request your help in collecting information for the research project titled "Leadership, Perceptions, and Turnover Intentions: A Correlational Study." The purpose of the research is study relationships in the workplace between a worker and his or her direct manager.

Your participation will involve filling in three surveys, which should take no more than 10 minutes of your time to complete. Your participation in this study is voluntary and greatly appreciated if you choose to help. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so because participation is not required.

Your individual information will not be shared with the organization or any other outside entity besides for the researcher's sole purpose of gathering information about the perceptions of the technician staff regarding direct managers. Even though the researcher works for the same organization, the researcher is conducting independent research to fulfill requirements for the degree program and to further leadership research. Even though there may be no immediate benefit to you, a possible benefit of your participation is the long-term effects of the study of leadership and the interactions between technicians and direct managers. Your time is valuable and participating in the survey process is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, please contact me at [REDACTED] or email me at [REDACTED]

As a participant in this study, you should understand the following:

1. You may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without consequences.
2. You and your organizations identities will be kept confidential.
3. The researcher (Joel Nelson), has thoroughly explained the parameters of the research study and all of your questions and concerns have been addressed.
4. Data will be stored in a secure and locked area. The data will be held for a period of three years, and then shredded at the end of the three years.
5. The research results will be used for publication but individual and organization information will remain confidential.

"By signing this form you acknowledge that you understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to you as a participant, and the means by which your identity will be kept confidential. Your signature on this form also indicates that you are 18 years old or older and that you give your permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described."

Signature of the interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the researcher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F: APPROVAL TO USE PLIS



University of Phoenix®

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## Request to use - Perceived Leader Integrity Scale survey tool

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**Bart Craig <bart\_craig@ncsu.edu>****Wed, Aug 31, 2011 at 7:15 AM**

To: Joel Nelson &lt;[REDACTED]&gt;

Hi Joel,

Thanks for your interest in the PLIS. We do make the PLIS freely available for any noncommercial research purpose (see [www.sbcraig.com/plis](http://www.sbcraig.com/plis) for details). The terms of your letter are certainly agreeable, but it is really not necessary to provide me with a signed copy in order to secure permission for use (though I do appreciate your willingness to do so).

I've attached a few other files related to the PLIS that may be helpful, including an MS Word file containing some new experimental items that you may want to include. If you would be willing to share your data with me after your study is completed, so I can use it to help to continue to improve the PLIS, I would be very grateful. But it is not required that you share your data; it is only a request.

Just let me know if you have any other questions. I wish you the best of luck with your research!

Bart

~~~~~  
S. Bartholomew Craig, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Industrial-Organizational Psychology Program

North Carolina State University

## APPENDIX G: APPROVAL TO USE GJS



University of Phoenix®

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**Survey use**


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**Rosenoff, Emily (HHS/ASPE) <Emily.Rosenoff@hhs.gov>**
**Tue, Dec 6, 2011 at 5:29 AM**

To: Joel Nelson [REDACTED], "Swirsky.Stephanie@DOL.GOV" &lt;Swirsky.Stephanie@dol.gov&gt;

Cc: "Harris-Kojetin, Lauren (CDC/OSELS/NCHS)" &lt;fti3@cdc.gov&gt;

Hello Joel-

All of the measurement instruments included in "Measuring Long-Term Care Work, A Guide to Selected Instruments to Examine Direct Care Worker Experiences and Outcomes", were vetted and selected so that researchers or employers could use them without seeking permission. HHS and DOL specifically wanted to develop a "tool-box" of instruments that could easily be used. Therefore, I believe that this email can serve as confirmation that you may use the GJS for your dissertation.

I have printed/bound versions of the Guide if it would be helpful for you to have the reference (if you don't already). Just send your mailing address and I can drop one in the mail.

The authors listed on the guide were not the actual authors of the GJS instrument, but had assembled and vetted the instruments, and sought appropriate permissions from the original authors.

I don't have the current contact information for the lead author of the Measurement Guide, but I am in touch with the second author, Lauren Harris –Kojetin. You should realize that she has changed jobs and, since the project was a number of years ago, may not remember specific details from the project. I have cc'ed her here if you have other questions.

Good luck,

Emily Rosenoff

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)  
 Disability, Aging and Long-Term Care Policy  
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 Washington, DC 20201  
[202-690-5740](tel:202-690-5740)  
[Emily.Rosenoff@hhs.gov](mailto:Emily.Rosenoff@hhs.gov)