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Reflections From Advances in Global Leadership's Emerald Literati Award Winners

Osland, Joyce S.; Levy, Orly; Peiperl, Maury; Huesing, Tina; Ludema, James D.; Nelson, Janet Ann; Gyamfi, Nana Yaa; Lee, Yih-teen; Adler, Nancy J.; Bolden, Richard D.; Lyndgaard, Danielle Bjerre; Nielsen, Rikke Kristine; Ruiz, Lisa; Žilinskaitė, Milda; Miska, Christof

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REFLECTIONS FROM *ADVANCES IN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP'S* EMERALD LITERATI AWARD WINNERS

Nancy J. Adler, Richard D. Bolden, Miska Christof, Nana Yaa Gyamfi-, Tina Huesing, Karsten Jonsen, Orly Levy, James Ludema, Danielle Bjerre Lyndgaard, Maury Peiperl, Rikke Nielsen, Joyce S. Osland, Lisa Ruiz, and Milda Zilinskaite

The book/journal editors of Emerald Publishing are asked to select the Outstanding Author Contribution in each volume, which is a difficult choice. Before the Covid pandemic, the Emerald Literati Awards were handed out in a ceremony at the Academy of Management Meeting. Because that practice ended, we decided to showcase the work of our award winners, beginning with volume 8, who have made very important contributions to the field of global leadership. We were also very curious about the impact of their article and what they would write differently today. Thus, we invited the author/author team to write a short reflective piece broadly related to the questions below.

- 1) What motivated you to research this topic?
- 2) Do you have any sense of what impact your paper has had on the field of global leadership or beyond?
- 3) Would you write this paper differently in retrospect, or if you were writing it today? Is there anything you would add or change?
- 4) Did the paper have any impact on you personally? For example, did it change the way you teach, influence what you are researching today, get you promoted and put you in a higher income bracket (just kidding), etc.?

COVID-19 was just making its appearance when we were putting together volume 13 in 2019. A month before we went to press, we asked a large group of scholars and practitioners to

write short reflections that distilled their thinking on the global leadership challenges faced by individuals, organizations and communities tackling COVID-19 situations that are novel, complex, and filled with paradox. This is a typical context for global leaders. We replicated that with our authors, giving them only three weeks to write about an unfolding crisis. We titled their essays “The Role of Global Leadership during the Covid-19 Crisis,” and the wisdom and critical thinking of these essays earned them the Emerald Literati Award. Because their writing assignment was atypical, they were given slightly different questions to answer, which are listed below.

- 1) Do you have any sense of the impact your perspective had on the field of global leadership or beyond or on individuals or organizations?
- 2) You wrote your original reflection in the early days of the pandemic. If you were writing today, is there anything you would change or add to your piece? What did you get right or wrong, with the benefit of hindsight? What else can we learn from Covid that would benefit the field of global leadership?
- 3) Did your participation in this collaborative paper have any impact on you personally? For example, did it change the way you teach, influence what you are researching today, get you promoted and put you in a higher income bracket (just kidding), etc.?

We hope you enjoy all of these reflections as much as we did.

2013 Emerald Literati Award for “THE CONTEXT OF EXPERT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP”

**By Osland, J., Bird, A., &
Oddou, G. (2012)**

Reflecting on the Expert Global Leadership Journey

Joyce S. Osland

1) What motivated you to research this topic?

My fellow authors, Allan Bird and Gary Oddou and I had a personal interest in studying global leadership due to our years of work experience and some leadership positions in other countries, and our involvement in leadership training for MBA students, executives, and in my case, women managers. We were also intrigued by the goal of helping to advance a young field. Our interest in expert cognition was a direct result of the state of the field at that time; we began publishing on global leadership in 2005. With few exceptions, early researchers did not distinguish between effective and ineffective global leaders in their research samples, and there was no accepted construct definition for global leadership. Therefore, it was difficult to predict or train global leadership effectiveness, in such a nascent field. We wanted to remedy that situation, so our selection criteria were very strict and designed to include only outstanding global leaders. Focusing on expert cognition was another way to understand what effective global leadership looks like. We believed that if we could understand how expert global leaders think, had access to critical incidents reporting how and why they behave as they do, and understand the context in which they work, we could design training that would accelerate global leadership development in trainees and students. In addition to careful selection, we also used a methodology, cognitive task analysis (CTA), that was designed specifically to distinguish between experts and novices, which also met our desire to understand effectiveness. In sum, we

assumed there was a great deal more to learn about global leadership and, if the research proceeded as planned, we hoped to make a difference by developing global leaders with greater expertise.

2) Do you have any sense of what impact your paper has had on the field of global leadership or beyond?

This research built a foundation for the theoretical argument of what distinguishes domestic or traditional leadership from global leadership and raised the question of the role that context plays in challenging and developing global leaders. I believe it helped lay some of the groundwork for a later article on the construct definition of global leadership (Reiche, Bird, Mendenhall & Osland, 2017). This paper was cited by global leadership scholars, but I believe its impact was also practical in terms of influencing training designs and trainees. The idea of replicating the actual work context of global leaders and focusing on the global skills that we identified in this research was well received at conferences and workshops.

Our research also garnered some attention from the fields of decision-making and expert cognition. We were encouraged to present at the Naturalistic Decision-Making conference (Osland, Bird, Osland, & Oddou, 2007), and I was invited to publish in a book on cross-cultural decision making (Rasmussen, Sieck, & Osland, 2010) and expert performance (Osland, 2010). The high point of being exposed to other fields was the week I spent at Gary Klein's research lab in Ohio. I wanted to observe his team compile the results of a CTA study to make sure we weren't missing anything. When I showed Klein the tentative results from our own study, he said, "They are clearly highly intelligent people, but how are they different from any other highly intelligent sample? What makes them global?" We did another round of content analysis and identified their global skills, which became a cornerstone of all our training programs. Those

skills were so important that we posted them across the front wall of our Global Leadership Lab at San Jose State University.

3) Would you write this paper differently in retrospect, or if you were writing it today? Is there anything you would add or change?

I can't speak for my co-authors, but I wouldn't change the way we did the research or write it differently. I wish, however, that I could have found the time to fully realize the potential training opportunity based on our findings and, at the same time, carry out what would have been the next logical research step. A wonderful master's student, Karen Tremel, did her thesis on creating and testing a small number of situational judgement tests (SJTs) based on our data (Tremel, 2016). We tested the SJTs with students in our global leadership courses using a paper and pencil version. However, I also had student programmers create an online version, but I never found the time (or a server) that would allow me to complete and program enough SJTs to test whether this could possibly distinguish between traditional and global leaders and serve as an effective research-based training method for global leaders.

4) Did the paper have any impact on you personally? For example, did it change the way you teach, influence what you are researching today, get you promoted and put you in a higher income bracket (just kidding), etc.?

I was joking about the potential impact of putting authors into a higher income bracket when I wrote that question, but in thinking back, this article plus the others that resulted from this research program led to an endowed professorship for me and the life-changing opportunity to create the Global Leadership Advancement Center and GLLab at San Jose State University. This resulted in more time and resources to test our training ideas in an undergraduate global

leadership course and a three-course Certificate in Advanced Global Leadership at the MBA level.

I also became entranced with cognitive task analysis (CTA) due to the way that subjects' thinking is unpacked and even reveals "ah-ha" moments for them during the interview process. The distinctions between novices and experts that is designed into this method is fascinating. Subjects identified the cues and strategies they used in each component of expert thinking in the most difficult step of leading a successful global change initiative. Then they explained why novices would find this difficult. That novice-expert juxtaposition and the cognitive demands on global leaders that emerged are both memorable and incredibly useful in training (Osland, Ehret & Ruiz, 2017).

CTA significantly changed the way I teach and train. For example, I revised every edition of Dave Kolb's and Irwin Rubin's *Organizational Behavior: An Experiential Approach* ever since I was a doctoral student. They created an excellent book full of wonderful exercises. After using cognitive task analysis, however, I expanded my teaching and revision goal from helping students acquire essential OB knowledge and the self-awareness and behavioral skills to make them effective to include "helping students think like experts in organizational behavior." At the end of each chapter, I added in Action Scripts for Employees, Managers, and Organizations that summarized what experts would do. I tweaked debriefing questions on experiential exercises to emphasize expertise a bit more. And I created a team project in which students investigated and interviewed experts to learn what it meant to be an expert in a specific management topic that interested them. Students also shadowed experts and wrote about what they observed. When teaching global leadership, I used the critical incidents from this study to create case studies, situation judgement tests, and simulations. I modified existing experiential exercises to reflect

the global leadership context and global skills even more closely and tried harder to approximate the cognitive demands reported by expert global leaders.

Ironically, another result of the Literati Award paper may have been Bill Mobley's invitation to replace him as senior editor of *Advances in Global Leadership* upon his retirement, which might have inadvertently returned me to a lower income bracket.

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Joyce Osland, (Ph.D. in Organization Behavior from Case Western Reserve University) is an emeritus professor at San Jose State University and the former Lucas Endowed Professor of Global Leadership and Executive Director/Founder of the Global Leadership Advancement Center and its innovative GLLab. Dr. Osland is an internationally recognized scholar in the field of global leadership and international management. She has received numerous awards for both research and her innovative, experiential teaching. As a senior partner of the Kozai Group, she trains clients to use instruments that measure global competencies and inclusion for personal development and program assessment.

2016 Emerald Literati Award for “COSMOPOLITANISM IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE”

By Orly Levy, Maury Peiperl, & Karsten Jonsen (2016)

Advances in Global Leadership, vol. 9., Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing: 281-323.

CONTESTED COSMOPOLITANISM: LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

Orly Levy and Maury Peiperl

This essay is dedicated to our friend and coauthor, Karsten Jonsen, a true ‘citizen of the world.’

When our author team first came together in 2008, we were inspired by a multitude of cosmopolitan experiences in both research and practice brought about by the changing global business landscape. We found cosmopolitanism, as an academic concept and from personal experience, to be meaningful and instructive. We were also rather optimistic at the time, hoping that a new era, a new world—indeed, a cosmopolitan world—was emerging and taking shape. Our article — “Cosmopolitanism in a globalized world: An interdisciplinary perspective” (Levy, Peiperl, & Jonsen, 2016) — was driven by intellectual curiosity as to what this new world might mean, who these cosmopolitans might be, and what would be the implications for global business. We thus shared a deep sense of mission to illuminate the effect of global dynamics on the experience of cosmopolitanism in everyday life and to improve the workings of the global business system.

Our article reviews the vast literature on cosmopolitanism, mapping out the moral, political, and sociocultural perspectives, and explores diverse types of cosmopolitans, including the global elite, highly mobile professionals, and what we termed “ordinary cosmopolitans.” The last category refers to people exposed to the diversity that characterizes life in a globalized world. We like to think our work has helped broaden perspectives on cosmopolitanism and, indeed, global citizenship, particularly given the clear need for more interdisciplinarity (and, of course, impact) in this area. We would also like to think that our article can serve as a foil against which to read emerging anti-cosmopolitan sentiments, which have taken hold across much of the world in recent years.

Given that historical and structural dynamics, and above all, context, were central in the creation of our framework, and that these things are playing out even more profoundly in our world at present, were we to undertake this research today we would likely have to go even deeper into the complex entangling between cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan sentiments. Our focus on cosmopolitanism, as the title itself suggests, was inspired by globalization processes in the 1990s. However, these days cosmopolitanism has become a contested terrain with the rise of neo-nationalism and anti-cosmopolitanism across much of the world, from Russia's, China's, and Turkey's mission to restore their former imperial glory, to Trump's "America First" immigration and trade policies, Modi's Hindu nationalist party in India, to the upsurge of far-right politics and ideology in Europe, along with British, Catalan, and Scottish separatist movements. Perhaps the most explicit denouncement of cosmopolitanism as political principle came from former British Prime Minister Theresa May, who asserted in 2016 (shortly after the publication of our article) that "If you believe you are a citizen of the world, you are a citizen of nowhere. You don't understand what citizenship means" (*The Telegraph*, 2016). The condemnation of cosmopolitans is, of course, nothing new, and Ms. May has embraced a long-lasting tradition of anti-cosmopolitan propaganda (e.g., Nazi Germany and Communist Russia against Jews). However, if we were writing our article today, we would have examined more carefully the backlash against cosmopolitanism and the "cosmopolitan democracy," or indeed democracy itself, and the question of whether the current phase of anti-cosmopolitanism is an extension of the past or a significant new development.

We would also add contemporary depth to our categories of cosmopolitans, for example "ordinary cosmopolitans" for whom their relative lack of geographical mobility became, over the past few years, simply a fact of life for everyone. The consequent increased centrality of virtual

interactions across the entire spectrum of global (and even local) business would perhaps require reassessment of the centrality of globe-trotting mobility in defining our categories.

Another group of “ordinary cosmopolitans” that we would have explored in more depth is immigrants and refugees, many of whom find themselves practicing cosmopolitanism intuitively and unintendedly, as a matter of survival, as a matter of everyday life. Furthermore, we would have explored how cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan experiences permeate the daily life of immigrants.

Finally, we would go deeper into the current and potential role of business in resolving conflicts in the global system, as is now playing out (we hope), for example, in the boycott of Russia by ever-increasing numbers of global firms. We might also say more about the need for businesses to develop more and more cosmopolitan thinkers—particularly on the dimension of “moral commitment to a wider social community” for the global system to continue to function.

The stream of work that resulted in this paper has helped us to be better able to understand, advise, and act on the rapidly-changing, sometimes more and sometimes less global business system. Applying the concepts we spelled out in this article has become, really, our central mission in life and career.

Finally, we want to note that our dear departed colleague and co-author, Karsten Jonsen, was as friendly, supportive, and effective a cosmopolitan as it was possible to be. As Karsten wrote: “True value lies in how you live the nuances.” R.I.P.

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October 5, 2016.

Orly Levy (PhD in sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA) is Reader in International Management and Director of Research of the School of Finance and Management at SOAS University of London. Orly conducts research on multinational corporations and transnational networks, focusing on global mindset and cosmopolitan disposition, transnational social capital and cultural capital, power and politics in multinational corporations, and transcultural brokerage. Her research has appeared in journals such as *Journal of Management*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Organization Studies*, and *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. For her work, she received multiple awards, most recently the Emerald Literati Award for Outstanding Author Contribution in 2017 and 2021.

Maury Peiperl (PhD in organizational behaviour, Harvard) is Professor of Management and Senior Fellow in the Office of the Provost at George Mason University, Virginia, USA and serves on the boards of several for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. He was previously a professor at London Business School, IMD (Switzerland), and Director of Cranfield School of Management (UK), as well as Visiting Professor at HEC (Paris) and MIT, among others.

Maury's research has focused on careers, change leadership, CEO learning, and global mindset.

His work has appeared in journals including *Academy of Management Review*, *Harvard Business*

Review, Journal of Management, Journal of International Business Studies, Organizational Dynamics, and Human Resource Management. He has received multiple awards for research and teaching and is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences.

2017 Emerald Literati Award for “THE NATURE OF GLOBAL LEADERS’ WORK”

by **Tina Huesing & James Ludema** (2017)

Advances in Global Leadership, vol. 10, Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing: pp. 3-39.

REVISITING THE NATURE OF GLOBAL LEADERS’ WORK

Tina Huesing and James Ludema

“Experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you.”
– Aldous Huxley

“Leaders who have a greater sense of humanity and a clearer perception of what is happening in the world are the humblest, performing their work more effectively and efficiently.”
– Paul Polman

Our research in 2015 was motivated by three aspects: a) curiosity about the impact globalization has had on the world of work, and especially the work of leaders, b) a desire to contribute to a body of knowledge on global leadership based on the nature of the work actually being done by global leaders, and c) the desire to reflect on personal experience gained working in different global leadership roles. We reflected on the common understanding that the speed of change in the world was increasing, but how work itself was changing was not well understood. We replicated Mintzberg’s seminal 1973 study on the nature of managerial work to understand the nature of global leaders’ work.

Changes in information technology and global commerce have changed the context of work and have made leading on a global scale more challenging. Our findings showed that global leaders work much longer hours than the domestic leaders that Mintzberg observed fifty years earlier, and a blending of being “on” and “off” work is typical for global leaders. Global leaders need to rely on country-specific expertise from others to be successful. Global leaders know how to stay connected: they work in virtual offices that span the globe. Work gets done using synchronous and asynchronous communication and a variety of tools. The context in which the work takes place is characterized by complexity. Interdependence between different factors, ambiguity due to the complexity and an ever-changing reality make it more challenging to choose the right course of action. Global leaders focus on information flow between all stakeholders. Working and living in this environment requires bringing the whole person to work every day.

What has become much clearer since we wrote the article for *Advances in Global Leadership*, Volume 10 five years ago, is the importance of global leadership for business and beyond. The world is facing global issues: climate change, COVID, the global impact of regional wars, be it on energy, the supply chain or food security, and migration, just to name a few. While global governmental and non-governmental organizations are addressing these challenges as best as they can, businesses have moved away from a doctrine that had them focused solely on shareholder value and profits to a larger vision of purpose that includes providing benefits for society. When the world came together in 2015 in an urgent call for action by all countries and agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), some businesses reinvented themselves into a force for good that enables the pursuit of the SDGs. Many business leaders understand that their influence and business resources are needed to meet the 169 targets associated with the

17 SDGs, and these leaders want to contribute to achieving the 17 SDGs (see UN Global Compact).

Global leadership skills are needed when working on global sustainability goals, along with a better understanding of the kind of leadership that is best suited for these challenges. Whether we focus on global leaders' competencies, the kind of individual leadership practiced, or leadership at the organizational level, what we know from research on global leadership is beneficial to solving today's global problems. What we have learned from studying global leadership is helpful to all leaders who address global issues. When the challenges are global, global leadership is needed to tackle them.

Below are the top three insights we gained from our research that have become even more important in the last five years:

1. Global leaders shape their work and set preferences. They bring their whole self to work, and a separation of work and non-work is often not possible. Whether it is keeping up with what is going on in other parts of the world, checking in with business partners and friends around the globe to ensure they are safe and healthy, keeping in touch is a business need and a personal desire. Global leaders' passion and understanding of the world and its interconnectedness lead them to embrace sustainability goals. They pay attention to what is going on beyond the borders of their business, in society and in the world.
2. Global leaders focus on the information flows among all stakeholders. The context in which the work takes place is characterized by complexity. Interdependence between different factors, ambiguity due to the complexity, and an ever-changing reality make it challenging to choose the right course of action. Global leaders know it takes broadly

collaborative efforts to address the wicked problems they face in their businesses, and they know that global problems can only be solved in global partnerships. Global problems come with a multitude of stakeholders, and they all need to be part of the solution.

3. Global leaders practice shared or distributed leadership. They know they can't know everything, and they rely on other leaders with local knowledge when decisions are made. We see this leadership style as most suited to address global issues. Global leaders reach out and collaborate with other global leaders to get things done.

The research we did in 2015 provides a lens into what kind of leadership is needed today. Global conversations now include questions around de-globalization and a new economic world order. Global leadership will be essential for addressing all of them, and a deeper understanding of global leadership is a necessary contribution.

Tina Huesing, Ph.D., is based in the Greater New York area and provides organizational development services to small and medium-sized organizations. She has extensive experience helping global companies become more customer-focused and lean. Her current interests include helping companies develop and implement purpose-driven missions while embracing ESG (Environment Social and Governance) to contribute net positive sustainable results. Over the last fifteen years, Tina has taught graduate courses in leadership and management in Germany, New Zealand, India, PR China and the United States. She enjoys the interaction with future leaders. Tina received her PhD in global leadership from the Center for Values-Driven Leadership at Benedictine University. Her MBA comes from Thunderbird School of Global Management.

James D. Ludema, Ph.D., is Dean of the School of Business at Calvin University. Previously, he was Professor of Global Leadership and Founder and Director of the Center for Values-

Driven Leadership at Benedictine University. He is Past Chair of the Academy of Management's Organization Development and Change Division and is the author of two books and dozens of articles on global leadership, strategy, and organizational change. Jim has lived and worked in Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and North America and has served as a consultant to organizations including GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, BP, McDonald's, John Deere, USG, U.S. Cellular, the US Navy, World Vision, and many local and international NGOs.

2018 Emerald Literati Award for "HERE BE PARADOX: HOW GLOBAL LEADERS NAVIGATE CHANGE"

by **Janet Ann Nelson** (2019)

Advances in Global Leadership, vol. 11 Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing: pp. 3-30.

"HERE BE PARADOX" REVISITED: WHAT GLOBAL BUSINESS LEADERS CAN TEACH ALL OF US ABOUT NAVIGATING CHANGE

Janet Ann Nelson

"Here Be Paradox: How Global Business Leaders Navigate Change" (Nelson, 2018b) evolved from my doctoral dissertation, *Here Be Dragons* (Nelson, 2018a), completed in early 2018. That study examined how global executives in globally-integrated business enterprises navigated complex organizational changes through the lens of paradox theory. Findings of the study revealed that (1) global business executives are contextual leaders who juggle both global task and global relationship complexities; (2) paradox is the process they employ to navigate continuous change, enabled by sensemaking; and (3) as agile learners, they prove that the global

leadership capabilities required to navigate paradox can be learned. The final conclusion was “*it is not how these global leaders navigate change, but rather how they navigate paradox.*”

As I started my doctoral studies and research, I was in the process of retiring from a 30+ year career as a business leader specializing in global human resources. As a practitioner, I had been challenged over the years to identify, recruit, develop and promote global talent into key roles – in fast-growing global high-tech businesses, the demand *always* outstripped the supply of “ready-now” leaders. Additionally, I had been deeply influenced by living, working and learning in Asia. As a doctoral student, more scholarly discussions on leadership, organizational change and learning theories introduced me to the empirical research, academic arguments, and the potential lenses that might frame many of the questions that I had long wrestled in practice – my challenge was to extend these concepts to global leadership in the global business setting. I was also fortunate to have two doctoral faculty, Mike Marquardt and Shiasta Khilji, who shared my passion for global organizations, and to meet two seminal scholars in the field of global leadership, Joyce Osland and Allan Bird, at my first academic conferences.

My study was designed as an exploratory, basic qualitative study, and my research sample included 23 global executives from global business enterprises worldwide. As a first-time researcher and doctoral student, I was impatient to move from the data gathering to the data analysis and finding stages. Today, I would want to include a much larger number of participants and to interview them multiple times to see how their journeys continued to unfold, and how they continued to navigate change – especially the global pandemic! Additionally, some of the future research recommendations in that article are still needed: validated assessments; longitudinal studies; and studies of target subgroups.

The dissertation, the article, and a research presentation at a conference were key milestones for a brand-new scholar. I was delighted to be contributing to the fundamental research in the young field of global leadership. The total body of work stimulated conversations with other doctoral student researchers and was cited in other dissertations and theses. Most satisfying for me was the mentoring that I have been able to do with other doctoral students and the invitations to be a member of two doctoral dissertation committees.

On a personal level, this paper has impacted me in three areas: teaching, coaching and the pandemic. My doctoral degree opened the door to a new career teaching graduate and MBA students. My theoretical research lens of paradox and my findings on navigating change, global sensemaking and learning agility are now frameworks that I incorporate into my classroom teaching. As an executive coach, I continue to partner with both experienced global executives and next-generation global leaders. Paradox theory, especially the concepts of *Both/And*, and navigating change continue to be useful frameworks with my coaching clients as we lean into their current global business challenges.

Over the past two years, all of us around the world have been challenged by the paradoxes of COVID – the paradoxical tensions, the competing priorities, and navigating unknown changes. For myself, as well as with family members and colleagues, the frameworks and learnings from my earlier research have given us language to discuss and make sense of the pandemic tsunami going on around us. *How do we recognize and make sense of the new pandemic tensions bombarding us each day? How do we make choices that are good for us, both as individuals and as members of larger communities? How do we continue to learn and pivot as we work-from-home, school-from-home, and invite ZOOM into all aspects of daily life?*

The pandemic definitely slowed both my work and research in global leadership. However, my curiosities around leaders, organizational change and workplace adaptability have steered me to new questions, study and teaching in the Future of Work. The rapid explosion of technological changes and demographic/social shifts had already started to disrupt work, the workforce and the workplace, and COVID brought this to the forefront, especially hybrid work. It is a disruption that is right in front of and surrounding me. As an individual, a professor, an executive coach and a consultant, my context has shifted to this new landscape – the new workplace. I am finding that many of the questions, theoretical lens and findings from my earlier work continue to guide me in this new research, and also challenge me to answer this question: *How do each of us continue to disrupt our own thinking, research, scholarly conversations and writing to invite in new or broader paradigms that incorporate the massive changes now occurring in the world around us?* Similar to the final conclusion in the first article, my hypothesis is that *it is not how we navigate change, but rather how we see and navigate the paradoxes around us.*

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Janet Ann Nelson, EdD., is an Adjunct Associate Professor and MBA Instructor at the University of Richmond, an Executive Partner at the Raymond A. Mason School of Business, College of William & Mary; and an executive coach in private practice, working with global

business executives and next-generation global leaders. Previously, she was a global human resources leader in Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, with GE Healthcare for 34 years. Following her retirement, she completed her doctorate at George Washington University in 2018, where she received the first Marquardt 100 Research Fellowship Award. Her first published research on global leadership was recognized with an Emerald Publishing Literati Award in 2019. Dr. Nelson's current research, teaching, coaching and consulting interests include the Future of Work, global leadership, organizational change, paradox and learning agility.

2019 Emerald Literati Award for "TOWARD A FRAMEWORK OF CONTEXTUALIZED ASSETS AND LIABILITIES IN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP: IDENTITY AND POWER IMPLICATIONS IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT"

By Nana Yaa Gyamfi & Yih-teen Lee (2020)

Advances in Global Leadership, vol. 12. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing: 79-108.

Coming to Contextualization: Reflections on the Crafting of our Emerald Literati Award Paper

Nana Yaa Gyamfi & Yih-teen Lee

We are grateful for the opportunity to write this reflection essay about our paper published in *Advances in Global Leadership*, Volume 12. This paper was developed in the early part of Nana Yaa's PhD journey. In developing her second-year empirical paper, we had had several conversations on the idea of business leaders bridging cultures in multicultural work environments. Based on our respective international experiences, and given the fact that we both came from non-USA/EU countries, we are conscious that individuals do not interact with people from different cultures in a neutral way. People often carry markers of the cultural backgrounds they come from,

and such markers may generate both favorable and unfavorable conditions for the focal individual when interacting with people from different cultures.

We recognized an opportunity to distill the mass of empirical data collected at that time from the perspective of attributes of the leaders we had interviewed. We were not satisfied to simply present cultural differences as the main value proposition of the study, because they did not adequately capture the nuances underlying the intercultural interactions described by the leaders. In fact, one of the many themes that pervaded our analysis was the inherent advantages and disadvantages that our informants seemed to enjoy or suffer simply by virtue of being a Ghanaian local or a foreigner. This led us to dive deeper into the emerging themes, bringing us to the realization that discussions of power and identity ran parallel to the overarching subject of cultural advantages and disadvantages. Thus, we arrived at a framework of assets/liabilities of foreignness/localness.

Since this was one of the earlier qualitative papers we had written (the first for Nana Yaa), we were intrigued not only by the findings emanating from the data, but by the writing process itself. It was highly collaborative and iterative, involving deep reading of the interviews, consideration of the context of conversations and experiences that the informants shared, and numerous discussions about the impact of words and statements on the emerging bigger picture. In crafting the paper, we found ourselves swimming in words and descriptions, forcing us to make difficult choices in deciding what to keep and what to cut out so that our paper remained coherent (and publishable!). Even deciding on the visualization of the overall model was a learning experience, particularly for Nana Yaa. The data was so rich that there was an ongoing temptation to somehow sneak extra narrative into the illustration. Fortunately, the beast was tamed into a presentable diagram that we were both happy with.

Although it is difficult to predict the impact of the paper given the relative recency of its publication, we feel the topics we addressed are of both theoretical and practical importance. Our explicit modelling of assets and liabilities in the paper brought new perspectives to analyze global leadership and intercultural interaction, especially in recognizing the impact of cultural backgrounds of global leaders on their perceived sense of belonging and power, contingent on the specific cultures involved in the interaction. Such a view offers complementary insights beyond global leaders' cultural knowledge and cultural intelligence, and invites researchers and

practitioners to be attentive to global leaders' "being" and the contingent nature of the resulting assets and liabilities. We knew, or perhaps hoped, that our findings would resonate with many as they had with us, but we certainly did not expect to win an award. That was a very pleasant surprise that both gratified and humbled us. We take winning the award as affirmation of the value of the work we produced and are hopeful that the increased visibility would increase the paper's readership and citation, enabling it to inspire other papers along similar lines of enquiry.

If we were writing this paper today, given the confidence we have developed in conducting qualitative research and our deepened understanding of identity work literature, we would have been more ambitious in our theorizing. Conceptually, we may have further developed the concept of identity resources that may be associated with global leaders' cultural backgrounds and identities (e.g., Lee & Gyamfi, in press). Our framework explaining how MNEs in Ghana position local and foreign global leaders to maximize power and/or identity benefits could have been expanded toward a concept of contextual identity work; that is, identity formation and maintenance that is not occasioned by an individual, but by external forces that act to maximize or minimize that individual's identity resources. Because this was our first foray into qualitative research, we were overly cautious about the integration of our findings into existing theory. Therefore, we focused on describing our findings and highlighting the contextual contributions they made to the cultural identity literature, without anchoring our theorizing in a particular stream of literature.

On a personal level, the paper meant so much to Nana Yaa as her first publication out of her doctoral research. Such affirmation is invaluable, especially in the academic profession where assurance about the quality of one's work can be slow and sparse. In Nana Yaa's case, the announcement came at a time when she was struggling through the conceptualization of the second essay in her dissertation. She was bowled over by the announcement and also bolstered by the evidence that her work *meant* something. For Yih-Teen, this paper marked another important step in his pursuit of deeper understanding of the complexity surrounding multiple cultural identities and their influence in leading across cultures, with qualitative methods. It is particularly meaningful to broaden his perspective to empirical settings in Africa. This paper offered both authors a profound learning experience, allowing us to upgrade our knowledge to advance this line of research.

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Nana Yaa A. Gyamfi is a Researcher at China Europe International Business School (Africa Campus). She obtained her PhD from IESE Business School with research interests in cross-cultural management, particularly, the management of cultural differences in multinational enterprises, global work and global leadership. She is published in the *Academy of Management Review*, *Research in Accounting in Emerging Economies* and *Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies*. She has consulted for the World Wildlife Fund as a member of the Cognoscere Consulting group (LSE, UK). She is an alumna of the U.S. State Department's International Visitor Leadership Programme (IVLP) and has coached mixed teams of Ghanaian and Dutch students under the New Business Challenge programme of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RvO). Nana Yaa has written six feature-length plays, five of which have been staged. She also writes poetry and songs and engages societal conscience through exploratory pieces via social media.

Yih-Teen Lee is a Full Professor at IESE Business School. He specializes in leadership, fit, cultural identities, leading multicultural teams and global collaboration in his roles as educator, researcher, and advisor. He is particularly passionate about the concept of dynamic balancing and its application in leadership and bridging cultural differences. His research in these themes has appeared in leading journals such as *Academy of Management Discoveries*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Management*, and *Personnel Psychology*. In addition to MBA

programs, he contributes regularly to executive education programs and works closely with multinational organizations in their leadership development. Yih-Teen earned his Ph.D. from HEC, University of Lausanne, Switzerland, and his bachelor and master degrees from National Taiwan University. Raised in a Chinese cultural context, he has been living in Europe for over 20 years and is fluent in Chinese, English, French, and Spanish.

2020 Emerald Literati Award for "PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS"

When Arrogance Kills

By Nancy J. Adler (2020)

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**LEADING TOWARD REALITIES WE DESIRE: BY EMBRACING HUMILITY,
UNLEARNING CONVENIENT FALSEHOODS, AND RECOGNIZING
INCONVENIENT TRUTHS**

Nancy J. Adler

March 2020 feels like an eternity ago. That was the month I survived COVID-19; I guess I was an ‘early adopter.’ Already in Spring 2020, the level of threat and uncertainty felt astronomically high, while the level of understanding remained frustratingly minimal. As the *New York Times* described it, “the science was scant and discouragingly mutable, and so we settled on stories and updated them as needed (Stack, 2022).” The more people, myself included, craved certainty and any guidance that we could believe would keep us safe, the more leaders confidently asserted ‘facts’ that stretched well beyond what was known. Those ‘facts’ weren’t facts at all, but only predictions that had more to do with hope than with accurate observations of reality. That was when I began to appreciate how rarely our culture accepts, and almost never encourages, leaders

to publicly admit that they don't know. Yet without the humility to disclose that we don't know, none of us can navigate uncertain times, not just during a pandemic, but also more broadly when confronted by the array of grand challenges society now faces.

Feeling an enormous personal and professional need to make sense of what was happening, I immediately said yes to working with a wonderful group of 20 cross-cultural leadership scholars from around the world who were also seeking to decode what worked, and didn't work, when facing a pandemic such as COVID-19. Together we asked, "Which countries and leaders are navigating this pandemic successfully? Which are failing? Why?" Great questions, but they reveal that I, along with some of the rest of this wonderful team, had, at least initially, allowed ourselves to become entrapped in false confidence, rather than embracing humility. Even with all our collective expertise and years of experience, we over-confidently believed that we could make definitive sense of what was going on. We also believed that leaders and good leadership were central to the answer. We, like the leaders we were observing, had not approached our task with sufficient humility to realize that even the questions we were asking might be wrong. We thought we could know, but we couldn't. Especially during those early months of the pandemic, no one could. The global situation simply kept changing too rapidly, the patterns kept reversing themselves too often, core assumptions incessantly kept proving to be wrong, and definitive answers remained either elusive or non-existent. I am so glad I was able to be a part of this group. They taught me humility, not just the humility needed to understand effective leadership during a pandemic, but also in all areas of my life. It was a huge gift. In 2021, the group published our observations (Adler et al., 2022). Not surprisingly, we identified more questions than answers.

This past year, as I continued trying to make-sense-of-it-all, I was nagged by the sense that humility—not entering the world confident that we were right—was not enough. During a pandemic,

a leader who demonstrates humility by telling the public that “We simply don’t know how to keep you safe” is not doing enough. So what are the other steps that we, as leaders in our own lives and leaders on the world stage, need to take. At the moment, I have a hunch that there are four such steps: 1st, Embrace humility; 2nd, Unlearn; 3rd, Expose overly convenient falsehoods; and 4th, Recognizing inconvenient truths. Let me say a bit about how I think about each.

First, embrace humility. If I can’t admit that I could possibly be wrong, then there is no possibility that I will be able to let go of the false premises that lock me into unproductive ways of understanding the world. During the initial stages of the pandemic, while most national leaders confidently and definitively asserted the rules their citizens needed to follow—mask mandates, testing, vaccine regimes, lockdowns. Only one national leader that I am aware of led with humility, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen. She acknowledged that, given how little was known, the government would make mistakes. But as the government and public health experts learned more about the pandemic, they would update their recommendations, including letting go of policies that had originally looked promising but had proven ineffective (Søderberg, 2021). The Danish Prime Minister not only led with humility, but she was also strategic in its use. By stating at her first public press conference that she could, and most likely would, make mistakes, she protected herself and the government from being rebuffed when the shifting situation forced them to change course.

Second, Unlearn. To move on, leaders, and society, need to let go of prior assumptions, beliefs, perspectives, and paradigms, many of which served them well in the past, but no longer fit with the current situation. Adam Grant (2021), in his excellent new book, *Unlearning: The Power of Knowing What You Don’t Know*, documents how much more difficult it is to let go of a previously held belief or “fact” than it is to learn something new. Unlearning is difficult even once

a prior belief has been shown to be false. Why? Because there are convenient falsehoods embedded in our current beliefs that benefit us, and thus become ‘too convenient’ for us to let go of. Which brings us to the third step.

Third, Expose Convenient Falsehoods. We only let go of prior beliefs once we have identified why we have continued to hold onto such beliefs, even in the face of evidence that demonstrates their falsehood. For example, early in the pandemic, in February and March 2020, when I was living in Tuscany, I observed that the world press was strenuously condemning Italy for its high hospitalization and death rates. The media often employed an unfortunately popular stereotype to condemn the Italian government for being too disorganized to properly run their public health system and hospitals. Similarly embracing a stereotype, the world press accused Italian citizens of being ‘too creative’ to follow the strict rules that the government thought was needed to keep people safe from COVID-19. Neither stereotype was an accurate description of Italians’ response, especially during the early stages of the pandemic, after Italy had become the second country (after China) to suffer exceedingly high infection rates. What was true, and in retrospect explains Italy’s devastating early outcomes, is that Italy has one of the oldest populations in the world. We now know that seniors disproportionately suffered higher infection, hospitalization, and death rates than did younger people.

So why would the rest of the world choose to believe a false, stereotypic narrative about Italy’s excessive disorganization and immense (believed to be dysfunctional) creativity? Why? Because that false narrative allowed people in other countries to conclude that they were safe. They could conveniently, but falsely, believe that because their country was not as disorganized nor as creative as Italy was stereotyped to be, they would neither get sick nor die. Sadly, they were wrong.

The dynamic surrounding believing convenient falsehoods is not unique to Italy nor to the pandemic. As the *New York Times* reported, "...punctuated by abrupt breakdowns in logic. People ... [make seemingly] irrational choices; they ... [can't] tidily explain themselves (Stack, 2022)." As soon as I recognized the believing-convenient-falsehoods dynamic, I seemed to see examples of it everywhere.

How do we break the cycle? Perhaps by exposing the convenient falsehoods, primarily by repeatedly asking: What is convenient to me about holding this belief? How do I benefit from holding this belief? What if it is false? How could I let go of this falsehood? Without unlearning, none of us will have the possibility of moving on to new perspectives and beliefs that are more accurate and more productive.

Fourth, Recognize inconvenient truths. Since 1967, we have known—or we should have known—from Thomas Kuhn's brilliant discussion in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, that we, as human beings, do not let go of false beliefs simply because they are wrong (Kuhn, 1967, 2012). We don't unlearn a falsehood simply because there is mounting evidence to demonstrate that it is not true. Unlearning, as Adam Grant (2021) has described it, is not that easy. It appears that we only let go of a false paradigm when a new, more attractive option is offered to replace it. However, this too is tricky. Why? Because the new paradigm is often embedded in an inconvenient truth. Al Gore first highlighted this unfortunate dynamic in his Academy Award winning film entitled, *An Inconvenient Truth*. Whereas Gore presented overwhelming data amassed by scientists from around the world documenting that climate change was an existential threat to the planet and to humanity that urgently needed to be taken seriously, much of the population simply didn't want to believe that humanity could become extinct. The truth was too 'ugly' to accept that it might be

true. Significant proportions of the population simply rejected the science along with the dire predictions.

How do we break out of this cycle? How do we stop colluding with illusion? It is not easy, but perhaps we can start by (1) admitting that we could be wrong (humility), (2) being open to unlearning, (3) exposing the benefits(s) to ourselves and others of continuing to believe propositions that we are suspicious are false (and which, oftentimes, data has already proven to be false), and (4) recognizing the detriment(s) to us posed by accepting new propositions that we are suspicious are true (and oftentimes the data has already revealed them to be true), but that would undermine some of our most cherished beliefs and most prized aspects of our lifestyle. Just four steps, but not four easy steps.

Moving Forward. Today, in June 2022, with crisis after crisis washing over us, and cries for a return to an ever elusive “normal” filling the air, I wonder how society can embrace such a shift in our ways of understanding and living in the world. I have great confidence that select individuals can make the shift, but how can whole populations similarly change? I have searched history for examples of how whole populations that have made dramatic shifts toward the positive. One of the current examples that inspires me, perhaps surprisingly, comes from Ukraine.

We have much we can learn from Ukraine. As described in Timothy Snyder’s (2010) historic book on the region, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, the geographic area that now encompasses Ukraine has a long history of antisemitism, pogroms, and murder committed against its Jewish population. Yet four decades ago, when Ukraine gained its independence, the culture began to change in many positive and highly significant ways. In an election that that Ukraine’s history would have judged to be unthinkable, Ukraine elected Volodymyr Zelensky, a Jewish man, as president in 2019, with 73% of the vote (Beckerman, 2022). Zelensky is even more

admired today than on the day he was elected. Antisemitism in Ukraine has fallen to one of the lowest levels in the region; Ukraine is now the most accepting of Jews among all Eastern and Central European countries (Pew Research Center, 2018). As celebrated in the world press:

“In these days of war and uncertainty, the fact that a Jew has come to represent the fighting spirit of Ukraine provides its own kind of hope. Along with all that seems to be recurring—the military aggression, the assault on freedom—there is also something new: inclusion and acceptance in a place where it once seemed impossible.” (Beckerman, 2022)

How do such significant, large-scale, positive cultural changes occur? None of us has all the answers. What we do know is that no one can do any of this alone. We need all of us, compassionately listening to each other, deeply respecting each other’s humility and vulnerability, gently guiding each other toward unlearning—toward letting go of convenient falsehoods that no longer serve us, and inspiring each other to optimistically reach for new, more accurate truths, even when they are inconvenient. This is a process that demands nothing less than courage, compassion, honesty, and optimism. It feels huge, and yet I must believe we can do it. Quietly, I hope I am not deluding myself with yet another inconvenient truth.

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Nancy J. Adler, Ph.D., is the S. Bronfman Professor Emerita in Management at McGill University. She conducts research and consults worldwide on global leadership, cross-cultural management, and arts-inspired leadership practices. She has authored more than 150 articles, produced several films, and published 10 books and edited volumes. She is a Fellow of the Academy of Management, the Academy of International Business, and the Royal Society of Canada, and has been recognized as one of the top university teachers in

Canada. Adler is also a visual artist known for her paintings, monotype prints, and ceramics. Her artwork is held in private collections worldwide.

2020 Emerald Literati Award for "PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS"

“Leadership, Complexity, and Change: Learning from the COVID-19 Pandemic”

By Richard D. Bolden (2020)

Advances in Global Leadership, Vol.13 Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, 5-8

CURRENT PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Richard D. Bolden

1) Do you have any sense of the impact your perspective had on the field of global leadership or beyond or on individuals or organizations?

I wrote my reflections on the early stages of the pandemic in March 2020, when the UK was just four days into its first national lockdown (Bolden, 2020a). At that point, whilst relatively little was known about the virus, it was already clear that this was a momentous situation that would have a lasting impact on how we live our lives and lead our organisations and societies.

Within the article I highlighted five main themes that I felt characterised the challenges and implications of Covid-19 for leadership research, education, and practice. Whilst I would not seek to claim personal impact from my work, looking back I believe that each of the themes outlined in the paper have proven to be highly relevant to leadership theory, policy and practice both during and post pandemic.

The ability of governments and organisations to create and sustain a compelling sense of *shared purpose* has proved integral to their ability to implement and maintain the public health measures required to contain the virus (Jetten et al., 2020). *Collective leadership*, whereby individuals and communities stepped in to address the void left by formally appointed leaders has also proven essential (Kars-Unluoglu et al., 2022). The significance of *systems change* and collective *sensemaking* have characterised effective leadership within the complex and uncertain context of a pandemic (Angeli & Montefusco, 2020). And the argument for a *place-based leadership* approach has become ever more convincing in response to varying local conditions and needs (Sutherland et al., 2022).

2) You wrote your original reflection in the early days of the pandemic. If you were writing today, is there anything you would change or add to your piece? What did you get right or wrong, with the benefit of hindsight? What else can we learn from COVID that would benefit the field of global leadership?

Something that I did not explore in the original article was the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on disadvantaged individuals and communities. Highlighting the interconnection between health, economic and social factors, several authors have argued that this was a syndemic rather than a pandemic (Horton, 2020). The prevalence of *systemic inequality* became headline news during the Black Lives Matter protests in June/July 2020 and in my own city of Bristol led to the toppling of the statue of Edward Colston, a renowned slave trader, that had stood pride of place in the city centre for over 120 years (see Bolden, 2020b). As we rebuild and learn the lessons of COVID-19, these issues need to be front and centre in our minds - requiring *compassionate and inclusive leadership* that makes time and space for much needed reconciliation and recovery (Bolden, 2022).

Another theme that I did not explore in the original article was the significance of *digital leadership*. Though the pandemic we have all become familiar with different ways of working – including the ubiquitous Zoom and Teams meetings. Whilst technology has facilitated the transition to remote working, however, there are concerning accounts of the growth of a surveillance culture that undermines dignity, privacy and trust. The return to the office also poses challenges, with new expectations around hybrid and flexible working at the same time as some

leaders and organisations are demanding people come back on site. Looking forward, COVID has fundamentally transformed our relationship to technology and patterns of work -- the savvy leader would be wise to learn from this.

Finally, I did not give much consideration to the topic of *crisis leadership*. The leadership styles that emerged and were effective through the early stages of the pandemic differ in some significant ways from the leadership required to facilitate the recovery and rebuilding required as we transition into a post-pandemic environment. Arguably many organisations and governments remain stuck in crisis-response mode and are struggling to (re)establish appropriate democratic and participative ways of working.

3) Did your participation in this collaborative paper have any impact on you personally? For example, did it change the way you teach, influence what you are researching today, get you promoted and put you in a higher income bracket (just kidding), etc.?

As director of a university-based leadership centre, I felt compelled to comment on what was happening during the COVID-19 pandemic. The blog post from which my contribution to the *Advances in Global Leadership* paper was taken was one of the first times I had publicly applied my knowledge of leadership to a real-world crisis. Since then, I have written several more blog posts and been appointed as a Fellow of the International Leadership Association to contribute to their blog on *Leadership for the Greater Good* - <https://ilaglobalnetwork.org/blog/>.

I also found the opportunity to conduct applied research for a range of organisations on people's experiences of working and leading through the pandemic and the implications for leadership and organisation development. This has been moving and emotive work – with many participants finding it cathartic to share their experiences in a safe and supportive environment. The use of online platforms for hosting interviews and focus groups has proven highly effective and enabled a broader reach than would otherwise have been the case.

Similarly, I have developed my capacity for developing and delivering online leadership and management education, including the opportunity for my students to engage directly with cohorts from around the world. Whilst the pandemic has had a devastating effect for many, for

me at least it has led to a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to leadership research, education and engagement that drives a positive change in the world – and for that I am thankful.

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Richard Bolden, Ph.D., is Professor of Leadership and Management at Bristol Business School, University of the West of England. His teaching and research explores the interface between individual and collective approaches to leadership and leadership development. He has published on topics including distributed and shared leadership, systems leadership; leadership paradoxes and complexity; cross-cultural leadership; and leadership and change in healthcare and higher education. Richard has an extensive publication history including numerous journal articles, book chapters, conference papers and research reports. He is the Director of Bristol Leadership and Change Centre and Associate Editor of the journal *Leadership* (SAGE). His international experience includes sub-Saharan Africa, France, Egypt and the Balkans.

2020 Emerald Literati Award for "PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS"

“What Non-Global Leaders Can Learn from Global Leadership in Times of Pandemics”

By Danielle Bjerre Lyndgaard (2020)

Advances in Global Leadership, Vol.13, Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, p. 44-46

A NEW COVID-19 PRACTICE EMERGES: ARE VIRTUAL ASSIGNMENTS WITH GLOBAL EMPLOYEES HERE TO STAY?

Danielle Bjerre Lyndgaard

During the first months of the COVID-19 crisis, I helped many companies find their way through the chaotic and novel work situation they faced. I often provided them with the 7-Step ‘Guidelines for Virtual Work,’ the tool I described in my April 2020 contribution to “Perspectives on Global Leadership and the COVID-19 Crisis” (Lyndgaard, 2020). As a result, I repeatedly saw confirmation that what global leaders had been doing for decades was now highly

appropriate for all kinds of managers struggling to survive and succeed in the local and virtual context necessitated by COVID-19.

In the early stages of the pandemic, I joined a research project entitled, “Virtual Leadership During the Corona Crisis.” By spring of 2020, we began applying our initial research findings on “how to modify leadership habits and obtain results in a difficult, new context” when advising global and local leaders, as well as HR professionals. As was the case in most countries, the pandemic catapulted Danish managers into very demanding leadership situations. Having to manage, lead and deliver results in an uncertain, virtual workspace over a lengthy time period with no end in sight without being able to physically meet with their teams and/or engage in any real face-to-face meetings constituted a unique challenge.

Back in Spring 2020, many of us believed that the COVID-19 crisis would end by autumn. As time passed and the pandemic continued, however, we realized how much managers unused to working globally and virtually could learn from the field of global leadership. Therefore, in addition to the 7-Step tool, we also shared principles, tools and inspiration from global leadership when advising Danish managers on how to keep things on track – even in the long run like this pandemic.

Since November 2020 I have worked very closely with some of the companies in Denmark that employ the largest number of international employees. Based on dialogues held with the managers and HR professionals from these companies, I have observed a new practice regarding virtual assignments with global employees, described below. Before the COVID-19 crisis, most Danish companies preferred bringing international employees and their families to

Denmark. Now, however, companies are more likely to take advantage of virtual assignments on a much larger scale than before. If a job role does not demand a physical presence in Denmark on a daily basis, the international employees travel to Denmark for shorter periods whenever it is relevant and convenient. Typically, this involves a short stay in the beginning of an employment period, where the new employee is introduced to Danish colleagues and company processes and gets a bit of 'HQ-DNA' under their skin. Thereafter from time to time when new projects are kicked off or when working with creative and innovative processes that require the international employee to be present, he or she physically joins the team in Denmark for a short period. This is much easier – and often cheaper – than moving the whole family to a new country, but it also adds even more complexity to the global management task. Before the COVID-19 crisis, global leaders often lead different teams located at offices around the world. Now the complexity of global leadership is increasing along with the practice of having your employees scattered all around the world, working from dining tables and home offices located in many different time zones and whatever country where they prefer to live. I'm very curious to find out if this practice will continue or disappear once the COVID-19 crisis ends. If this tendency sticks, I believe we must look deeper into how we can help global leaders understand and master this extra layer of complexity in their job.

Shortly after participating in the Advances in Global Leadership collaborative paper in 2020, I accepted a new position in The Confederation of Danish Industry (DI) that gave me the opportunity to focus 100% on global leadership and global HR, both inside and outside Denmark. I took over a team and a business area that had to be scoped in a completely new way and rebuilt almost from scratch. The team advises companies on global leadership and HR, targeting Danish managers and HR professionals who lead international employees in Denmark

and/or working globally as well as foreign managers working in Denmark. As much as I enjoyed my former work in DI, this new job felt like ‘coming home.’ I wrote my first master’s thesis in 1993 about intercultural communication and competences, which, combined with all the experience I gained during almost 30 years of leadership and management consulting and training, resulting in what my manager has called ‘the perfect match’ for me. I have what feels like 117,000 ideas on what we must do to help Danish companies succeed even better with global leadership challenges in the future.

Contributing to ‘Global Leadership and the COVID-19 Crisis’ in 2020 made me realize how much working in the field of global leadership meant to me. This made it very easy for me to seize upon the opportunity in this new job position and appreciate the mission of advising, facilitating, teaching and inspiring global managers to find their way through the complexity and paradoxes of global leadership.

Danielle Bjerre Lyndgaard holds a Master of Science in Economics and Business

Administration and a Master of Management Development from the Copenhagen Business

School. She is Director, Global Talent & Mobility at the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI).

Danielle is responsible for a team that advises Danish managers and HR professionals working with international employees both in Denmark and abroad, as well as foreign managers working in Denmark. Her research interests focus on global leadership development and the paradoxes

and complexity in global collaboration. She co-authored six books on global leadership and HR.

She is a member of the Global Leadership Academy – an academia-practitioner research

collaboration with 12 Danish MNCs under the auspices of DI. The research-based management

tools developed in this project were published in a practitioner toolkit titled Grasping Global

Leadership – Tools for “Next Practice” (Nielsen & Lyndgaard, 2018). They are used in global

leadership practice and executive global leadership training and are available to the public. They are excerpted in the Practitioner's Corner of this volume of *Advances in Global Leadership*, vol. 15 (Nielsen & Lyndgaard, 2023). During the COVID-19 pandemic, one of Danielle's primary tasks has been advising companies on how succeed with global leadership and HR -- often in a virtual workspace.

2020 Emerald Literati Award for "PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS"

"The Bat Effect: Global Leadership is Normal Leadership in Times of Crisis"

By **Rikke Kristine Nielsen** (2020)

Advances in Global Leadership, Vol.13, Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, 12-15

Corona Lessons: Preparedness, Connectivity & "Research Flashmobs"

Rikke Kristine Nielsen

In my original contribution to the *Advances in Global Leadership (AGL)* perspectives on the COVID-19 crisis (Nielsen, 2020), I argued that global leadership was normal leadership in times of crisis in that all leaders were experiencing and exercising "extreme leadership" (Osland, Bird & Oddou, 2012, p. 107). I believe that this point of view has been affirmed throughout the corona crisis, where the complexity of the leadership role typically associated with global leadership has been shared by leaders in general. 2020 already seems like a lifetime ago, however, and organizational life has gone back to non-crisis mode in many countries. In Denmark, where all corona restrictions were lifted in the beginning of 2022, we seem to have

almost forgotten about the pandemic and have moved on to another crisis of war in Ukraine. The corona crisis initiated a steep learning curve – I wonder if the forgetting curve will be just as steep?

My interactions with local and global organizations and corporations lead me to believe that a lasting impact from corona (now spurred on by the war in Ukraine) is a new or increased attention to organizational preparedness. Preparedness goes beyond change management and resilience, but at the same time is different from acute crisis management and rapid response initiatives. Post-COVID-19 change readiness seems to not only involve a state of mind or organizational culture, but is increasingly also a concrete question of “being prepared” in terms of, for instance, communication infrastructure, supply chain and sourcing, warehousing, and new dimensions of health and safety. Local and global corporations alike are preparing for global threats that do not emanate from traditional sources of changing customer preferences, legislative changes, or competitor actions -- thus they deal with new or increasingly relevant dimensions of globality.

A main point in my COVID-19 essay was that the explosion in virtual collaboration created a burning platform for a giant, naturally occurring experiment of digital transformation. The challenges of overcoming distance through virtual, mediated forms of communication, so central to the work life of many global leaders, was a challenge put to all managers. This experiment may not have changed the way global leaders interact with internal and external stakeholders, but it certainly seems to have changed other types of organizations for good. Even if management would prefer to get employees back to the office, employees are unwilling to give up the flexibility derived from being forced to work at home. As global leadership scholars, we have much to offer the organizations that now experience the promises and pitfalls of virtual

connectivity as a central collaborative nerve for the first time. Now, even local employees are dispersed in the hybrid workplace, potentially levelling the playing field for those employees participating virtually out of necessity rather than choice. We need to consider distance and remote working in new ways and combinations going forward – locally and globally. We also need to consider that our knowledge is now in demand by new audiences.

In my original contribution, I also asked the hopeful question: “What if governments and businesses acted with the same agility and resolve in handling the climate crisis as they do in confronting the corona virus?” Indeed, the later development of a COVID19-vaccine is a clear indication of what can be done through international collaboration when we put our mind to it. Yet it also poses the question of what the social sciences generally and global leadership research in particular have to offer. Research is generally a slow endeavor, and it has been argued that academic publishing cycles of lengthy rigorous peer review prevent research from tackling and quickly resolving the contemporary and grand challenges that face society. Indeed, during the corona pandemic, many journals made submitters aware that authors should expect longer processing times for their manuscripts since reviewers might be held up by corona-related life changes. But then you have collaborations such as *Advances in Global Leadership’s* “Perspectives on Global Leadership and the COVID-19 Crisis” in which the authors had three weeks to write their reflections, which were in print five months later. This effort felt like the research version of a flash mob, which is defined as a group of people summoned (usually by email or text message) to a designated location at a specified time to perform a brief action, often for entertainment and artistic expression, before dispersing.¹

The citation rates and downloads for this collaboration and others (e.g., Keller, Carmine, Jarzabkowski, Lewis, Pradies, Sharma, G., Smith, & Vince, 2021; Adler, et al., 2022), testify to

the relevance of this type of contribution. Their popularity seems to reflect the hunger for contributions that are timely, tap into the ongoing debates in our lives and societies, address grand challenges, and provide a variety of perspectives that can help us frame our teaching in a relevant matter, inspire our next research project or application and allow us to engage new audiences. The global leadership research community has a strong tradition for bringing researchers together for research handbooks (e.g., Szkudlarek, Romani, Caprar & Osland, 2020) and co-authored books on new topics that are challenging for practitioners as well as researchers (e.g., Lane, Maznevski, Mendenhall & McNett, 2009). I hope that the success of the *AGL* “research flashmob” on COVID-19, as evidenced by the Emerald Literati Awards, lays the groundwork for a new tradition -- “global leadership research flashmobs” that address many more of the pressing problems and grand challenges of our time.

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ⁱ Based on <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/flash%20mob>. Accessed May 30, 2022.

Rikke Kristine Nielsen holds a PhD from the Doctoral School of Organization and Management Studies at Copenhagen Business School and is currently Associate Professor of Organizational Communication at the Department of Communication and Psychology at Aalborg University in Copenhagen, Denmark. Nielsen's research interests focus on global leadership development and the paradoxes of border and boundary spanning. Nielsen has published on global leadership in *Advances in Global Leadership*, the *SAGE Handbook of Contemporary Cross-Cultural Management* as well as in a number of Danish research publications. She has been a leading member of the Global Leadership Academy (GLA) - an academia-practitioner research collaboration with Danish MNCs under the auspices of the Danish Confederation of Industry. Research-based management tools from this 7-year project have also been disseminated to the global leadership community in a toolkit, "Grasping Global Leadership – Tools for "Next Practice" (2018), which is used in global leadership practice and executive global leadership training. This toolkit also appears in the Practitioners' Corner of this volume of *Advances in Global Leadership*.

2020 Emerald Literati Award for "PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS"

"Work in the Time of COVID-19"

By Lisa Ruiz (2020)

New Ways of Working in the COVID World

Lisa Ruiz

Two years ago, scholars and practitioners came together to share their experiences on the impact of COVID-19 and how it shaped the global leadership perspective. The paper posed an important question at the time, and I was personally grateful in the early days of the pandemic to take time and reflect on the impact to the nature of our work. In some ways, it was comforting to know that even in the time of great uncertainty we were not alone in our experience. Everyone was working to forge a new path and new ways of working. At that time, we were only a few months into the pandemic, and so our collective perspectives were focused on adapting in an ambiguous environment and helping our team members do the same. Leaders within our company were first focused on ensuring team members had what they needed to work remotely and made a rapid transition to a virtual world. For those team members who had to be on site, the company was committed to ensuring that those employees felt safe and supported. No one imagined that we would still be working this way more than two years later.

In those two years we have expanded our virtual capabilities. We have become experts at virtual whiteboards, breakout rooms and other collaborative technologies. We check-in with intention at the beginning or end of meetings to ensure connectivity. Project groups are fully utilizing the functionality of Microsoft Teams and Zoom meetings. As we return to in-office presence, hybrid meetings are now the norm. Meeting leads know that they must prepare for meetings that ensure active participation both in person and virtually.

The employment market has changed dramatically. Like many other sectors we are seeing employees and recruits looking for remote or flexible working situations. With a tight

employment market, the candidates are often in the driver's seat in terms of setting salary and benefit expectations. Existing employees are seeking workplace flexibility to manage their own personal situations and problems that, in the past, they might have tried to solve on their own. Conversations about mental health and personal well-being are now common and encouraged. As a people leader, this is the one area of focus that really has my attention. Everyone, without exception, is sharing that they are experiencing some level of stress and burnout. We are encouraging our team members to take time away and disconnect. It is critical that team members feel that they can ask for what they need since each one's situation is different. As leaders, we need to set the example as well by taking care of ourselves and ensuring that channels of communication are always open for our teams.

In summary, having the opportunity to contribute to Volume 13's "Perspectives on Global Leadership and the COVID-19 Crisis" in the early days of the pandemic allowed me valuable time for reflection at a moment when the world of work was changing rapidly. When I reflect two years later upon the worldwide change brought about by the pandemic and the resulting changes in the global workplace, it is obvious that the pandemic made it necessary for all leaders to develop new skills and expanded forms of expert cognition in adapting to and leading change, over and above those we identified previously (Osland, Ehret, & Ruiz, 2017). COVID-19's impact on the world confirms the critical importance of leadership and continuing research on expert cognition in global leaders to enable us to meet the ever-changing challenges and demands of a global workplace.

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Lisa Ruiz is the Vice President of Regulatory Operations and Innovation at AbbVie Inc. AbbVie is a global, research-based biopharmaceutical company that grew out of Abbott Labs, with the mission of developing and marketing advanced therapies to address the world's most complex and serious diseases. Lisa has over 30 years of experience and currently manages a team that supports regulatory strategies for AbbVie's entire portfolio globally. Outside of her work at AbbVie, is an adjunct faculty member of Lake Forest Graduate School of Management teaching innovation and a facilitator/consultant in LFGSM's Center for Leadership. Lisa is a dedicated volunteer—she leads the Business Member Interest Group of the International Leadership Association, and serves as an advisor to her undergrad institution, the University of Illinois. She holds an MBA from Benedictine University and of course earned her PhD in values-driven leadership with a dissertation focused on design thinking as a positive approach to stakeholder collaboration and product innovation.

2020 Emerald Literati Award for "PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND THE COVID-19 CRISIS"

“Leveraging the COVID-19 Pandemic to Develop Global Leaders”

By Christof Miska and Milda Zilinskaite (2020)

Advances in Global Leadership, Vol.13, Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, 25-28

REVISITING LEVERAGING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TO DEVELOP GLOBAL LEADERS

By Milda Zilinskaite and Christof Miska

1) Do you have any sense of the impact your perspective had on the field of global leadership or beyond or on individuals or organizations?

Our contribution was on teaching. It focused on how the Covid-19 pandemic could be seen as a unique opportunity for professional MBA students in our multicultural Leadership Lab to foster their learning and leadership development. In response, we incorporated a student-initiated component that focused on leadership in times of crisis. Students reflected on their own behaviors in response to the pandemic and shared expertise relevant to the crisis and hands-on solutions implemented in their workplaces and discussed global organizations' innovative approaches (Miska & Zilinskaite, 2020, p. 26-27). We are not yet aware of the impact our perspective might have on the field of global leadership. However, we did see that it positively impacted our students.

In our original text, we wrote: “[a] thorough evaluation of this initiative’s impact on students’ leadership development and competence advancement will only be feasible retrospectively after more time has passed.” Several months after the text was submitted for publication, we had a course debrief session -- actually, three debrief sessions with different groups of students, each of which surprised us in their own way. What they shared were powerful discussions that cut deeper than usual, especially with regard to affective and behavioral aspects of learning. Although we did not empirically test our observations (we do not collect student data in this course), we both sensed that our intervention on Covid-19 nudged the students to acquire more holistic and new ways of generating meaning. Again, research is needed to support this, but it could be argued that our active global leadership development in the context of the pandemic related to “threshold concepts”—a term used widely in pedagogy literature. It refers to cognitive gateways that open up “a new and previously inaccessible way of

thinking about something” (Meyer & Land, 2003, p. 1). In this regard, it was notable that our students emphasized more than usual the system skills – such as leading change, making ethical decisions, building community – and thus the top of the global leadership competency pyramid (Bird et al., 2010).

For one full year after the course, we continued receiving emails from the students in that particular cohort. These included messages of gratitude, updates about their lives, and also sincere and deeply personal questions about leadership. Based on our previous experiences, this was an atypical reaction to the Leadership Lab, indicating a stronger bond and likely more trust than usual. Executive students are often too busy to look back at their courses and contact their former instructors. The messages included observations like these: “What that year [2020] made clear to me was that my leadership style is founded on the fundamentals of self-development, improving and helping others;” “The pandemic, and the way it turned our MBA program upside down pushed me to go deeper and to reflect on who I am and where I want to go,” and “When I started the program, my plans were very different from what they are now. The last year was especially agitating. In the midst of all the MBA “technical” courses I attended, your leadership reflection interventions left me stunning [sic] and enriched.”

2) You wrote your original reflection in the early days of the pandemic. If you were writing today, is there anything you would change or add to your piece? What did you get right or wrong, with the benefit of hindsight? What else can we learn from Covid that would benefit the field of global leadership?

Since we rather spontaneously reacted to the Covid-19 crisis while being part of it ourselves, we do not feel, with the benefit of hindsight, that we got anything particularly “right” or “wrong”;

apart from perhaps one general observation. In our last paragraph we wrote: “[First] taking global leadership development seriously makes it imperative to leverage ongoing rough contexts and situations for learning purposes, even if presently such endeavors might not appear of immediate relevance” and “[second], in times where crises seemingly justify national protectionism and de-globalization, it is even more urgent to foster the cross-national and cultural aspects associated with perception, relationships, and self-management competencies of global leadership” (p. 27). We stick to these two statements. Furthermore, the experience made us more self-conscious about reacting to unforeseen circumstances and translating crises into opportunities for leadership development.

Sadly, in today’s context—at the moment of writing this reflection—our experience and own learning was put to the test, again just as wrought with uncertainty as when we were writing the original contribution. The Covid-19 pandemic has not yet exactly passed: this year’s PMBA cohort was also forced to switch from in-person, to hybrid, to online-only modes, several times throughout the year. Furthermore, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has been a huge shake-up. This is not only because of Austria’s geographical proximity to Ukraine, but also because of the large percentage of enrollees from both Russia and Ukraine.

In our Leadership Lab course, we again had the dilemma of whether or not to acknowledge the real-world occurrences and modify our course activities accordingly. And again, encouraged by our experiences with the pandemic back in 2020, we chose to do so. Although the situation today is quite different since the overall class atmosphere is rather tense, it is heartwarming to see that many students from Russia reached out to Ukrainian peers, and vice versa. This is what we have observed in the students’ reflection assignments that mentioned

these occurrences of positive Russian-Ukrainian interactions. It is too early to tell how this eventually influences students' global leadership development. Currently, it appears as though the threshold concepts and system skills might be more relevant once again for students.

3) Did your participation in this collaborative paper have any impact on you personally? For example, did it change the way you teach, influence what you are researching today, get you promoted and put you in a higher income bracket (just kidding), etc.?

Our participation in this collaborative effort clearly required us to carefully reflect upon our teaching work, which we would probably not have done otherwise, given the tough circumstances caused by the pandemic. Interestingly, self-reflection is the backbone of the Leadership Lab, and by engaging in the collaborative paper for *Advances in Global Leadership* at the beginning of the pandemic, we actually practiced what we preach. Perhaps this contributed to students' learning as well as to a stronger bond and more trust in us as instructors. Definitely though, our greater self-observations resulted in increased self-management in the specific global leadership competencies, such as optimism, self-confidence, emotional resilience, and non-stress tendency (Bird et al., 2010). Writing about how we leveraged the COVID-19 pandemic made us do exactly what we ask from our students – to work on our own global leadership development.

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Milda Žilinskaitė is a Senior Scientist and Manager at the Competence Center for Sustainability Transformation and Responsibility (Vienna University of Economics and Business) and a visiting faculty at the International Anti-Corruption Academy. Milda obtained her PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of California, San Diego. She currently teaches and conducts research on business ethics, value-based compliance and sustainable development, especially, through the lens of international migration. Her collaborative work on these topics has been published in journals such as *Academy of Management Learning and Education* and *Academy of Management Discoveries*, and she is a coeditor of Routledge volume on *Responsible Global Leadership, Dilemmas, Paradoxes, and Opportunities* (2020). Her own experiences of living and working—including low-skill jobs—as a migrant in five different countries are what inspired her to co-found the *Migration, Business & Society* global network (www.migrationbusinesssociety.net).

Christof Miska is an Associate Professor at the Institute for International Business at WU Vienna University of Economics and Business in Austria. He is an alumnus of WU Vienna, CEMS (The Global Alliance in Management Education), and the Nordic Research School of International Business (Nord-IB). His research explores the intersection of responsible leadership and cultural/institutional variations, spanning micro, meso, and macro perspectives, and associated areas such as leadership studies and sustainable development. Christof's research has been published in international journals such as the *Journal of World Business*, the *Journal of Business Ethics*, and *Business Ethics Quarterly*, and presented at major academic conferences including the

Academy of Management and Academy of International Business (AIB) annual meetings. Christof gained industry experience through internationally-oriented project and consulting work with a number of reputable SMEs and MNCs across Europe.