

# It Takes All Kinds: Types of Leaders at the Bottom, Middle, and Top

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In H.S. Leonard (chair) *Investigating the Leadership Pipeline: Selection and Development Implications*. Academic-Practitioner Collaborative Forum presented at the annual conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology in Dallas, Texas. May 5, 2006.

# Background

- ▶ Escalating war for managerial talent has increased interest in developing leaders internally
- ▶ Developing leaders internally means understanding the leadership pipeline—how demands change across organizational levels

# Frameworks for Distinguishing Organizational Levels

- ▶ Organizational responsibilities  
(*Leadership Pipeline*, 2001; Freedman, 1998)
- ▶ Application of structure (Katz & Kahn, 1978)
- ▶ Stratified Systems Theory  
(Jacobs & Jaques, 1987)
- ▶ Differing skill requirements  
(Katz, 1955; Mann, 1965)

# Three Levels

	Responsibility	Functional Activities	Time Horizon	Primary Skills
Supervisors	Group or team within one function	Application of structure	Weeks to 2 years	Technical
Middle Managers	Multiple functional units	Interpretation of structure	2 – 5 years	Interpersonal
Executives	Multi-business organization	Creation of structure	10+ years	Conceptual

# Kaiser & Craig, 2004

	Supervisor <i>b</i>	Middle Manager <i>b</i>	Executive <i>b</i>
<i>Learning Orientation</i>	<b>+.291***</b>	<b>+.193***</b>	<b>+.499***</b>
<i>Work-Life Balance</i>	<b>+.204***</b>	+.015	<b>-.195***</b>
<i>Decisive, Action Orientation</i>	+.119	<b>+.207***</b>	<b>-.188***</b>
<i>Empowerment</i>	-.142	<b>-.118***</b>	<b>+.214***</b>
<i>Interpersonal Warmth</i>	<b>-.335**</b>	<b>+.170***</b>	+.052
<i>Abrasiveness</i>	<b>-.518***</b>	<b>-.215***</b>	+.026
<i>Lack of Follow Through</i>	+.124	<b>+.064*</b>	<b>-.171***</b>
<i>model R<sup>2</sup></i>	<b>.237***</b>	<b>.245***</b>	<b>.388***</b>

# Research Questions

- ▶ What types of managers actually exist at each level?
- ▶ Does performance of types vary as predicted by previous study?
- ▶ What do type frequencies tell us about natural selection in the leadership pipeline?

# Sample & Instrument

- ▶ Archival database of *Benchmarks*<sup>®</sup> ratings
- ▶ Empirically derived 7-factor structure
  - § Learning Orientation, Work-Life Balance, Decisive/Task Orientation, Empowerment, Interpersonal Warmth, Abrasiveness, Lack of Follow-through
- ▶ Excluded managers that couldn't be confidently coded as 1 of the 3 primary organizational levels
- ▶  $N = 2175$ 
  - § 225 first-level supervisors
  - § 1457 middle managers
  - § 493 executives
- ▶ Average of subordinate ratings used to define profile

# Frequencies of Predicted "Ideal" Profiles

	Ideal Supervisors	Ideal Middle Managers	Ideal Executives
Supervisory Level	3%	.5%	.5%
Middle Level	2%	.4%	.8%
Executive Level	3%	4%	2%

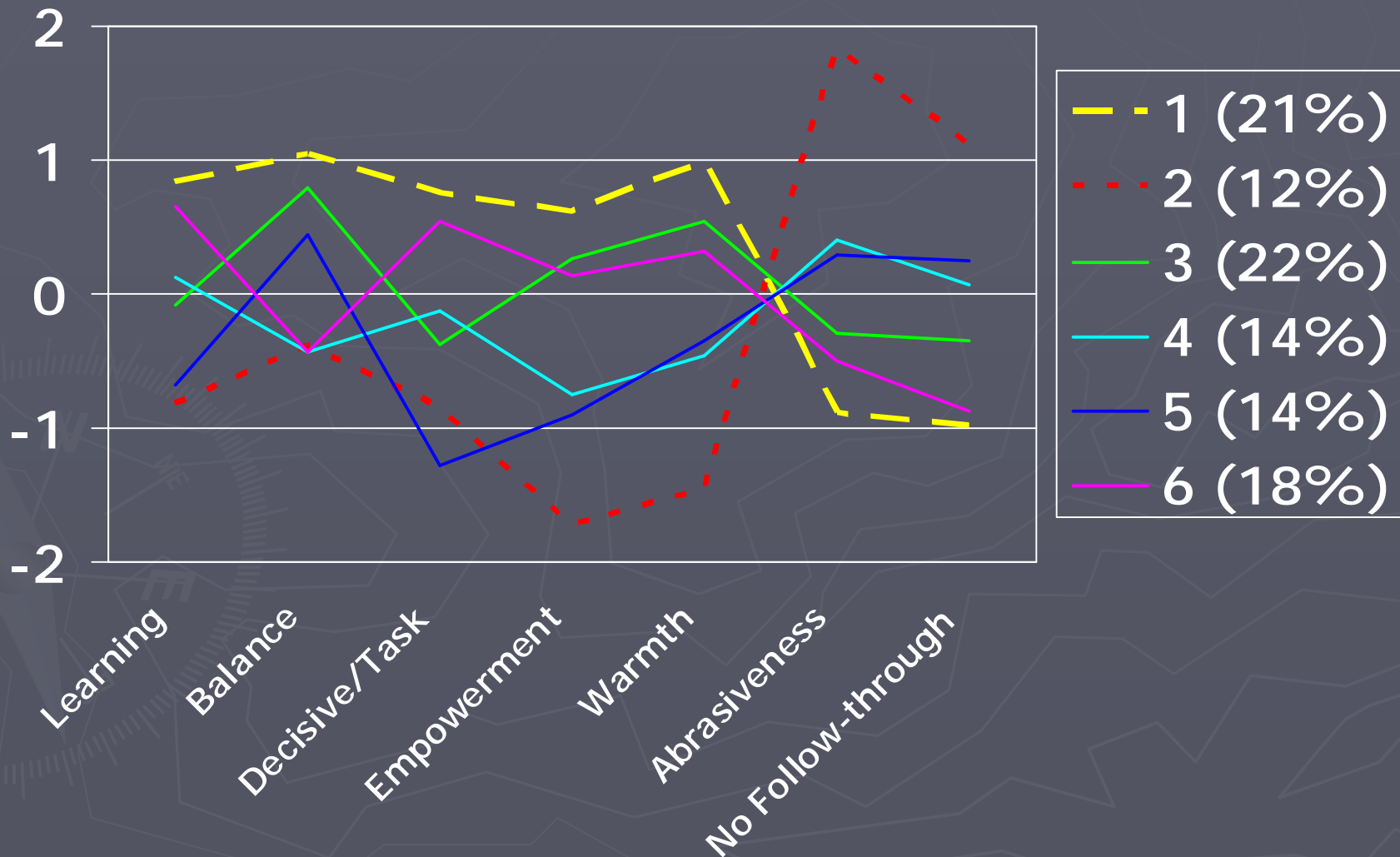
# Cluster Analysis

- ▶ Outliers removed  
(11 bottom / 19 middle / 23 top)
- ▶ Two-stage cluster analysis done separately for each organizational level
  - § Hierarchical agglomerative (Ward, 1963)
    - ▶ Average squared Euclidean distance
    - ▶ Standardized scores
  - § Iterative partitioning ("k-means")
    - ▶ Stabilizes solution by re-evaluating each case

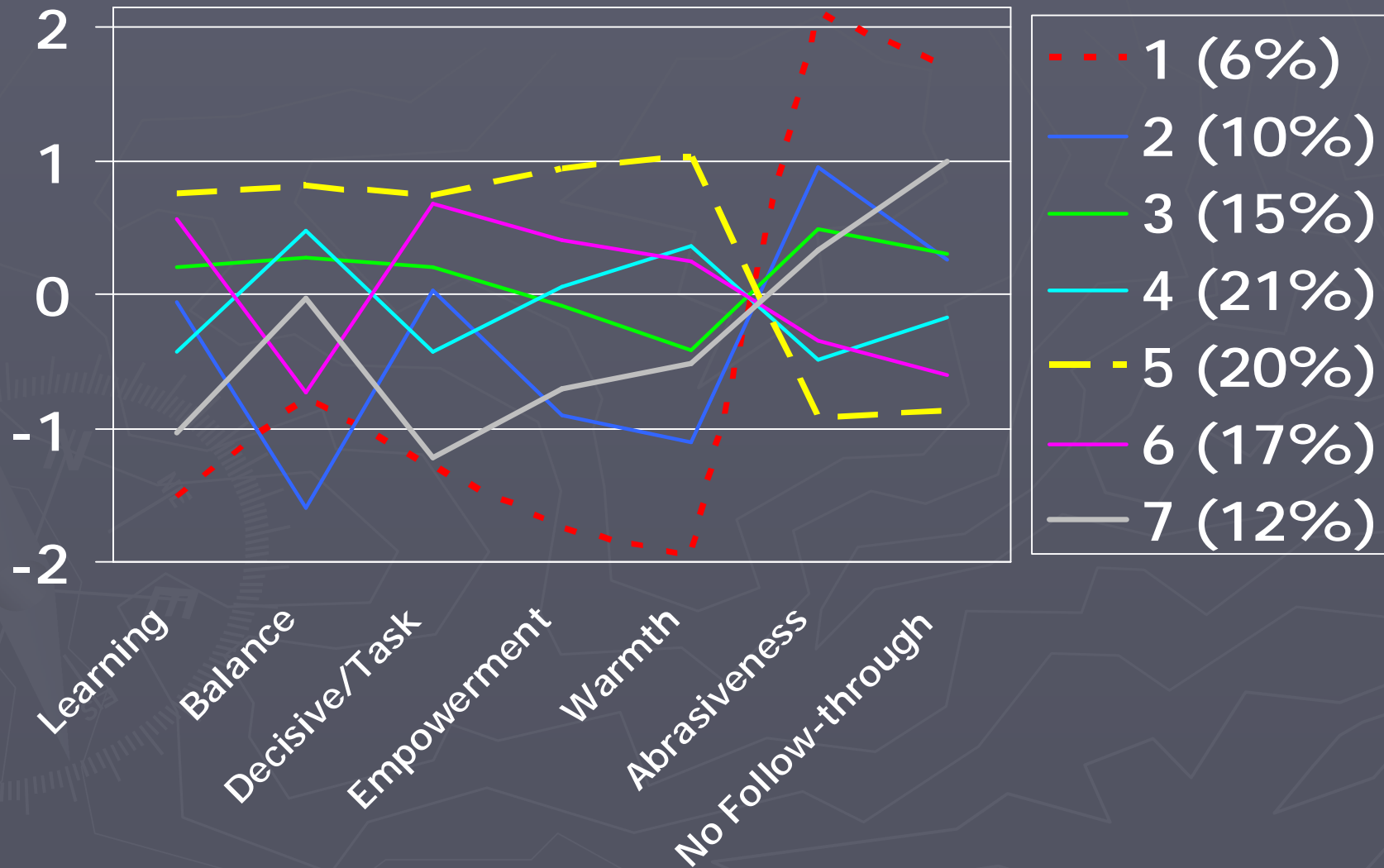
# Cluster Results

- ▶ 6 types of First-line Supervisors
- ▶ 7 types of Middle Managers
- ▶ 6 types of Executives
- ▶ Cluster membership accounted for
  - § 9% / 17% / 22% (bottom/middle/top) of boss-rated performance
  - § and 65% / 60% / 63% of subordinate-rated performance

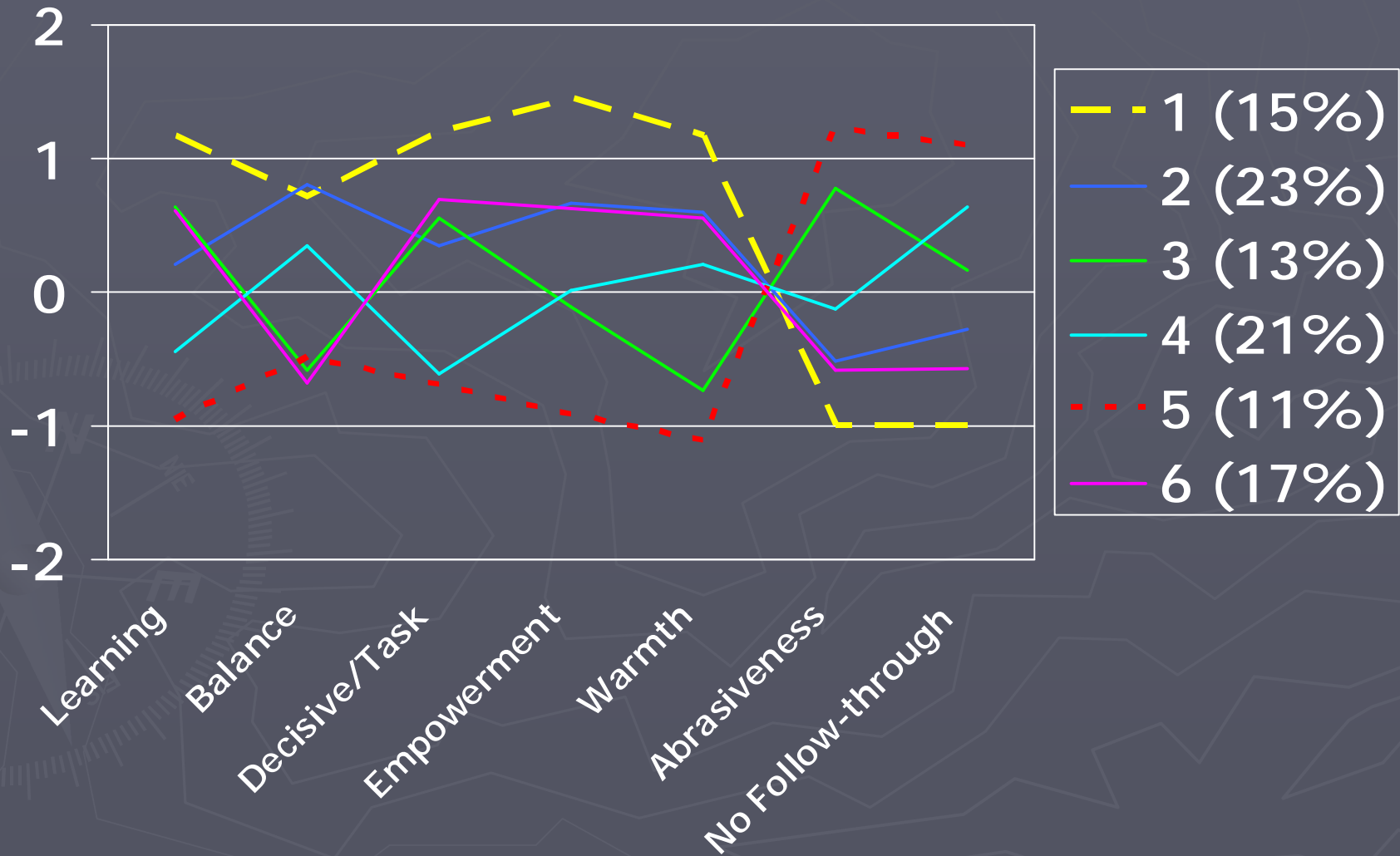
# First-line Supervisor Types



# Middle Manager Types



# Executive Types



# Some Observations...

- ▶ “Ideal” profile did not emerge as a cluster at any level
- ▶ Highest and lowest performing types were fairly similar across levels—and dissimilar to predictions from variable-oriented analysis
  - § Also similar: 3/4/4, 6/6/6
- ▶ Some clusters emerged only at certain levels (e.g., 1-4)
- ▶ Some types have similar shape but different levels (e.g., 1-4 and 2-3)

# Limitations & Future Research

- ▶ Factor-analytically derived measures not targeted to level-specific constructs
- ▶ Use of a shape-only similarity index might produce different results
- ▶ Need longitudinal study to address adaptation-selection question

# How to Get the Handout

- ▶ Download from [www.kaplandevries.com](http://www.kaplandevries.com)
- ▶ Request a copy via e-mail from [bart\\_craig@ncsu.edu](mailto:bart_craig@ncsu.edu)
- ▶ Leave your contact information after the presentations