Timothy A. Judge

Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior

Changes in Perspective and Perspectives on Change: Reflections on a Career

Timothy A. Judge[1,2]

[1]Fisher College of Business, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, USA; email: judge.56@osu.edu

[2]Mays College of Business, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA

Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav. 2023. 10:1–24

First published as a Review in Advance on November 30, 2022

The *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* is online at orgpsych.annualreviews.org

https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-042021-100036

Keywords

organizational behavior, personality, leadership, research methodology, autobiography

Abstract

This article describes my journey as an organizational behavior scholar, including reflections on the state of the field of organizational scholarship. I organize the article into two main sections. First, I provide my autobiographical review, beginning with my early years and ending with the five universities where I have been employed in my career. Second, I provide a set of observations about the state of the organizational sciences, focusing specifically on the two areas of my most significant focus—personality and leadership—as well as offering some general observations about the field. The organizational sciences have seen many positive advances: Research is more rigorous theoretically and methodologically, and more concern is devoted to replication and research ethics. However, partly owing to prioritizing these advancements over other concerns, new problems have developed, and other long-standing concerns have been exacerbated. I discuss my own changing perspectives on these issues and present some thoughts on how they might be addressed.

PREAMBLE

In the 36 years (counting my doctoral studies) I have been in the field of organizational psychology and behavior, I never would have anticipated the scale and scope of the changes we have witnessed. Some of these changes are technology based and therein similar to how technology has shaped other professions (Cascio & Montealegre 2016, Colbert et al. 2016). Many other changes, however, are largely independent of technology and are due to the progress of the discipline (scientific fields, of course, are dynamic, so present and past research change future research) as well as evolutions in the process itself (some of which is due to the growth in our field). While the effects of many of these changes have led to a more robust and mature field, I am concerned about some of the effects. This is a topic to which I turn in the second half of this article.

I have enjoyed reading the excellent articles in this series that my colleagues have written (Latham 2019, Mitchell 2018, Porter & Schneider 2014, Rousseau 2020, Sackett 2021, Schein 2015, Staw 2016, Tsui 2022, Weick 2017). In this article, I cover some of the same general topics: early influences, discussion of research streams, and commentary on contemporary perspectives. I was also, moreover, gratified to see some commonalities in my colleagues' evaluations of exciting developments in—as well as problems with—current research in the organizational sciences.

Yet this article diverges from these prior perspectives in an important way: This article is more autobiographical and, perhaps, more introspective than the prior contributions. Initially, I hesitated in taking on such a task as, in so doing, one perhaps assumes that one's story is of inherent interest and usefulness to readers. Indeed, over the years, I have known friends and colleagues whose paths have involved surmounting challenges I never faced, whether those be culture, language, gender, race, and even personality.

I tell my story here for several reasons. First, I think my appraisal of the current status of our field—as noted, a topic I address later in this article—can be better understood through an understanding of my personal history. Second, relatedly, and perhaps most importantly, as the title of this article suggests, my journey has involved considerable changes in perspective. How I view our work and our field is fundamentally different than was once the case, and how I spend my time significantly diverges from how I think my colleagues (such as my predecessors in this series) spend theirs. Some of the very values I have held most dear have shifted and even changed. It is my hope that others may find a reading of such changes helpful to inform their own past, present, or future career paths and strategies.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Early Years

I grew up on a farm in central Iowa in a small and close-knit community. The two nearest towns—Garwin and Montour—had populations of roughly 300 people. The nearest "large" town—Marshalltown—had a population of roughly 30,000. Though we made a trip to the "big city"—Des Moines—perhaps once per year, until I was 22, I only visited two cities in my life: Chicago and New York (when I was 16). My world was relatively small and lacked diversity in race, nationality, and high culture. It was stable, however, and my work on the farm instilled in me a capacity for hard work, a quality my sister also absorbed.

My sister and I were fortunate enough to live close to our grandparents, and they played important roles in our lives, as did a godmother with whom my sister and I spent a great deal of time. My mom was a proverbial farmer's wife, but such a stereotype hardly does justice to her strong and independent nature. Though she passed away in 2010, she had a particularly important influence on our early lives. My father, like my mother, did not attend college, but no one would ever question my dad's intelligence. Perhaps as a result of that intelligence, he realized farming was both a way of life and a business. While little was given to him, with my mom's help, we moved from what I would call lower middle class to solid middle class over the course of our childhood.

For the most part, I disliked farming but loved being outdoors. I also was not particularly fond of school at that time. Though I studied little, I was a good student in school, with the occasional run-in with authoritarian teachers. (To this day, I tend to react with defiance to that style of influence.) Though I was relatively quiet by nature, those who knew me could perceive my fierce independence and, at times, a somewhat wisenheimer attitude. There were many times when the gap between what I thought I knew and what I really knew was vast.

Despite the obvious but fairly narrow career path implicitly laid out before me—I was the only son of a farmer, and Judges had farmed in that area of Iowa for generations—it became obvious to my parents that I was not destined to be a farmer. At the age of 7, for reasons that now escape me, I set my sights on being an attorney. All that I knew was that I yearned for something more. I remember many days laying on my back watching airplane contrails high above, wondering what exotic places the people must be headed to. At such times, and whenever my curiosity was piqued, I yearned to experience something more exotic, while having little idea what form that might take.

In high school, my social group became the relatively small group of individuals who were more serious about their studies and who wanted to go to college. I was a good student in high school, and I recall the first intellectual stirrings emerging then. There were few advanced courses in my high school, but I certainly did benefit from spending time with the more intellectually inclined teachers and my college-bound peers (we were, in fact, a fairly nerdy bunch). It was also the first time I remember enjoying school.

While in high school, I took up golf when I was 15 and eventually earned a spot on the varsity golf team. I was surprised that many of the members of the team did not accept me because I was "a farmer." It was my first experience with class-based prejudice and ostracism, and it gave me some small insight into what oppressed groups must face at a far more fundamental and harmful level.

In my senior year of high school, my dad tried to convince me to attend the local community college rather than my aspiration, the University of Iowa. I privately wondered whether I was up to the challenge myself, but I was never one to stray far from my internal compass (a quality some might call stubbornness). By that time, I was dating Jill Oelerich, who had moved to Montour. Jill intended to apply to the University of Iowa and that only strengthened my resolve. Iowa was the only college to which each of us applied, and we both were admitted. In August 1981, off to Iowa City we went.

Undergraduate Experience: The University of Iowa

Though Iowa City was only 90 minutes from my farm, it seemed like another world. I do not believe I had ever set foot on a college campus before I moved into my dorm in August 1981. I was in wonder at the whole experience, but I also felt like a fish out of water in more ways than one. I remember thinking that I would need to study very hard just to earn passing grades. There was one singular event that changed my thinking. In my first semester, one of my classes was Political Science 101. It was a large, lecture-style class with nearly 300 students. I took the midterm exam. In those days, grades were posted on printouts by the last four digits of one's social security number. As I anxiously ran my eyes over the board, I found my ID and saw a score of 65. The maximum possible score was 70 and as I scanned the printouts, I saw that there was no score higher than 65. You would think in such a situation I would be happy. But the primary emotion I remember was confusion. After subsequently learning about image theory (Beach & Mitchell 1987), I understood the basis of my reaction: My whole conception of how I had oriented myself toward college did not fit the facts. The heuristic I had applied to myself was wrong. It was, in a way, its own problem to be negotiated.

I worked my way through college, mostly as a cook. However, late in my junior year, through serendipity, I came across a position where I could tutor calculus to disadvantaged students. The work was hard in some ways. I frequently found myself tutoring students from inner-city Chicago who received A's in math in high school but who had trouble multiplying fractions (and thus were ill-prepared for the rigors of this calculus course). I was inspired, though, by the intense desire of the students to learn. I immediately enjoyed the work—and was struck by a singular realization: It was the first job in my life I had ever enjoyed and found meaningful. I remember thinking, in naïve wonder, "I guess a person can really like the work they do."

I remember another event that taught me how life's chances can sometimes turn based on what may seem a trivial act on the part of one person. In my tutoring position, once a semester a supervisor would observe a session. My supervisor's name was Jeannette. After she observed my session, Jeannette told me, "You're really good at this." Jeannette had surely given such feedback to scores of tutors. For all I know, she said it to many tutors to encourage them. But as someone who was accustomed to few compliments, it caught my attention, especially when blended with my enjoyment of the work.

Even before my tutoring job began, during my sophomore year, I concluded, with little careful thought, that the world had enough lawyers and I decided (for reasons that still elude me) to check out the business school. As I surveyed the classes, I decided that the behavioral aspects of business intrigued me the most and therefore decided to take courses in marketing and human resources. I thought marketing seemed manipulative (not entirely a fair appraisal), but I was drawn to human resources as it seemed to blend elements I found interesting: numbers/objective analyses, understanding of human psychology, and procedures to ensure equitable treatment of people. I actually enjoyed most of my business classes. I found my two accounting classes to be the most challenging, but I was drawn to the challenge and the use of methodologies to solve practical problems. With my electives, I took classes in literature and French and dearly loved them. To this day, I find far more interest in classical fiction (especially Hardy, Eliot, Dostoevsky, Wharton, Austen, the Brontës) than in any other form of reading.

Jill and I were married in between our sophomore and junior years. This again was a situation where I went against the grain. My parents thought it ill-advised to marry so young, and in retrospect I can see why they felt that way. Yet for 2 years Jill and I had spent nearly every waking moment together and we had come to know each other quite well. Though I do not completely trust my memory, I think I was in more of a hurry to get married than Jill. I've made some bad and some good decisions in my life, but I never made one nearly as good as marrying her. Like all couples, we've had our ups and downs, but our bond is true and deepens with time.

During my junior year I was fortunate to enroll in a class taught by Duane Thompson. Duane was a faculty member at Iowa but had spent most of his career in human resources. I loved the way Duane taught (in a somewhat quirky blend of geniality, organization, and storytelling), and I enjoyed the translation of his business experience to research findings. Eventually Duane became my undergraduate advisor, and seeing Duane's skill in teaching, together with my own tutoring experience, led me to be drawn toward becoming a college professor. In various conversations in Duane's office, he patiently taught a very naïve student about the profession, and the more Duane described it, the better it sounded to me. I will forever be grateful to Duane, who recently passed away, for the helpful and clear guidance he gave me. Yet again, it was one of those seemingly small acts of kindness (though with Duane, it was actually many acts) that can represent turning points in our lives.

As I approached my senior year, Duane suggested that before I enroll in a doctoral program, I gain some business experience. In the fall of 1985 I interviewed for various jobs (there were no human resource jobs available at the undergraduate level), all general management positions, mostly in corporate training programs. Eventually, I was offered positions in Target's management training program in Minneapolis and Kohl's training program in Milwaukee. I decided to take the position at Kohl's and moved to Milwaukee in January 1986. After graduating from the 3-month training program, I was assigned the job of assistant store manager trainee at Kohl's Janesville, Wisconsin store. I was then promoted to assistant store manager at one of Kohl's stores in Rockford, Illinois. At Kohl's the management structure consisted of a store manager, three assistant store managers, and then department leads who reported to the assistant store managers. My responsibility was hardlines, which included everything one did not wear (the other two assistant store manager positions were softlines and personnel/operations).

Though I admired the company, I was ambivalent about my work at Kohl's. I enjoyed learning new things and found the environment exhilarating. I remember the feeling that, every day I walked into the store, I never knew what was about to confront me. I quickly learned about the good (that most employees cared deeply about doing a good job), the bad (shoplifting, employee theft, poor performance), and the ugly (my office was directly above the security office, and more than once I heard violent confrontations between security personnel and shoplifters they had detained; I also had to patiently listen to my share of personal threats when I did not accept a return as the customer wanted). While the job was exciting, I never felt entirely comfortable as a manager, and I'm not sure I was ever particularly good at it.

I did enjoy working for my boss, the store manager, Mike. Mike was an old-school, Porsche-driving chain smoker, whose hard-edged business mien was matched by an entrepreneurial and in many ways humanistic approach to management. I still remember the day I told Mike I was leaving Kohl's to attend graduate school and how graciously he handled it (though he nervously asked me if I intended to stay through the Christmas season; I did).

Graduate School: The University of Illinois

Once I decided a career in management was not for me, I was in a rush to get my PhD as quickly as possible and equally determined to start mid-year (never letting my naiveté hold me back, I did not realize how unusual this was). On the advice of Duane, I applied to every program he recommended—Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, and Iowa. (I wanted to stay in the Midwest as Jill was finishing her nursing degree.) I still am rather amazed that each one of these programs admitted me mid-year. I quickly narrowed my choices down to Illinois and Minnesota, and Jill and I moved to Champaign-Urbana in early January 1987. The programs I applied to were all industrial relations schools or programs. (Since then, many, including Minnesota and Wisconsin, have been absorbed into the business school.) At Illinois, disciplines were king, so as long as one took classes and formed one's committee in one of the major disciplines (labor economics, psychology, or sociology), one was allowed to take classes wherever one wished. I took as many classes in psychology and business as I did in the industrial relations program itself.

One of my first classes at Illinois was a research methods class with sociologist Bernie Karsh. We were required to write a research proposal for his class, and in deciding what to write, I reflected on my experience at Kohl's with a particularly complicated employee. The Sporting Goods department manager was a very smart, highly competent, but very unhappy individual. I'll call them Randy. Randy was also a leader in the store, often rallying others behind the latest defect they detected in the store. As I tried to address Randy's continual criticisms, I got to know them better. As I did, I realized that Randy was dissatisfied with virtually all aspects of their life—the store was no different.

My experience with Randy gave me the idea of writing a proposal about the spillover between job and life satisfaction, with the idea that while the spillover from job to life is obvious, the opposite direction, from life to job, should be studied. After I wrote my proposal, Professor Karsh called me into his office, and in a stern counseling session he told me that I could not study such a topic. Not only would it be impossible to study well, he argued, but it reflected a discredited position that personality is an important driver of human behavior. "No one believes that stuff anymore," he summarily proclaimed.[1]

Looking back, I am rather amazed at my reaction. I was disappointed but immediately accepted his judgment. I then spent (or misspent) a year trying to discover something that interested me in the hot field at the time, strategic human resource management. The only thing that really intrigued me was the upper echelons work by Don Hambrick (e.g., Hambrick & Mason 1984) and related research such as Anil Gupta's work on the personality of leaders (Gupta & Govindarajan 1984).

Two events represented turning points for me. First, Dave Whetten talked to me about a teaching assistant position in the business school. Dave was editor of the *Academy of Management Review* (*AMR*) at the time, and I happened to mention my interests. Dave then generously offered to share with me accepted but not yet published papers for a special issue in *AMR* guest-edited by Terry Mitchell and Larry James on personality and organizations (Chatman 1989, Davis-Blake & Pfeffer 1989, Pervin 1989, Wood & Bandura 1989). These papers were a gold mine to me. Not only could organizational scholars study personality, but this was emerging as an area of active (and legitimate) debate. I then quickly found papers I should have discovered earlier, the two seminal Staw papers (remember, this was before electronic searches were possible). Although I've never told Barry this, those two papers—Staw & Ross (1985) and Staw et al. (1986)—inspired me more than any work before or since. The Staw studies, along with one by Joel Weitz that I will discuss shortly, remain the most influential studies of my career; it is hard to overstate their significance and inspiration to me. What genius to produce those two thematically similar but otherwise entirely different papers at a time when virtually no one was focusing on personality at all.

The other turning point came at the hands of the person who would eventually become my advisor, Chuck Hulin. I was enrolled in a doctoral seminar and Chuck brought up this little ingenious study by Joel Weitz (Weitz 1952). Weitz theorized that if a worker reported that they were dissatisfied with their jobs, to know whether this was "real" dissatisfaction—and thus likely to lead to turnover—one needed to see how they felt about their job relative to other aspects of their life. Weitz then invented this checklist whereby he asked people if they were satisfied or dissatisfied with a list of ostensibly neutral objects common to everyday life (e.g., one's telephone number, first name, neighbors, car, etc.). Chuck's favorite neutral object was 8½" × 11" paper. Someone who hates normal sized paper, Chuck mused to the class with a gleam in his eye, is probably predisposed to dislike a lot of things in their life, including their jobs. I was inspired by that, and in my dissertation I adapted Weitz's checklist and found that not only did it predict job satisfaction of hospital nurses (Judge & Hulin 1993), but it also moderated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover in exactly the way Weitz had implicitly argued (Judge 1993a).

Chuck was the best advisor I could have had, and I idolized him. He is perhaps the deepest thinker I've known and could always be counted on for sound advice when I needed it. Chuck and I agreed on many things, but, true to my form, we disagreed on others, and we would often have spirited debates. Those debates made me nervous as I knew I was arguing with someone far more versed in the field and with a person I considered my intellectual better. Yet I treasured those arguments, in no small part because Chuck treated me as an equal. Rather than implicitly viewing our field as a sort of game by which one tried to produce as many top-tier publications

[1] In fairness to Professor Karsh, in 1987, most organizational behavior scholars did see this as, if not discredited, at least an infertile area to devote one's attention to. Professor Karsh had a successful career, and he merely conveyed to me what was the dominant thinking in the social sciences at the time.

as possible, what Chuck cared about were ideas. I was also deeply influenced by his respect for the science of organizational psychology and his belief that job attitudes were important to study, both because dissatisfaction would manifest itself in myriad forms of work behavior that no human resource policy could control and because employee well-being (as measured by their attitudes) was an important outcome itself.

One major event that transpired was in early 1988, when Jill told me that she was pregnant. This was not expected, and I remember immediately sitting on the floor thinking, "My graduate school days are over. I have to get a real job." Fortunately, we had just enough income to get by, as Jill was already supporting me (she was an oncology nurse at the largest health care provider in Champaign-Urbana, Carle Clinic), and I had my graduate assistantship. I worked odd jobs where I could. Abby was born in September of 1988, and upon seeing her for the first time, all my worries and concerns seemed to evaporate.

As I continued my march to get my doctorate as soon as possible, another fortuitous event transpired. Jerry Ferris accepted an offer from Illinois. Jerry was at Texas A&M at the time, and when Jerry arrived he brought not only all of his positive personal qualities—intelligence, remarkable supportiveness and generosity, and an optimistic outlook—but also A&M's values. Much of what I ever learned about critical aspects of our craft—how to frame a paper, respond to reviewers, look for jobs, etc.—I learned from Jerry. Jerry involved me in several of his existing projects. As I will note shortly, those made a major difference in my early career. I also benefited enormously from one of the best friendships I've been fortunate to have in my life, with Tim Chandler. Tim's focus was labor relations, but we got along incredibly well and his friendship contributed greatly to my doctoral experience at Illinois.

When I entered the job market after only 2.5 years in graduate school (I started applying for jobs after only 5 semesters of graduate studies), I had no publications and, indeed, had nothing under review. I did have those three projects with Jerry, which eventually were published (Ferris & Judge 1991, Ferris et al. 1994, Judge & Ferris 1993), and those did likely add a modest credibility to my record. There were many excellent candidates the year I was on the market, including Alison Barber, Mike Crant, Micki Kacmar, Cindy Stevens, and Ben Tepper. All of them were more qualified than was I.

In the summer of 1989, I cast my job search net broadly, applying to any school that had an opening, including universities whose names I had not previously known. As I recall, I applied to 37 schools and received only two job talk invitations, though (somehow) they were from great universities. The first was from Notre Dame and was a product, no doubt, of Chuck's friendship with Bob Vecchio, who was heading the search. I interviewed there in December 1989 and received an offer a month or so later. It was about that time I received my second job talk invitation, from Cornell. To this day, I am not certain what Cornell saw in me.

As Notre Dame's deadline approached, I called Bob Vecchio and told him that I wanted to come to Notre Dame, but Chuck strongly believed that I should interview at Cornell. I presented this to Bob as a dilemma, not a proposal, but Bob quickly said, "Tim, I want you to come to Notre Dame, but I don't want you to do so wondering what you might have missed. Go on to your interview at Cornell, and we can extend the deadline until a few days after your interview there." I was shocked because I really didn't want to go to the Cornell interview. But go I did, and I still remember the feeling of certainty that I've rarely had since for big decisions: At the end of the first day, I fell onto my bed in the Statler Hotel and knew that if Cornell made me an offer, I would accept.

Upon coming back from Cornell, I walked into Chuck's office and he asked, "So, what did you think?" "I liked it," I said, knowing that was a significant understatement of my enthusiasm. Chuck seemed to recognize that, grinned, said not a word, but licked his forefinger and made an imaginary mark of "1" in the air. Since I was on a tight deadline with Notre Dame's extended offer, Cornell made me an offer the day after I returned, and I accepted right away. Bob, of course, was gracious when I informed him. Yet again, though, a small act—his wisdom and empathy—ended up making a major difference in my career.

Early Career: Cornell and Iowa

I arrived in Ithaca in August 1990 eager and nervous but, somewhat surprisingly in retrospect, not worried. I did have a couple of papers under review by then, but still nothing published. It would be October of that year before I had my first top-tier acceptance. By logical extension, I should have been terrified. Cornell was known for its tough tenure standards and the three most recent tenured faculty were stars (Sara Rynes, John Boudreau, and Barry Gerhart each had double-digit top-tier publications by the time they went up for tenure) whose success I could only faintly imagine. But, curiously, I would say I was neither intimidated nor confident. I simply got to work.

I was fortunate to work nearly immediately with three doctoral students, Amir Erez, Dan Cable, and Diane Johnson. I would chair the master's thesis committees of all three, and I eventually chaired the dissertation committees of Amir and Dan. While most of my work was with colleagues outside of Cornell, I benefited enormously from the friendship of two fellow assistant professors, Barry Gerhart and Bob Bretz. The three of us spent a great deal of time together. As I was a new and not well-established assistant professor, I'm sure I benefited more from their friendship than they did from mine. As was the case with my friendship with Tim Chandler at Illinois, Barry's and Bob's friendship was a foundational part of my experience at Cornell. Better friends I could not have asked for.

It was during the fall of my first year at Cornell that Chuck suggested we send my dissertation paper to Ed Locke for a friendly review. Few know that Chuck and Ed were fellow doctoral students at Cornell. Their relationship was complicated, but it was one of mutual respect. Though I was daunted by sending my paper to such a titan in the field, Ed promptly sent back detailed comments, in which he proposed to me that the concept of core self-evaluations was worth considering. Ed and I immediately struck up a conversation and began to work on the concept further. It was a delight working with Ed. We published a conceptual paper with Cathy Durham introducing the concept of core self-evaluations (Judge et al. 1997) and, at the same time, began working on an empirical paper with Avi Kluger (Judge et al. 1998).

Core self-evaluations is not a concept that everyone accepts. Though my initial reactions to concerns raised over the concept were unfortunately defensive, I have come to realize that all new concepts deserve scrutiny. My belief in core self-evaluations is mostly born from the belief that, too often, we scholars make very fine distinctions among concepts that seem separate in theory but tend to share enormous overlap in practice. It is a rare person, for example, who believes themselves worthy but generally incapable, or generally capable but lacking control over their lives. I do not deny that specific factor variance may be useful for some of the lower-order traits, but I also think it inarguable that these lower-order traits share a great deal of overlap. The lumpers-versus-splitters debate exists across many areas of scientific discovery.[2] I certainly would fall into the lumper category if for no reason other than I grow impatient with distinctions without a meaningful difference (at least in my view). But the arguments of splitters certainly have their merits.

I do think many of the concepts we study in psychology are multidimensional. This means two things. First, the broad-versus-specific dichotomy is a false one. As my advisor has advocated in

---

[2]For a brief history of the lumper–splitter divide, readers may consult **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lumpers_and_splitters**.

his brilliant opus (Hulin 1991), the specificity or generality of the construct should fit its purpose. Second, it seems to me that there is a similar false choice with multidimensional constructs that are either latent constructs assessed with reflective variables or manifest constructs assessed with formative variables. I do not believe that constructs themselves are, from an essential standpoint, either latent or manifest. Rather, it depends on how we wish to conceptualize and use the variables that measure the concepts. This is a topic I pick up later.

The major event in my third year at Cornell was the birth of our second child, Martha. Marty was born in November of 1993 when Abby had just turned 5. To this day, though being different in many ways, they get along extremely well and remain very close.

In the fourth year of my career, I considered a position in the Department of Psychology at the University of Minnesota. I decided to stay at Cornell, but the next year, shortly after receiving tenure, I left for my alma mater, the University of Iowa. I have always felt a bit guilty leaving Cornell after they had gone through the process of promoting me early. It felt ungrateful and the timing was awkward; but my moving there was mostly about being closer to family.

Iowa was by then flourishing with its focus on individual differences. I began working with Murray Barrick and Mick Mount shortly after arriving, and I learned a great deal from them. I also worked with Sara Rynes and Bob Bretz and again benefited from friendships with all of them. I learned the most, however, from Frank Schmidt, often by osmosis, mediated through my doctoral students who took classes from Frank. It was also at that time I became interested in leadership, mostly due to my doctoral students Joyce Bono, Remus Ilies, and Amy Colbert—each of whom had their own interests in the topic.

My primary attraction to the leadership literature was that it seemed, quite frankly, to be in a perpetual state of disarray. Theories were proposed and then seemingly discredited. By then, Bass, Avolio, and House were publishing important work on transformational/charismatic leadership, but the consensus around these approaches was just starting to form. Another reason for my interest was the confusing dismissal of individual differences. I had trouble believing that there was no talent (either in personality or intellect) for leading, and my first works in leadership sought to delve into these apparent contradictions further. I'll have more to say on this later.

I am proud of my doctoral students, many of whom have gone on to earn endowed chairs in their own universities. But what I am most proud of is how they fully earned what they achieved on their own terms. I did not mold or shape them, and I never "installed" them as authors on papers. If anything, I set high standards and then gave them an environment in which they could define themselves. I do not believe it false modesty to proclaim that I learned more from them than they from me.

After 5 years at Iowa, however, the familiar restlessness started to reemerge. Early in my sixth year at Iowa, Amir Erez called me and wondered whether I might be interested in an endowed chair at Florida. After some consideration and two trips to Gainesville, Jill and I decided to move to Florida.

Returning to Frank, there is one story that I remember quite well. I had already decided to leave Iowa for the University of Florida. I attended my last department meeting, and it was one the dean attended. The topic of faculty compensation was raised. I said nothing in the meeting, but at one point the dean turned to me and said, "Judge, you've been sitting there not saying a word. What do you think?" I replied in a few sentences that I thought the faculty at Iowa were somewhat underpaid (which, given many of their extraordinary records, I believed was true). The dean became furious and launched into an invective against me, telling me that he was disappointed in my leadership and that I had not developed into the kind of department citizen he had hoped. Once the dean finished, you could have heard a pin drop in the room. No one—myself included—said anything for a few moments, as much out of shock as anything. Frank then said, "I don't know how you can say that. We could not have hoped for a better colleague than Tim, and we are sorry to see him go." The dean later apologized, and we parted on good terms. I do not fault the dean for losing his temper; it is not easy being dean. But I do credit Frank for coming to my defense. It certainly was not something he had to do. Frank had a somewhat inimitable capability of surprising you at times when you did not expect it. Though we had our disagreements at times, he still serves as one of the most important influences on my career, and I am grateful for my time with him.

Mid-Career: Florida

Three faculty members, all assistant professors at the time, recruited me to Florida: Amir Erez, Jeff LePine, and Jason Colquitt. It was impossible not to see the potential both in them and in what they were building—as well as the strong support the dean, John Kraft, provided to research. I gave up a lot in leaving Iowa—there, I was once again close to my family, I had more work and nonwork friends than I have ever had before or since, and we had a comfortable life there. Professionally, however, this was the right move for me. Iowa was already well established by the time I arrived. At Florida, it was exciting to think about building something new, and it was clear that this was exactly what Amir, Jeff, and Jason had in mind.

It was also an awkward time in that I was actively advising three excellent doctoral students at the time (Joyce, Remus, and Amy). Joyce was a year ahead of Remus and Amy was a year or two behind Remus, so when I left Iowa, I continued to serve as Joyce's chair with her degree coming from Iowa, Amy Kristof-Brown and I were Amy's cochairs, and Remus moved with me to Florida.

My time at the University of Florida was the most productive of my career. The organizational faculty were so research focused, and the college environment was so conducive to research, that it was hard not to be. Amir, Jeff, Jason, and I quickly recruited another strong faculty member, John Kammeyer-Mueller, and yet again I was lucky to benefit both personally and professionally from their friendship. I published papers with all four of these individuals, and we also worked with each other's doctoral students.

I continued to work with excellent doctoral students at Florida, including the aforementioned Remus, Ron Piccolo, Brent Scott, Beth Livingston, Charlice Hurst, all of whose doctoral committees I chaired or cochaired. But I also enjoyed working with Amir, Jeff, and Jason's students, including Jessica Rodell, Cindy Zapata, Pauline Schilpzand, and Eean Crawford.

Most years the five of us were at Florida, we were at or near the top of management department productivity. This occurred despite the fact that there were only five of us, and we had not yet established an effective strategy group. It was quite remarkable, and I would imagine that Amir, Jeff, Jason, and John would all agree that what we established there was pretty unique. Like so many good things in life, I wish I had better appreciated what we had at the time. Amir, Jeff, Jason, and John, of course, now are all chaired professors and leading figures in the field. How lucky I was to work with such a great group of scholars.

John Kammeyer-Mueller and I would often work at Starbucks. We'd sit at different tables, put on our headphones, and get to work. There was not a Starbucks in Gainesville that we did not frequent. Eventually, I discovered there were a few other "coffee shop" professors who worked there, including a faculty member in German, one in philosophy, and so on. It was a rather unusual way to work, but I found it enjoyable and productive. I remain especially close to John as well as Amir.

It was around this time that Pearson approached me about joining Steve Robbins as a coauthor on his *Organizational Behavior* textbook (Robbins & Judge 2006). Previously, Herb Heneman had asked me to join him on his *Staffing Organizations* textbook (Heneman et al. 1997). I really enjoyed working with Herb, and he remains a good friend.[3] Moreover, I found that working on a textbook forced me to translate the applied value of our research clearly. I enjoyed this challenge, and I found that, over time, it influenced how I thought about research in our field. It was therefore not hard to convince me to join Steve's book, which was, of course, exceptionally successful (for good reason) before I even signed up. Many editions of *Organizational Behavior* and *Essentials of Organizational Behavior* later (Robbins & Judge 2022, 2023), I continue to enjoy the work. I have no doubt that the necessary practice of writing clearly and translating research findings into useful recommendations for practice altered my views about how research in our field can be made more relevant, which again is a topic I take up later.

Jill and I had been debating for a long time whether to have another child. Finally, in 2002, we decided to try, and Carsten was born in February of 2003. After seeing all the joys our three children have brought us (along with, of course, the inevitable worries and difficulties), I wonder what took us so long. Then again, Jill had a disproportionate share of the household responsibilities, so, as with many (but not all) men in our field, I benefited from having a spouse who did more of the childrearing and household production than did I.

Yet again, though, I started to grow restless if not dissatisfied. "What's next?" I started to ask myself around 2009. It was a recurring theme in my career, the restlessness or ennui of having something settled. When I left Cornell, Iowa, and now Florida, it was not out of anything other than the need for change. Indeed, sometimes, if I had no logical reason for wanting to leave, I would invent dissatisfiers in my mind that, in retrospect, were pretty ridiculous. Upon reflection, I think some of this nature—undertaking something, becoming as good at it as one was capable, and then moving on when one was at the top of one's game—was inherited from my father. My dad would master something and either lose interest or look for a different way to extend or push what he had established. Frankly, I'm not sure whether it is a positive quality or not. I suppose like all traits, its functionality depends on the context.

Regardless of the cause or its logic, when Notre Dame came calling in 2009, I joined them the following year.

Late Career: Notre Dame and Ohio State

The move to Notre Dame was in some ways the biggest shift I've made. Some of this was a function of the distinctiveness of Notre Dame. Yes, it did value research, but it valued teaching nearly as much. And its mission led to more service-oriented outreach than I had experienced in the past. This shift, however, was also due to changes in how I viewed my career and what I was doing.

Sometimes in life we are pulled in directions without consciously understanding why. As I moved from Florida to Notre Dame, I was in the midst of the deepest ennui of my professional life. I did not realize it at the time, but my days of churning out articles at a high pace were over. I increasingly began asking the "what for?" question, and, lacking a satisfactory answer, I became involved in more administrative service; I also became involved with a start-up company in Notre Dame's Innovation Park that assessed job attitudes in the trucking industry. Early on, I greatly enjoyed my work with the company—Stay Metrics—as well as my friendship with its CEO, Tim Hindes. The start-up environment, the fact that its co-owners Tim and Kurt LaDow were serious about using evidence to solve problems, and the nature of consulting work were all happy revelations to me.

---

[3] Herb had asked that the 9th edition of *Staffing Organizations* be his last edition, so John Kammeyer-Mueller and I have been proud to carry on the legacy that Herb created with his brother Robert Heneman on the first edition (see Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller 2022).

While at Notre Dame, I became increasingly involved in administration. I served as chair of the management department and, later, as associate dean for faculty and research. I served on the Provost's Advisory Committee and was also a Provost Fellow. I am not certain what drew me to administration, as in the past, while I had performed the typical level of professional service, it never had been especially appealing to me. In retrospect I think some of it was a product of the restlessness I felt. Some of it may have been a feeling that it was my turn.

In 2015 I received inquiries for two positions. Jerry Baker was leading a search for the next dean of the College of Business at the University of Louisville. Though I have turned down these inquiries before and since, I was intrigued by Louisville for several reasons. The university had just joined the Atlantic Coast Conference, and the university was looking to increase its stature. The business school figured prominently in those plans, and I saw this as an opportunity to help build something exciting. It coincided with an evolution in my own thinking about outreach and impact, and I felt my skill set matched what the university was looking for in their next dean.

The search process was one of the more interesting experiences of my career. I had no idea that such searches were so thorough. It was the only deanship for which I ever formally interviewed. I found that the provost, Neville Pinto, was an exceptional leader; he was held in high regard by every single person I spoke with. (Pinto is now President of the University of Cincinnati.)

I believe I would have gone to Louisville if I had not received a call from Ben Tepper, who was then chair of the Department of Management at Ohio State. Ben described a new endowed chair that had been created, The Joseph Alutto Chair in Leadership Effectiveness (named after the longtime dean and provost of Ohio State, Joe Alutto). The chair was unusual in the sense that there was a significant service expectation associated with it. That expectation was somewhat vaguely defined, but it revolved around bringing a more concerted and coordinated focus to the loosely coupled leadership development efforts in the college and to use leadership as an important element of the college's somewhat underdeveloped outreach efforts. These goals appealed to me and I saw the position, then and now, as a good fit for my evolving perspectives on my career.

I was fortunate to have offers for both positions at the same time and to be able to consider them simultaneously. In the end, I chose Ohio State because I thought it would provide me the ability to spend at least some of my time on research. I still do wonder what it would have been like to be dean. I think I have some qualities that would have helped me be effective in the role, but I also have some definite weaknesses that, I think, would have revealed themselves over time.

The Fisher Leadership Initiative

I have now been at Ohio State for 7 years. I have found that the time available for me to spend on research is less than I imagined. However, I'm pleased and proud of what we've been able to do in that time. Our primary accomplishments include the following.

Creation of arguably the most comprehensive leadership assessment available. We created BUILD, an assessment that measures leadership at three levels: self-leadership (e.g., self-awareness, social responsibility, emotional intelligence, character development), relational skills (e.g., developing others, communication, resolving conflict, ethical conduct), and stewardship (e.g., vision, strategic planning, change agent, diplomacy), with six individual skills housed within each level. BUILD is owned by Ohio State, and we have now given the assessment to 13,514 undergraduates, 752 graduate students, and 1,089 working professionals. BUILD provides users with an individualized feedback report that is accompanied by skill development modules for each of the dimensions. We have integrated the reports individuals can download with a leadership development planning process whereby individuals set goals for both skills they wish to improve and strengths they wish to leverage better. We have also developed a coaching program around the assessment.

Creation of an outreach-oriented website called Lead Read Today. Lead Read Today (LRT) is an informational site that facilitates the college's outreach efforts while being focused on advancing professionals' understanding and practice of leadership. I originally proposed Lead Read Today when I interviewed for the position in 2016, and, frankly, I have been surprised by its growth. Lead Read Today now has 2,000 subscribers, more than 29,000 monthly users, and it has been viewed over 625,000 times since it launched in March 2018. The success of Lead Read Today is due to the fantastic work of our staff member Dylan Williams as well as the many contributors who have published more than 700 posts since the site started.

Creation and launch of an experiential outdoor leadership program called Leading Expeditions. Leading Expeditions[4] begins with a 3-credit, case-based core course built around a model called the High Stakes Leadership model. The premise of this model is that in high-stakes settings—where life and death may hang in the balance—some leadership precepts change, such as the importance of having a formal leadership structure, the differing requirements of active followership, and the important role of stress and emotions. After completing the 3-credit course, students enroll in one of four expeditions, one of which is local (consisting of climbing at local crags as well as at the Red River Gorge), one is in West Virginia (which includes summiting the highest technical peak in the Eastern United States), and two are in the Rocky Mountain National Park (which include summiting Longs Peak). Thus far, we have had 62 students enroll in the program. It would not be possible without a generous gift from a donor, Dan Rosenfield.

There have been challenges, and I have learned much from running an initiative such as ours that strives to make an impact in terms of both student leadership development and outreach. I have had, at times, a desire to return to my research. But the work is unfinished, and I enjoy the challenge and continue to feel this is making a difference.

Hagler Fellowship at Texas A&M University

From my 36 years in the field, Texas A&M has had one of the most productive management departments in the world. It is impressive that they have maintained that level of productivity for so long, and they have done so through strength in both organizational behavior/human resource management and strategic management.

I was therefore very honored when I was informed, unbeknownst to me, that I had been nominated for (and was then awarded) a fellowship with the Hagler Institute of Advanced Studies at Texas A&M. Most of the Hagler Fellows are from STEM fields, and some of them are Nobel Prize winners. I, of course, wondered how I was included with such individuals. While COVID has made it difficult for me to make the most of this opportunity, I look forward to continued and accelerated work with the Institute. I am very grateful for the support of the Department of Management at A&M, in particular Murray Barrick, Wendy Boswell, and Interim Dean Duane Ireland.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE FIELD

I now turn to a brief discussion and commentary of the state of our field. Though I have published in several areas, I confine my comments here to the two fields that are my greatest areas of focus: personality and leadership. I also offer some perspective on our field in general. What is to follow is

---

[4]A description of the program can be found at **https://fisher.osu.edu/centers-partnerships/leadership/leading-expeditions**.

admittedly incomplete and superficial, though I hope it does achieve a certain resonance with some scholars because, while I think our field can be proud of many advances, we should be proactive in turning our attention to present or brooding problems that remain due to insufficient attention on our part. That is my focus in this section.

Personality Research in the Organizational Sciences

Since the time I began my doctoral program in 1987, the contributions of personality research—in organizational psychology/behavior and in psychology more generally—have been nothing short of remarkable. Indeed, there is not a major area of personality where we have not seen major contributions. Below I highlight some of the areas in which I have focused and also discuss a few areas that need further attention. These observations are hardly comprehensive reviews or anything like it. Rather, they represent brief summaries and discussions of extant, often unresolved, issues.

Core self-evaluations. As noted earlier, some researchers have argued that the notion of core self-evaluations implies that the individual core traits have little to offer. If I made such an argument, it was in error. Like the Big Five traits, facets or lower-order traits can be important when their specificity is more appropriately matched to the models in which they are situated. I do think the general core self-evaluations concept is a useful one. Yet we purposely viewed core self-evaluations as a multi-dimensional concept; otherwise we would not have conceived of it as a function of existing traits. We could use a better understanding of the contexts in which the general concept is more appropriate and when one or more of the specific traits are more relevant. One thing is certain—there are situations in which one or the other is true.

The Big Five. I have always been persuaded by the evidence in favor of the Big Five, and they have brought an enormous amount of clarity to personality structure and measurement. Yet, as in the case of core self-evaluations, facets are not to be neglected (Judge et al. 2013). Moreover, the fact that a particular trait may not fit within the five-factor framework does not mean it has little utility. Sometimes these other traits might be seen as composites of existing Big Five traits (such as personal integrity), but that, too, is neither a necessary nor a limiting condition on their utility.

By now, five-factor model research is a mature area in the organizational sciences, and one wonders from where future innovations will come. I suspect that the primary application of the Big Five in our field will continue to be as model variables (whether they be independent variables or moderator variables). I would like to comment about one area that I think is ripe for further study. If we view personality traits themselves as products of both genetics and environment (or gene x environment interactions), then more research in our field on how work experiences influence personality change over time is warranted. Brent Roberts has done some important work in this area, but that work is confined to personality journals (see Roberts & Yoon 2022 for a review of these studies). More studies of how work environments shape both long-term and short-term changes in personality will further our understanding of the relevance of personality to our field.

Multidimensional constructs. One question that looms, generally unresolved, over the variables we study in our field, personality included, is the nature of the multidimensional constructs. Many concepts in our field—literally any concept that has facets or dimensions—are by definition multidimensional when we assume or argue that those facets or dimensions indicate or form a higher or general concept.

Most researchers implicitly believe that most of our multidimensional concepts are latent variables, and the facets are lower-level indicators that reflect an underlying general construct. One requirement of a latent construct is that its indicators be sufficiently related so that a common construct can be derived from them. One advantage of fulfilling this requirement is that it can be explicitly tested and demonstrated. A further requirement, often ignored, however, is that indicators of latent variables must be substitutable, so that if we remove one of the facets or indicators, the essential nature of the construct does not change (the reliability of the construct, of course, will change, but its substantive nature should not). If we think of extraversion as comprised of facets—such as sociability, social dominance, and positive emotionality—then clearly we cannot use these facets to measure the latent construct of extraversion. Instead, we are implicitly conceptualizing extraversion as an aggregate, manifest, or formative construct.

In my opinion, one of the primary elements of confusion is when we conflate the measurement of a general construct with its substantive components. If we are using facets of extraversion (or any other general construct) to form the general construct of extraversion, we cannot properly do so with a latent variable model. Instead, we should use substitutable parcels to indicate the higher-order construct.

What I am arguing here is that personality—and other multidimensional constructs in our field—can be latent or manifest depending on how we wish to measure them and whether we wish to model their lower-order dimensions or facets. More discussion of this is needed in our field. If we were clearer about the distinctions, the conceptual clarity of our models would be considerably enhanced.

Leadership Research

I was a relatively latecomer to the field of leadership. My advisor was not fond of leadership research, and my reading of the literature revealed a field that seemed to me somewhat enigmatic. Early approaches such as the trait approach or behavioral approach were critiqued as overly simplistic, yet the main responses to that apparent simplicity (contingency theories) were often roundly criticized as well.

Three of my aforementioned doctoral students—Joyce Bono, Remus Ilies, and Amy Colbert—were intrigued by the field, however, and we all found work on charismatic and transformational leadership to be fascinating. Bob House, Bernie Bass, and Bruce Avolio deserve a great deal of credit for inaugurating a field and, in so doing, reinvigorating leadership research (e.g., Bass & Avolio 1994). Credit is also due to James MacGregor Burns, who coined the term transformational leadership and who inspired Bass. Bass and Avolio's systematic work—as well as the work of the many colleagues who collaborated with them—proved particularly important. I have always had an affinity to charismatic/transformational leadership. I think perhaps the biggest reason for that is that transformational leadership was designed to be practical. Reading Bass, Avolio, and colleagues' work—and I've read most of what they have written—I found them to be never far away from trying to describe what leaders can do and should do to make their organizations more effective. Though I agree with many of the critiques espoused by van Knippenberg & Sitkin (2013), most of their comments could be applied to most leadership theories that are in vogue. I find Drew Carton's work on vision implementation and communication (e.g., Carton & Lucas 2018) particularly exciting because it is rigorous and eminently practical.

Neglected concepts and topics. I use this opportunity to discuss some areas in which I think leadership research could advance. As before, this is hardly meant to be a comprehensive summary of existing gaps in the leadership literature; rather, it does reflect my observations on the current state of the literature and important ways in which I think it could make progress.

Effective leadership can take many forms. I am struck by the singular nature of leadership theories. Even theories with multiple dimensions still confine themselves to a very limited set of leadership behaviors. Other scholars have noted the need to integrate these theories, but my concern here is of a more thoroughgoing nature: The theories tend to assume that there is one path to effective leadership. In my experience interacting with many leaders at different levels while directing the Fisher Leadership Initiative, however, I have observed many leaders widely seen as effective, who yet had quite different profiles or sets of strengths and limitations. To be sure, this does not mean that all possible sets of leadership behaviors are equally important. Avolio (2011) and colleagues have contributed to the literature based on their full range of leadership models, but I do not think four transactional behaviors come close to capturing the kind of diversity in leadership practices I am proposing here. What I would suggest is that traditional management behaviors such as communication, negotiation/conflict resolution, mentoring and coaching, strategic planning, and so on should be integrated into our thinking about leadership, since they reflect behaviors in which leaders engage. As I have noted, I think visionary and transformational perspectives on leadership are incredibly important. But of what benefit is vision without execution?

Principles are an effective way of considering ethical aspects of leadership. While the notion of ethical leadership has made a valuable contribution to the leadership literature, there are limitations in terms of the usefulness of the concept to everyday leader behavior. One way of thinking about this is to ask, How often have we known our leaders to engage in behaviors that are, by consensus, unethical? I am certainly not arguing that unethical behaviors do not exist, nor am I arguing that such behaviors cannot be extremely damaging and should not be highlighted and avoided. What I am arguing is that consensually unethical behavior is the exception rather than the rule: Most leaders, like the rest of us, do not engage in unethical behavior very often. Yet I think the concept of principled leadership may be useful. One could define principled leadership as a process by which leaders (*a*) know their own values, (*b*) consistently make decisions based on those values, (*c*) communicate those values to others, and (*d*) acknowledge cases in which their decisions or behaviors do not reflect their values. This concept would have the ability to apply to everyday leader behavior and, I believe, would be more readily amenable to developmental programs than the related concepts of ethical or authentic leadership, which tend to be more rule- and character-based.

Leadership can be both a role and a set of behaviors. A common premise in the leadership literature is that leadership is best considered as a set of behaviors, not a role. Thus, anyone at any organizational level can exhibit leadership. I believe that to be true, but I also believe that leadership is a role with its own set of responsibilities. I think we need more research on the role of leader, and a better understanding of the characteristic behaviors individuals in such roles enact.

Leadership is often the art of the mundane. Transformational leadership teaches us the importance of vision, and many examples of it are of great leaders making differences through visionary leadership. Vision may be the single most important leadership skill we can learn, but many of the existing leadership theories—including ethical leadership, servant leadership, empowering leadership, and so on—do not always capture the prosaic nature of the interactions between leaders and followers. We have collected some data, as yet unpublished, that analyze the daily requests leaders made of their subordinates. It was eye-opening to observe how mundane many of the tasks that define this work are.

Limitations of within-individual studies. Due mostly to Remus Ilies's influence, I published some of the earliest experience-sampling studies in organizational behavior (Ilies & Judge 2002). The two other inspirational influences in this area were Howard Weiss (Weiss et al. 1999) and Kevin Williams (Williams et al. 1991). Since that time, this area has virtually exploded, with many

Table 1 Summary of issues, their implications, and possible remedies

Issue	Implications	Possible remedies
Overemphasis on theory	Research that is impenetrable and arcane; reviewer judgments that are subjective	Weight theory less heavily in review process; allow broader definition of theoretical contribution
Data analysis methods overly complex	Research that is arcane and difficult to replicate; difficulties in applying findings	Implement Occam's razor (methods and analysis should be no more complex than necessary) in both article preparation and the review process
Insufficient emphasis placed on practical application	Research that is not sufficiently relevant to organizations; insufficient attention to addressing practical organizational issues	Add additional criteria to reviewer checklists reflecting practical importance and ease of application; appoint more practitioners to editorial review boards
Review process too lengthy, detailed, critical, and microscopic	Delay between findings and publication; discouragement of scholars	Simplify review process by limiting reviewer comments to one page; add additional reviewers to increase reliability of judgment; limit decisions to two rounds

interesting developments. We have come to learn that virtually all phenomena of interest have both between-individual and within-individual variations, and significant recent research has focused on within-individual variation in leader behavior. There are now scores of studies on within-individual variation in leadership behavior or processes (see Kelemen et al. 2020 for a review). Despite the contributions of this line of research, I have begun to wonder whether we are leaning on this perspective too heavily. It is sometimes hard to logically analyze the practical implications of within-individual variation in leadership. I am certainly not calling for us to abandon such a focus, but I do want us to be more problem focused in how we conceptualize this research. Ideally, within-individual leadership studies would have a clear problem focus with accompanying lucid implications.

Learning how to lead. Though of course I knew of him by reputation, I had never met Ben Tepper until I interviewed for the position at Ohio State.[5] As Ben and I discussed the field of leadership, we found we shared many similar views. We presently are working on a perspective that focuses on the development of leadership skills. It focuses on the concept of a lever, which we argue is a useful concept through which leaders can learn to lead more effectively.

General Perspectives

In this section I offer some general perspectives on the field. Though there is much to celebrate in our field, I discuss my concerns with our field here, focusing in particular on how we go about the conducting and publishing of our research. These issues are summarized in **Table 1**, along with their implications and possible remedies.

Role of theory. As other senior scholars have commented, including, strikingly, numerous contributors to this series (e.g., Latham 2019, Sackett 2021, Staw 2016, Tsui 2022), I think we have become too theoretical in our focus. Of course, theories are important because they help us understand the phenomena we are studying. However, we are an applied field of discovery, and, in my

[5] It is not unusual for me to have not met Ben. I rarely go to conferences, and when I do, I usually go for a particular purpose, stay away from the main conference hotels, and see only a few people. Big conferences are, quite simply, odd for me in ways I cannot fully explain. Even though I do miss seeing friends and meeting colleagues whose work I admire, large conferences just have a vibe that does not appeal to me.

view, that means we do not wish to prioritize anything over scientific discovery and the application of those discoveries. Theory may be an essential tool in the discovery process, but so are other elements such as sound empirical evidence. Moreover, because ours is an applied field, the application of that knowledge is paramount. Yes, nearly every journal includes both theory and practice in reviewer ratings, but I believe perceived theoretical contributions figure far more prominently in reviewer recommendations and editorial decisions than practical implications. Indeed, I think it's likely an order of magnitude difference in terms of variance explained.[6] Why should this be the case? One could argue that we are a field properly oriented toward scientific understanding, and a theory better illuminates understanding than does practical relevance. I think this is a specious assertion for two reasons. First, I am simply not sure this is the case. In my judgment, theory sometimes obfuscates as much as it clarifies. Dense and complex theories that are nearly impossible for those outside our field (and sometimes those within our field!) to understand do not necessarily lead to greater understanding, at least in my judgment. Second, I wonder whether scientific understanding can be elevated above practical relevance. We are an applied field.

The solution? I am not arguing that we eschew theory. Rather, I am arguing that theory be resituated in two ways: (*a*) Theoretical contribution should not be the primary factor driving reviewer judgment and editorial decision making—it is important, but so are other criteria; and (*b*) we should view theory more broadly. This can be done by not strictly requiring new theory development in decision making, and by viewing theory more generally or loosely. Any effort at conceptual understanding, for example, could be considered a theory. Moreover, we simply need to weigh more heavily and focus more carefully on practical implications. We have theory development workshops and special issues of top journals, but do we devote the same attention to practical implications?

As I have noted, I am far from the first senior researcher to note this problem and argue for a more balanced approach [see also Hambrick's (2007) excellent editorial]. Yet I—and I suspect most senior scholars whose perspectives I have just cited—see few signs of change. So, in practical terms, what might change matters?

A first, and perhaps most obvious, answer is to change the criteria so that practical application is given more weight. An additional rating dimension on practical importance might be added, for example (one might have a rating dimension on potential practical importance and one on ease of implementation based on the article's contributions). Second, I think appointing more practitioners to review boards, even to the point of ensuring that most manuscripts have a practitioner assigned as a reviewer, would provide a valuable and different perspective. Practitioners, after all, are the primary individuals responsible for implementing the scientific advances that are published in the journals. If we are serious about the application of these advances, then are we not obligated to include these frontline individuals in deciding what is worth publishing? Third, I think those responsible for selecting editors need to favor those who value application at least as much as theory. Personally, I would love to see more senior scholars (who in my experience are more likely to have that perspective) as journal editors. To be sure, they may be past the zenith of their productivity; but I think the value of their experience is often underestimated.

Change is hard, and some may either somewhat disagree with my views or fail to see the problem. After all, our field has shown health and vitality for myriad generations. Yet I also believe higher education is facing new questions about cost/affordability, value added, and relevance that will only be accelerated and amplified over time (see Chamorro-Premuzic & Frankiewicz 2019).

[6]This is an empirical question—one could simply regress overall reviewer recommendations and editor decisions on reviewer dimensional ratings.

We can make and show ourselves to be more relevant. Let us do so before it is too late and we are fighting a losing battle on relevance.

Methodological rigor. I have similar concerns about the current state of methodological rigor in our field. Rigor in measurement, methodology, and analysis is, of course, important. But I think we have gotten to the point where the methods and analyses are far more complex than the basic phenomena we are trying to understand. I must admit to having some part in this. I have published some studies where I believe the quality of the data surpassed the applied (or perhaps even scientific) value of the research (e.g., Judge 1993b). There are others where the intricate nature of the analyses, I believe, keep us far from being able to easily apply the findings, not to mention the ability to replicate them.

When I compare our field to two other fields into which I've gotten a glimpse—medical research and engineering—I do not think the comparison is favorable. These fields have rigor in their methodologies and, at times, their analytical approaches. However, they are never far from the problem they are trying to solve, and both theory and method serve the problem, rather than the other way around (i.e., theory and method looking for a real problem to solve). When I engage in these conversations with others, I think there is a lot of self-denial. I hear, "Yes, but look at this study" or "No, I think we are pretty balanced" or "You can't objectively assess practical implications" or "Focusing too much on practical implications compromises our scientific objectivity." I used to believe the latter, and in that I agreed with my advisor, Chuck Hulin (see the valuable Hulin–Latham debate: Latham 2001, Hulin 2001). However, as the aforementioned comments suggest, my perspective on this has changed. I think we simply are not weighing practical implications enough (i.e., the degree to which our research solves practical problems at work, for employers or for employee welfare, is insufficient), and this affects the research process cradle to grave—from how we conceive research ideas to what gets published in top journals. This problem can be addressed if there is the will to do so, and if we care about the impact and value of our field, we certainly should be concerned with it.

The review process. I am not the first scholar in this series to suggest that the review process should be reexamined, and I am certainly not the first to recognize the problem. Yet I do not see much signs of change. The review process, in my view, is too elongated, reviewer comments are too long (to the point of an exhaustive list of pet peeves or personal irritations), manuscripts undergo too many rounds of revisions, and overall the process is simply too daunting. We have driven people away from the field by the way we review research. I am not suggesting, necessarily, that acceptance rates need to change, but the process does.

I also think we rely too much on impact factors. I certainly did not undertake meta-analyses because I thought they would be cited a lot. Impact factors really began to be important pretty late in my career. But the fact of the matter is that certain kinds of research are going to be more heavily cited than others. I think we sometimes forget that how often our work is cited by fellow researchers, or even how often it turns up in Google Scholar, is a very narrow and limited view (essentially, self-referencing) of impact. Yes, impact factors are much easier to calculate than assessing to what degree someone's research influenced the practice of management or the better treatment of employees. But does the fact that it is more easily measured make it more important?

My research has been cited a fair number of times by fellow researchers; but has it had much impact on organizations or the employees who work in them? I would say to the extent that it has, such impact has been pretty limited. I was once fortunate enough to be part of a National Science Foundation panel on the importance of employee well-being in organizations. The individuals on that panel, present company definitely excepted, were impressive: Daniel Kahneman, Martin Seligman, the late Alan Krueger (who became President Obama's Chief Economic Advisor), and

Carol Graham of The Brookings Institution. We each gave short talks before an open discussion, and one of the central themes of my talk was how little research on employee well-being was influencing organizational practice and institutional policy making. Danny Kahneman challenged this perspective, arguing that his work with Gallup showed that a research-oriented firm such as Gallup can influence practice through the hundreds of companies with whom it works. To say that I am not in Kahneman's league is an understatement, but I did then, and still do, think he's wrong about this (and right about so many other things).

Returning to the example of leadership, there are TED Talks, *New York Times* bestselling books, and YouTube videos that have had far more viewers or readers than have our works. Indeed, some of the leadership gurus have more Twitter followers than entire universities! I am not suggesting that we need to think or write to the TED Talk audience. We can be evidence based and practical at the same time. Indeed, I think the most enduring answers we provide are always supported by sound scientific evidence. What I am suggesting is that to have the impact we should have, we need to be more problem focused in our thinking, less arcane in our theorizing and statistical analyses, and more interested in communicating clearly and broadly. Scholars like Denise Rousseau, Sara Rynes, and Jean Bartunek have thought long and hard about this problem. More of us need to do more of that.

Some Advice

At this juncture, I humbly offer some advice. This is not the same advice I would have offered earlier in my career, which reflects the changing perspectives I have noted. Of course, each scholar must follow their own compass; my advice is offered for what I believe to be good for the field.

Work on important topics. I am often struck by how the focus of our work reflects an inside-the-ballpark mentality—it is literature- or theory-focused, with some general allusions to the importance of the problem that seem interchangeable across articles on the same topic. Articles published in light of the COVID-19 crisis are a good counterpoint to this polemic, where theory and analysis served addressing the problem, not the other way around. We need more problem-focused research like this, and I encourage scholars to tackle big problems, not necessarily big theories. Put another way, I'd rather see a theoretically (or methodologically) imperfect article on a big problem than a theoretically strong article on a small or rather unimportant topic. To be sure, journals would prefer to maximize every criteria, but every editor knows that many acceptance decisions mean balancing strengths and weaknesses. As researchers, we should alter the balance of what editors receive and focus more on solving pressing organizational and humanistic problems and less on advancing or developing a new theory per se.

One final note here: A topic's being interesting and being practically important are not necessarily isomorphic. Similarly, a topic that is important from a policy standpoint is not necessarily one that matters from the perspective of managerial practice. In my own case, the works I am least attached to are those that rather incrementally followed narrow voids in the literature. I would also note that I think my research has not been as impactful as many in terms of influencing organizational practice. Looking back, I believe I would have attended more to trying to answer the question, What would organizational leaders and employees do differently as a result of this study? Too often, it was an afterthought in my pursuit of research questions I thought were interesting.

Look to other fields for ideas. One practice that I have followed throughout my career is to read broadly. Many of my research ideas have come from reading newspapers (at one time I subscribed to four newspapers) as well as journals in other fields (especially psychology and economics). Some of my ideas even came from reading works of fiction. Insights into the human condition come from many sources, and I have had many instances of "Gee, this is an important topic that scholars in our field should have investigated." The risk in this approach is that the topics may not pass a test of relevance to our field, or it might lead one to lack a focus in their research. These are risks worth taking, however, especially when investigating these topics based on theories and approaches that are relevant to one's domain.

Find your teaching niche. It is not always clear the kinds of students one finds most engaging. Personally, I have come to prefer teaching undergraduates. Others, of course, may find their niche elsewhere. Beyond who you teach, what and how you teach are important considerations. As I mentioned earlier, I developed a program, Leading Expeditions, that constitutes my teaching load. Through this program, I feel I have created my own effective space; rather than passively accepting teaching assignments, I think we all can do the same.

Listen to that inner voice. If you are anything like me, there are times when you have an inner voice asking you whether you are doing the right thing, balancing your work and life in the right way, and planning and executing your career in the best way possible. I have made many mistakes along the way and continue to struggle with balance. I have found that the voices suggesting a change of direction, or learning from mistakes, are often subtle and overwhelmed by ensuing events. Too often I have not sufficiently listened to that inner voice and instead have been overly influenced by habit, external influences, expediency, and convention. Though "beginning with the end in mind" (to borrow from Covey 2004) remains a difficult challenge for me, I believe I have gotten better at this. If I had to do it over, though, I would be better at this earlier and more often.

A FINAL WORD OF THANKS

I want to thank some colleagues, many of whom I call friends, who, in one way or the other, have had a significant positive influence on my career: Steve Allen, Joe Alutto, Anil Arya, Murray Barrick, Bob Bretz, John Campbell, Tim Chandler, Aichia Chuang, Jason Colquitt, Steve Currall, Kevin Dawson, Ed Diener, Edina Doci, Fritz Drasgow, Jerry Ferris, Barry Gerhart, Dave Glerum, Herb Heneman, Tim Hindes, Joeri Hofmans, John Hollenbeck, Jasmine Hu, Roger Huang, Chuck Hulin, Kaifeng Jiang, John Kammeyer-Mueller, Ashley Keppler, John Kraft, Jeff LePine, Meng Li, Ed Locke, Bob Lount, Anil Makhija, Sarah Mangia, Joe Martocchio, Mick Mount, Keith Murnighan, Deniz Ones, Sara Rynes, Frank Schmidt, James Sun, Ben Tepper, Duane Thompson, Lori Tinkey, Rainbow Weinstock, Steffanie Wilk, and Vish Viswesvaran. They have so enriched my life; I only wish I could have been as good a friend to them as they have been to me. I am quite sure I have never thanked them enough.

I also want to thank my doctoral students, all of whom I admire and some of whom I am fortunate to call close friends: Joyce Bono, Dan Cable, Woohee Choi, Amy Colbert, Amir Erez, Erin Fluegge, Chad Higgins, Charlice Hurst, Remus Ilies, Dave Kennedy, Ryan Klinger, Beth Livingston, Brian McNatt, Ron Piccolo, Brent Scott, Lauren Simon, and Carl Thoresen. I had many imperfections as an advisor; I appreciate these individuals' tolerance of my myriad flaws. I also appreciate the students of other advisors with whom I worked, all of whom have gone on to have successful careers, mostly in academia: Wendy Boswell, Seunghoo Chung, Eean Crawford, Irene De Pater, Cathy Durham, Danny Heller, Christine Jackson, Hee Man Park, Jessica Rodell, Pauline Schilpzand, Steve Scullen, Jesse Vullinghs, Shin Watanabe, Cindy Zapata, Yuhan Zhan, Carrie Zhang, and Yiwen Zhang.

My final word of thanks is for my childhood and present family (my parents Karen and Lee, my sister Lorrie, my aunt Beverly, my grandparents Ida and Herb Parris and Martha and Harold Judge, and my godmother Vera Mackey) as well as my own family (my wife Jill and our children

Abby, Marty, and Carsten). I owe a particular gratitude to my wife Jill who has supported me—in ways both practical and spiritual—throughout our grand journey together.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author is not aware of any affiliations, memberships, funding, or financial holdings that might be perceived as affecting the objectivity of this review.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Kevin Dawson and Ashley Keppler for their assistance with preparing this article, as well as Frederick Morgeson for comments on an earlier draft.

LITERATURE CITED

Avolio BJ. 2011. *Full Range Leadership Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. 2nd ed.

Bass BM, Avolio BJ. 1994. *Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE

Beach LR, Mitchell TR. 1987. Image theory: principles, goals, and plans in decision making. *Acta Psychol.* 66(3):201–20

Carton AM, Lucas BJ. 2018. How can leaders overcome the blurry vision bias? Identifying an antidote to the paradox of vision communication. *Acad. Manag. J.* 61(6):2106–29

Cascio WF, Montealegre R. 2016. How technology is changing work and organizations. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 3:349–75

Chamorro-Premuzic T, Frankiewicz B. 2019. 6 reasons why higher education needs to be disrupted. *Harvard Business Review*, Nov. 19. **https://hbr.org/2019/11/6-reasons-why-higher-education-needs-to-be-disrupted**

Chatman JA. 1989. Improving interactional organizational research: a model of person-organization fit. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* 14(3):333–49

Colbert A, Yee N, George G. 2016. The digital workforce and the workplace of the future. *Acad. Manag. J.* 59(3):731–39

Covey SR. 2004. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*. New York: Free Press. Rev. ed.

Davis-Blake A, Pfeffer J. 1989. Just a mirage: the search for dispositional effects in organizational research. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* 14(3):385–400

Ferris GR, Judge TA. 1991. Personnel/Human Resources Management: a political influence perspective. *J. Manag.* 17(2):447–88

Ferris GR, Judge TA, Rowland KM, Fitzgibbons DE. 1994. Subordinate influence and the performance evaluation process: test of a model. *Organ. Behav. Hum. Decis. Process.* 58(1):101–35

Gupta AK, Govindarajan V. 1984. Business unit strategy, managerial characteristics and business unit effectiveness at strategy implementation. *Acad. Manag. J.* 27:25–41

Hambrick DC. 2007. The field of management's devotion to theory: too much of a good thing? *Acad. Manag. J.* 50(6):1346–52

Hambrick DC, Mason PA. 1984. Upper echelons: the organization as a reflection of its top managers. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* 9(2):193–206

Heneman HG III, Heneman RL, Judge TA. 1997. *Staffing Organizations*. Middleton, WI: Mendota House. 2nd ed.

Hulin C. 1991. Adaptation, persistence, and commitment in organizations. In *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, ed. MD Dunnette, LM Hough, pp. 445–505. Palo Alto, CA: Consult. Psychol. Press

Hulin C. 2001. Applied psychology and science: differences between research and practice. *Appl. Psychol. Int. Rev.* 50(2):225–34

Ilies R, Judge TA. 2002. Understanding the dynamic relationships among personality, mood, and job satisfaction: a field experience sampling study. *Organ. Behav. Hum. Decis. Process.* 89:1119–39

Judge TA. 1993a. Does affective disposition moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and voluntary turnover? *J. Appl. Psychol.* 78(3):395–401

Judge TA. 1993b. Validity of the dimensions of the Pay Satisfaction Questionnaire: evidence of differential prediction. *Pers. Psychol.* 46(2):331–55

Judge TA, Ferris GR. 1993. Social context of performance evaluation decisions. *Acad. Manag. J.* 36(1):80–105

Judge TA, Hulin CL. 1993. Job satisfaction as a reflection of disposition: a multiple source causal analysis. *Organ. Behav. Hum. Decis. Process.* 56(3):388–421

Judge TA, Kammeyer-Mueller JD. 2022. *Staffing Organizations*. Columbus, OH: Pangloss/McGraw-Hill. 10th ed.

Judge TA, Locke EA, Durham CC. 1997. The dispositional causes of job satisfaction: a core evaluations approach. *Res. Organ. Behav.* 19:151–88

Judge TA, Locke EA, Durham CC, Kluger AN. 1998. Dispositional effects on job and life satisfaction: the role of core evaluations. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 83(1):17–34

Judge TA, Rodell JB, Klinger RL, Simon LS, Crawford ER. 2013. Hierarchical representations of the five-factor model of personality in predicting job performance: integrating three organizing frameworks with two theoretical perspectives. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 98(6):875–925

Kelemen TK, Matthews SH, Breevaart K. 2020. Leading day-to-day: a review of the daily causes and consequences of leadership behaviors. *Leadersh. Q.* 31(1):101344

Latham GP. 2001. The reciprocal transfer of learning from journals to practice. *Appl. Psychol. Int. Rev.* 50(2):201–11

Latham GP. 2019. Perspectives of a practitioner-scientist on organizational psychology/organizational behavior. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 6:1–16

Mitchell TR. 2018. A dynamic, inclusive, and affective evolutionary view of organizational behavior. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 5:1–19

Pervin LA. 1989. Persons, situations, and interactions: the history of a controversy and a discussion of theoretical models. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* 14(3):350–60

Porter LW, Schneider B. 2014. What was, what is, and what may be in OP/OB. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 1:1–21

Robbins SP, Judge TA. 2006. *Organizational Behavior*. Hoboken, NJ: Pearson. 12th ed.

Robbins SP, Judge TA. 2022. *Essentials of Organizational Behavior*. Hoboken, NJ: Pearson. 15th ed.

Robbins SP, Judge TA. 2023. *Organizational Behavior*. Hoboken, NJ: Pearson. 19th ed.

Roberts BW, Yoon HJ. 2022. Personality psychology. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 73:489–516

Rousseau DM. 2020. Becoming an organizational scholar. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 7:1–23

Sackett PR. 2021. Reflections on a career studying individual differences in the workplace. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 8:1–18

Schein EH. 2015. Organizational psychology then and now: some observations. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 2:1–19

Staw BM. 2016. Stumbling toward a social psychology of organizations: an autobiographical look at the direction of organizational research. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 3:1–19

Staw BM, Bell NE, Clausen JA. 1986. The dispositional approach to job attitudes: a lifetime longitudinal test. *Adm. Sci. Q.* 31(1):56–77

Staw BM, Ross J. 1985. Stability in the midst of change: a dispositional approach to job attitudes. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 70(3):469–80

Tsui AS. 2022. From traditional research to responsible research: the necessity of scientific freedom and scientific responsibility for better societies. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 9:1–32

van Knippenberg D, Sitkin SB. 2013. A critical assessment of charismatic–transformational leadership research: back to the drawing board? *Acad. Manag. Ann.* 7(1):1–60

Weick KE. 2017. Perspective construction in organizational behavior. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.* 4:1–17

Weiss HM, Nicholas JP, Daus CS. 1999. An examination of the joint effects of affective experiences and job beliefs on job satisfaction and variations in affective experiences over time. *Organ. Behav. Hum. Decis. Process.* 78(1):1–24

Weitz J. 1952. A neglected concept in the study of job satisfaction. *Pers. Psychol.* 5:201–5

Williams KJ, Suls J, Alliger GM, Learner SM, Wan CK. 1991. Multiple role juggling and daily mood states in working mothers: an experience sampling study. *J. Appl. Psychol.* 76(5):664–74

Wood R, Bandura A. 1989. Social cognitive theory of organizational management. *Acad. Manag. Rev.* 14(3):361–84