TRANSFORMING PUBLIC SERVICES
LEADEX: THE POWER OF EXPERIENTIAL LEADERSHIP
From service delivery to memorable citizens experience management

The Service Canada Experience

Dr. Michel Langlois
Professor
ESG-School of Management Sciences
Université du Québec à Montréal
and
Maryse Boivin
MBA– Research
ESG-School of Management Sciences
Université du Québec à Montréal

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this research study was to identify the skills and best practices in leadership in order to determine whether they create a significant impact on the service experience of public sector organizations; the results suggested that the leadership skills required by both managers and frontline employees are very similar. In the five months following the implementation of an organizational transformation system to support the Experiential Leadership Model, we already observed a very significant improvement in citizen satisfaction with this organization and, moreover, an improvement of frontline employee satisfaction with their bosses.

KEY WORDS
Leadership; public services; service to citizens; quality of public services; citizen satisfaction; public services management

June 2007
LEADEX: THE POWER OF EXPERIENTIAL LEADERSHIP

1. CONTEXT ..............................................................................................................................3
2. LEADERSHIP AND PERSONALIZED SERVICE ENCOUNTER ..........4
   2.1 The service experience ....................................................................................................4
   2.2 Dimensions of the personalized service encounter .........................................................4
      2.2.1 The seduction relationship .................................................................................5
      2.2.2 The influence relationship ...................................................................................6
      2.2.3 The conclusion relationship ................................................................................7
      2.2.4 The service relationship .......................................................................................9
      2.2.5 The anchorage relationship ...............................................................................10
3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE TRANSFORMATION EXPERIENCE ..........12
4. WORK HYPOTHESES .......................................................................................................13
5. METHODOLOGY AND TRANSFORMATION PROCESS ........................................15
   5.1 The process ...................................................................................................................15
   5.2 Data collection .............................................................................................................16
      5.2.1 Measure of citizens’ experience with the organization ........................................17
      5.2.2 Measure of employee self-perception of the service experience provided to citizens 18
      5.2.3 Measure of employee perception towards the leadership style of the immediate supervisor 19
      5.2.4 Measure of executive perception regarding the leadership style practiced with their team 20
6. RESULTS ...........................................................................................................................21
   6.1 Organization profile in August 2006 .........................................................................21
      6.1.1 Comparison between citizens perception and employee self-perception ..................21
      6.1.2 Comparison between employee perception of their immediate supervisor and executive self-perception of their leadership style. ........................................24
   6.2 Impact of the LEADEX transformation process: .......................................................25
      Comparison of results of August 2006 and February 2007 ........................................25
      6.2.1 Measure of citizens’ experiences with the organization ........................................26
      6.2.2 Measure of employee perception towards the service experience provided to citizens 28
      6.2.3 Comparison between citizen perception and employee self-perception ................30
      6.2.4 Measure of employee perception towards the leadership type of the immediate supervisor 31
      6.2.5 Measure of executive perception towards the leadership style practiced with their team 32
      6.2.6 Comparison between employee perception of their immediate supervisor and executive self-perception of their leadership style in February 2007. ................35
7. CONCLUSION AND MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS ........................................36

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..................................................................................................................38

Journal articles ....................................................................................................................38
Monographs .......................................................................................................................41
Theses and Dissertations ..................................................................................................42
1. Context

Public service organizations have a responsibility to create memorable, positive customer service experiences for citizens in order to help improve their quality of life. Within this framework, Service Canada, an organization introduced by the Canadian federal government to provide Canadian citizens with a unique experience of one-stop access to services, indicated its willingness to improve the quality of service delivery to citizens. At first, they tried to determine how they might better meet citizens’ needs in terms of service experience with the introduction of an organizational transformation system that would further develop the leadership skills and practices of its executives and front line employees, thus moving from a program management structure towards a management model that focuses on creating positive, memorable experiences for citizens and all its employees.

In light of this, this research study aims to compare the leadership profile of frontline employees in how they perceive themselves and how they are perceived by citizens using the organization's services perceive. In the same manner, we tried to determine employee perception regarding the leadership skills of their bosses and how managers perceived themselves with their teams. In both instances, the goal was to gain a deeper understanding of the leadership dimensions from an experiential perspective as perceived by citizens, frontline employees and executives, and to determine their relative importance in identifying the levers for changes necessary to help the organization improve users-citizen's service experience.

The experiential quality of service is composed of five dimensions (Langlois, 2003 and Maurette, 2003). The dimensions include service reliability, accessibility, enjoyment, physical comfort and customer management by personnel. The value of service orientation is considered the most important dimension, making the delivery of service more reliable and secure. This reliability is directly associated with the organization’s performance in terms of this service delivery expected by customer or citizen. Accessibility is the ability to access information and services within the organization. Enjoyment is more related to the subject, the scheduling and appearance of the events. The physical environment takes into account the consistency of decor, but mostly the comfort and convenience of the premises. Finally, personalized environment refers to the interaction between the organization and the customer, as well as between customer management by staff. Each service quality dimension from an experiential perspective is divided into skills to be developed by the service organization. This study focuses on the fifth dimension, personalized relationships, where skills are associated with the relational aspects of contact personnel and the interaction with customers, the key element of experiential leadership.
2. LEADERSHIP AND PERSONALISED SERVICE ENCOUNTERS

2.1 The service experience
In a personalized service encounter, the interaction between the contact personnel and the customer can be seen as an experience and not merely a transaction. An experience occurs when an organization intentionally uses its services as the stage and the goods as props for the show (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). Customers are engaged individually so as to create memorable experiences. These experiences are inherently personal by existing only in the mind of an individual who is engaged in an emotional, physical, intellectual or even spiritual level (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). The goal is to maximize the chances of achieving active customer engagement and positive experiences in a context where absorption is the norm. This represents the difference between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This approach aims to assist managers in motivating their contact personnel to create more memorable face-to-face encounters.

2.2 Dimensions of the personalized service encounter
Since the interactional aspect of service delivery is a key factor in evaluating service perception, the interpersonal environment of a service is also very important. According to Langlois and Tocquer (1992), the personalized relationship dimension is a transactional process divided into five stages. These moments of truth, which allow service providers to deliver individualized experiences for each customer, include seduction, influence, conclusion, service and anchorage (Fig. 1). These five levels form the SICSA model (Langlois and Tocquer, 1992). Given that services are even more intangible, the experiences must be more memorable (Pine II and Gilmore, 1998). The delivery of personalized service by frontline employees may be further enhanced through customer participation and its link with the service environment.

![Figure 1: Personalized relationship dimensions of a service encounter](image)

Langlois, Tocquer 1992
2.2.1 The Seduction relationship
The power to seduce is achieved by establishing impeccable first contact and initiating a relationship in a way that leaves the customer with a first good impression. This relationship brings to mind the functional dimension involving the interaction between the customer and personnel proposed by Grönroos (1984). Following a literature review, we found that the power to seduce is based on five indicators including internal harmony, relational harmony, attitude, empathy and appearance.

Internal harmony refers to the management of emotions during service delivery (Hochschild, 1983). It also involves reaction to customer verbal aggression (Grandey, Dickter and Sin, 2004) and the methods used to control one’s emotions (Cryer, McCraty and Childre, 2003). Self-control is an essential skill for service employees (Varca, 2004). Control enables employees to take the necessary action during service delivery (Bitner et al. 1990). Finally, a study performed by Singh (2000) confirmed that the employee’s control towards a given task is a powerful resource and should be encouraged by the managers within the organization.

Interpersonal harmony can be described as the maintenance of a good relationship between the contact personnel and customer. For example, warmth is a positive construct because it correlates highly with friendliness, perceived quality and service loyalty (Lemmink and Mattsson, 1998). Rafaeli (1989) described the quality of emotion work as having a warm and friendly demeanour so that the customer is able to appreciate the service encounter. The psychological proximity was also studied by Chandon and his team (1996).

The attitude of contact personnel was studied by several authors (Czepiel et al., 1985; Parasuraman et al. 1988; Brady et al. 2002). According to Czepiel and his associates (1985), attitude is composed of helpfulness, open-mindedness, friendliness, warmth and concern for others. The SERVQUAL (perceived quality measure) and SERVPERF models (performance measure) suggest that the attitude of contact personnel is related to helpfulness, which means the willingness to help the customer and provide prompt service (Parasuraman et al. 1988; Brady et al. 2002). Referring to Nickson and his team (2005), attitude is an interpersonal and social skill. Studies have revealed that the extent of service employees’ display of positive emotions influences the evaluation of services received (Zeithaml et al., 1996; Grandey et al. 2005), the level of satisfaction experienced by customers (Zeithaml et al., 1996), the time spent in store (Tsai and Huang, 2002), the intent to return and recommend to others (Tsai, 2001; Athanassopoulos et al., 2001; Mattila, 2004) and the customer’s perception in terms of friendliness of personnel (Tsai and Huang, 2002; Grandey, et al., 2005).

Langlois et al. (1991) suggested that the level of empathy is the determining factor in defining the perceived competency and credibility of contact personnel. Therefore, the decision to buy is strongly influenced by empathy or non-empathy. In a similar manner, empathy has a positive impact on the selling points chosen for services (Langlois et al. 1992). Among the determinants of service quality developed by Parasuraman and his team (1985), empathy involves the ability to understand.
Empathy is a central dimension in the SERVQUAL multi-items scales measure (Brady et al., 2002) and the SERVPERF scale (Brady et al., 2002). Parasuraman et al. (1988) defines empathy as the kindness and personalized attention from the organization and its employees. Empathy can also be associated with active listening, as described by Chandon and his associates (1997) in their service quality interaction model. Empathy is defined in the Svensson model (2004) as the understanding of contact personnel. Svensson (2004), in particular, mentions that empathy in the relationship between the service provider and the customer during direct and indirect service encounters provides a basis for high-performance service. Varea (2004) defines empathy as the ability to put oneself in the other person’s place and understand the other’s feelings.

Appearance is an important element of seduction. According to “Catherine’s” experience, led by the Langlois team (1991), an employee with a natural pleasant manner, combined with emphatic behaviour, projects the most positive image in a customer’s eyes. Being well-groomed seems to create an artificial barrier and has a negative impact on the genuine nature of the relationship. However, in terms of memorizing selling points, the combination of employee empathy and a well-groomed appearance provides the customer with more alternatives to choose from (Langlois et al. 1992). According to Grönroos (1988), professionalism and credible appearance of employees are important characteristics of service quality. The appearance of contact personnel is also integrated into the tangible (Parasuraman et al. 1985; 1988) and visual (Svensson, 2004) elements of the service delivery system. According to the study by Nickson et al. (2005), aesthetic qualities are among the most important qualities for employers and employees.

2.2.2 The Influence relationship
Influence is the ability of the front-line employee to fuel the desire of consumers in order to promote motivation and personal interaction (Langlois and Maurette, 2003). Influence involves conviction, competency, language, presentation of services and solutions orientation. Solomon and his team (1985) suggest that the main role of employees is to be familiar with their products and services, present them in a convincing manner and provide solutions based on customers’ needs.

Conviction is one the most important factors in assessing the credibility of frontline employees (Parasuraman et al., 1985) in order to have a greater degree of influence on customers. The factor is closed associated with conviction in the model by Parasuraman and his associates (1988) are assurance, which is defined as the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence. The Svensson model (2004) defines the trust and confidence of contact personnel as assurance demonstrated in this manner during the interaction. This assurance is transformed into an attitude or convincing behaviour for the customer.
Several studies have been carried out involving competence in services (Czepiel et al., 1985; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Chandon et al., 1996; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Varca, 2004). Competence refers to the impact of the employee's education, experience, insight and creativity on the results of the service (Czepiel et al., 1985). Competence is a determinant of service quality, which represents the skills and knowledge to accomplish the service (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Knowledge is also associated with the assurance dimension in the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Chandon and his team (1996) believe that perceived competence is an indicator of interaction quality. According to Varca (2004), cognitive competence and techniques consist of a set of skills required by service employees.

Contact personnel must use simple, direct language when communicating to customers in order to be easily understood. It assures prompt and efficient delivery. For Parasuraman and his associates (1985), communication means listening to customers and informing them in a language they can understand. It also means adjusting one's language for different consumers. Among the interpersonal skills required by the contact personnel, Varca (2004) considers oral expression as the ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

Presenting the services means giving formal speeches on specifics subjects to a group of individuals (Varca, 2004) Since the level of effort made by the employee is related to the customer's perception of the service received (Mohr et Bitner, 1995), consistent presentation of services is considered a facet of effort made by the frontline employee. The sale of a service or the employee’s presentation, by having the skill to influence the purchase and with consistent use, is therefore part of the employee's competence (Varca, 2004).

“Solutions orientation” involves the degree of effort made to achieve the desired results and the impact on the evaluation of the transaction even if it is not concluded (Mohr and Bitner, 1995). Among the main categories of determinants of customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding incidents during service delivery, we must consider the employee’s response, on one hand, to the customer’s needs and requests, and on the other hand, to the weaknesses of the service (Bitner, Boom, & Mohr, 1994). Reliability of behaviour in the Brady and Cronin model (2001) represents the action taken by the employee to meet the customer’s needs.

2.2.3 The Conclusion relationship
The power to conclude is the ability to optimize and energize relationships with the customer and assume the responsibility to take action (Langlois and Maurette, 2003). The role of the employee during service delivery is to conclude the transaction. The power to conclude is divided into five indicators: determination, reaction, efficiency, negotiation and flexibility, as well as conclusion and reinforcement of the choice.
Transaction determination leads to the success of the transaction. The effort made will increase the chances of successfully concluding the transaction satisfactorily (Mohr and Bitner, 1995). These efforts are defined as the amount of energy an observer believes an employee has put into behaviour (Mohr and Bitner, 1995). It therefore represents transaction determination. One of the dimensions of evaluating the perceived quality interaction by the customer is the dedication involving the determination to solve the problem, the willingness to assist, the effort made to satisfy demands and the interest that the employee conveys to the customer (Chandon et al., 1996).

Reaction and effectiveness is associated with helpfulness (Parasuraman et al. 1988), which is the ability of contact personnel to assist customers and provide prompt service. Effectiveness is also an essential service encounter dimension (Chandon et al. 1997). In Svensson’s text (2004), reaction involves problem solving, personal interaction and timing. These indicators are determinants of employee success and the ability to conclude the transaction. The action taken by the employee to meet customers' needs (Brady and Cronin, 2001) is also associated with reaction and effectiveness. According to Haywood-Farmer (1988), the employee should be a guide to the customer by facilitating the transaction, integrating new information and achieving the desired results. This is an essential part of the employee's professional judgement (Haywood-Farmer, 1988). The manner in which the employee guides the customer towards the appropriate solution is part of the reaction process.

Varca (2004) describes flexibility as the ability to change behaviour, habits and style to meet the changing demands of the work environment. Within this context, the exchange is based on the employee’s response to the needs expressed by the customer and the adjustment to demands. With the power to conclude, the employee is able to use adaptive and recovery skills to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion for everyone (Grönroos, 1988).

Knowing when to conclude is an essential component of the transaction. According to Blake and Mouton (1978), two dimensions exist in management: task orientation and relationship orientation. The first dimension concerns production, results and profits. The second dimension, relationship orientation, focuses on the individual, and is reflected in work conditions, trust and sympathy. Both orientations overlap each other and their various arbitrations involve different types of transaction. The goal of the exchange is to conclude the transaction and deliver the service. Technical quality assists in the conclusion of the exchange. Once again, the action taken by the employee to meet customers' needs (Brady and Cronin, 2001) results in the conclusion of the exchange. The degree of effort is also a key determinant in concluding the transaction (Mohr and Bitner, 1995). Knowing when to conclude therefore involves continuing with the transaction or identifying a solution.

According to the theory of cognitive dissonance by Festinger (1957), an evaluation is made of attitude following a decision so that cognitions conform more closely to the behaviour chosen. Although cognitive dissonance usually appears following service consumption, a conflict may arise during the process (Festinger, 1964). Consumers are not always confident about their decisions with respect to purchase, consumption and provision of goods and services (Hoyer
and MacInnis, 2004). They may feel uncertain about the choices made and may even regret certain decisions. According to Hoyer and MacInnis (2004), dissonance is the feeling of anxiety about whether or not a correct decision was made. As cognitive dissonance may be experienced at any time, it is important to assure customer satisfaction and discourage doubts by reinforcing the choices made. In order to reduce customer anxiety, the employee may reinforce the customer’s choice by repeating the positive aspects of the decision and valorizing the decision.

2.2.4 The Service relationship

This notion represents the service quality dimensions, as developed by Langlois and Maurette (2003) and is reduced to the individual interaction level. The employee must, at their own level, provide quality service across the five dimensions, which include reliability, accessibility, enjoyment, physical comfort and memorability of the experience.

Reliability involves consistency of performance and dependability of contact personnel. It also means the employee performs the service right the first time and honours any promises (Parasuraman et al., 1985). According to Grönroos (1988), the contact personnel must demonstrate reliability, trust and confidence during service delivery. Reliable contact personnel are dependable when they fulfil any promises and commitments made and acts in the customer’s best interest (Grönroos, 1988). The SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) includes the reliability dimension. Reliability is the employee's ability to deliver the promised service in a dependable and timely manner (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In the model developed by Chandon and his associates (1997), reliability corresponds to effectiveness. It is defined as achieving what was desired at the beginning. Moreover, Brady and Cronin (2001) assess the reliability of interaction, physical environment and the results. In service leadership, the reliability of interaction is particularly interesting. According to Svensson (2004), reliability results from the fulfilment of promises and commitments by contact personnel.

Access means the ease of contact and approachability (Parasuraman et al., 1985). According to the criteria of perceived service quality in Grönroos’ model (1988), access and flexibility must also be established by contact personnel during service delivery. It means that the personnel must be easily accessible, approachable and able to adapt (Grönroos, 1988). Among the six dimensions of quality analysis of Svensson (2004), access is related to service employee availability and access to the service desired. The notion of access also refers to business hours, signage and physical premises. As the study focuses on the interaction between the contact personnel and the customer, the access measured will focused more on the employee.

Entertainment by contact personnel must be permanent to contribute towards integrating the entire offer (Langlois and Maurette, 2003). According to Pine II and Gilmore (1998), experiences are inherently personal, existing only in the mind of individuals engaged in service delivery. Contact personnel must consistently be involved in the experience design. The theme found in the experience must be consistently guided by employees. Facilitation includes the overall management of the theme and brand, the scheduling of events, the staff’s appearance and dress, as well as the memorable products (Langlois and Maurette, 2003).
According to Schmitt et al. (2004), there is no business that is not show business. The importance of entertainment is crucial for all players involved in service delivery within the organization. Everyone has the potential to create positive experiences for customers. This will reflect as enthusiasm and dynamism during the interaction between the contact personnel and citizen.

The employee must show concern for the sensory comfort of the customer. Although tangible elements in place play a primary role in influencing other quality criteria of the encounter (Reimer and Kuehn, 2005), the concern by contact personnel for the customer’s well-being should play an important role in quality assessment (Langlois, 2003; 2005). The employee has a role to play in the SERVICESCAPE assessment (Bitner, 1992; 1994) by making sure harmony is achieved between the customer’s needs and the needs of the surrounding work environment. In the hierarchal model by Brady and Cronin (2001), concern for sensory comfort is presented in the tangible dimension of service results. Employee empathy reinforces the importance of quality atmosphere, design of offices and facilities for customers (Brady and Cronin, 2001).

Personalized service delivered by frontline employees may be generated by involving customers and their link with the service environment. In his thesis, Maurette (2003) defines relational emotional comfort as emotion management, as well as relationship and information management. The personalized relationship environment is also related to the relational aspects and the interaction management between the customer and staff (Langlois and Maurette, 2003). Exceeding the citizen’s expectations is an excellent way to create memorability. According to Schmitt and his team (2004), the employee’s ability to listen and understand, establish a dialogue and develop transparent relationships, as well as deliver service expectations, will create memorability during face-to-face exchanges.

2.2.5 The Anchorage relationship
The memorable experience normally results in customer repurchase of the service, positive word-of-mouth and customer loyalty. To create this type of experience, the front-line employee has the power to stay focused on the customer’s objectives, provide feedback, consider his or her needs, be fair and equal, thus valorizing his organization and colleagues.

Staying focused on the objectives enables employees to specifically meet the expressed desires of customers from the start of the exchange. As employees should be a guide for the customer, (Haywood-Farmer, 1988), they may facilitate the transaction by integrating new information to achieve the desired results while keeping in mind the initial objective. When the basic service is delivered, it is possible to exceed customers' expectations and start creating memorable experiences. To achieve this, the customer’s reason for contacting the organization must be addressed, above all else. Therefore, the objectives must always be in sight during the exchange.

To facilitate dialogue, reduce barriers and encourage comments from customers and citizens, it is therefore necessary to apply the feedback method, ensure that all the relevant information is provided, reassure customers they have made the right choices and thank them for their cooperation. Loyalty is the customer’s voluntary decision to continue using the services of a
particular organization over a long time period (Lovelock and Wright, 1999). A loyal customer is a consistent, long-term source of revenue for an organization (Lovelock and Wright, 1999). Referring to Langlois and Tocquer (1992), reinforcement activities encourage customers to return. Contact personnel must build customer loyalty by creating an action plan that provides positive reinforcement for better customer experience (Langlois and Tocquer, 1992). Requesting customer feedback is an example of positive reinforcement (Langlois and Tocquer, 1992). Lovelock and his team (2004) confirmed this notion by proposing the importance of assuring the level of customer satisfaction during and after service delivery. The contact staff must allow customers to easily express their opinions. The organization must promote an effective after-sales service and an adequate clearing system. During the encounter, the employee must communicate clearly the information regarding solutions, and methods of recourse if the customer is dissatisfied. This assurance is essential in gaining customer or citizen loyalty.

Reviewing the literature, we found that consideration is often associated with courtesy. Courtesy involves politeness, respect, consideration and friendliness of contact personnel (Parasuraman et al., 1985). We also find that courtesy is included in the assurance dimensions of the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Among the service behavioural aspects, courtesy and politeness are important elements related to the consideration of contact personnel towards the customer (Haywood-Farmer, 1988). In addition, professional judgement mainly consists of honesty, confidentiality and discretion (Haywood-Farmer, 1988). A customer will be more satisfied if the employee shows consideration in this respect. Customer recognition is an excellent example of considering and even meeting the customer's fundamental need for self-esteem (Eiglier, 2004). This involves showing direct and indirect signs of recognition to the customer (Eiglier, 2004).

Fairness and equality are at the heart of relationships. The reciprocity phenomenon has long been a core process in business relationships (Gouldner, 1960). According to Price et al (1995), showing fairness and quality involves an open-minded relationship characterized by a greater degree of reciprocity between the service provider and the customer. All customers arrive at a service judgement based on the interactional, distributive and procedural fairness associated with the staff, the products process involved (Servert, 2002). The theory of equality is focused on the equality of exchange among individuals (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2004) and provides a better understanding of customer satisfaction. In order to ensure that the feeling of equality develops and that the results demonstrate the value invested in the service, the customer must experience exchange equality (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2004). The feeling of fairness is therefore considered an important factor in building customer loyalty.

Personnel integrity refers to the service climate (Pugh et al. 2002). According to Pugh and his associates (2002), the measures designed to facilitate work help employees to devote themselves to satisfying the customers’ demands. The basics of service climate, which include the resources and training, as well as service delivery policies and practices, are vital components of overall service climate. Collateral services among departments also promote customer orientation throughout the organization, while work facilitation encourages managerial behaviour focused on service. Organizations that pay particular attention to the needs and expectations of its customers are the most successful in creating conditions for optimal services climate.
3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE TRANSFORMATION EXPERIENCE

Service delivery is a customer service experience. Within the framework of this transformation system, we evaluated our intervention based on the skills demonstrated by the employee and perceived by the customer during the experience, as described above (Langlois and Boivin, 2007). These skills include contact, transaction and service leadership. They were measured using a diverse group of customers and employees at all levels by indicators composed of these elements. This section discusses the conceptual framework and the research hypotheses.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) define service quality as a comparison between the general customer expectations with the perceived performance of the organization. The service quality model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) identified a set of discrepancies regarding manager perception of service quality and the tasks associated with service delivery to consumers. These gaps represent major obstacles in attempting to deliver a service that consumers will perceive as being of high quality (Parasuraman et al. 1985).

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 3 proposes a transformation approach that enables service organizations to move from an operational culture to an experiential one. The conceptual framework and its hypotheses focus on validation of the experiential leadership model. Following the results obtained, we were able to identify an intervention model appropriate to a service organization for citizens. The results helped to build the foundation of the LEADEX transformation system, including training and coaching for executives and employees of the pilot offices. A few months later, a second measure was taken from these offices to demonstrate the impact of this system on citizens and staff within the organization.

Figure 3: Conceptual framework

- Operating culture of program and process management
- Traditional operational leadership of executive and employees
- LEADEX Organizational transformation process
  - Executives
  - Frontline
- Management culture of memorable experiences for citizen
- Dynamic experiential leadership of executives and employees
4. HYPOTHESES

We propose the following work hypotheses:

H1: The experiential leadership skills of frontline employees are considered important by citizens using the services of the organization

H2: The experiential leadership skills of their supervisor are considered important by employees within the organization

H3: The significant experiential leadership skills of frontline employees to citizens are similar to the significant experiential leadership skills of immediate supervisors to their employees.

H4: The improvement in the significant experiential leadership skills of executives has a significant positive impact on the satisfaction level of employees with their immediate supervisor and the organization

H5: The improvement in the significant experiential leadership skills of contact personnel has a significant positive impact on the satisfaction level of citizens with staff personnel and the organization

The analysis was carried out with citizen-users, employees and executives to measure the relevance of the domino effect. Within this context, it is possible to characterize these relationships as dyads between the agents in an experiential leadership perspective.

We based our actions on the five experiential leadership skills, including seduction, influence, conclusion, service and anchorage (Langlois and Tocquer, 1992).

The domino effect concept assumes that employees and customers perceive these experiential leadership dimensions with the same criteria. For this purpose, we used these five dimensions at the same time with the group of employees, service provider personnel and customers in order to develop a universal experiential leadership model. Figure 4 shows the research hypotheses.
Figure 4: Hypotheses

H1: Seduction, Influence, Conclusion, Service, Anchorage

H1: Citizen perception

H2: Seduction, Influence, Conclusion, Service, Anchorage

H2: Employee perception

Experiential quality of the relationship

H3

Experiential memorability for internal and external customers

Mobilization

H-4 Manager
Experiential leadership significant for teams

H-5 Frontline
Experiential leadership significant for customers

The power of experiential leadership
Transforming public services
5. METHODOLOGY AND TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

5.1 The process

The first survey helped to build the foundation of the experiential leadership training provided to employees within the organization. During this survey, we validated the experiential leadership dimensions with the participation of citizens and employees within the organization and confirmed the universality of these factors. The H1, H2 and H3 hypotheses will be tested in the first phase of the study.

After the first survey in August 2006, the group of managers from the organization in Quebec completed the experiential leadership training. Emphasis was placed on the highlights from the results to achieve the best possible improvement of citizens’ experiences gained by the organization. In addition, all employees from the three pilot offices received the same training that supports the citizen’s service experience. The training also allowed employees to reflect on the purpose of their work and proved to be a definite source of motivation.

Three offices participated as pilot sites in the experiential leadership experiment within the organization. A monthly follow-up with the executives and team leaders of the pilot offices was carried out. The meetings took place in two phases: the first consisted of a team work session, where each office explained the steps taken to implement the experiential leadership principles and the follow-up with their team. The meetings promoted exchange among the three branches, where everyone shared their respective actions. The goal was to promote the exchange of good practices.

We identified the prerequisites to achieve transformation based on the five conditions listed below, which served as the basis to effectively coach the pilot offices:

- Work within transformation units, comprised of employees, team leader, service manager and manager
- Work more than one transformation unit at the same time to maximize benefits through healthy competition and emulation
- Reduce the number of employees supervised by immediate supervisors by establishing team leaders
- Follow up actively with each unit
- Maintain a sustained interest in the teams by encouraging the highest level management to become involved in the process

In brief, each office doubled its efforts to provide more effective experiential leadership to its employees and, consequently, more effective experiential leadership to citizens requesting their services. Team leaders carried out informal follow-up on a daily basis, with more formal ones once a week with frontline employees, which has proven to be one of the key success factors of the experience.
The second survey in February 2007 attempted to measure the effect of the action towards experiential leadership within the organization. The results of this study are presented in the following section. The H4 and H5 hypotheses will be validated by measuring the impact of the transformation process.

5.2 Data collection

A survey was conducted at the end of August 2006 to help determine the training needs of employees within the organization. This survey consisted of four polls taken from three sections of the organization, including citizens, contact personnel and executives. The polls allowed the organization to guide and personalize the experiential leadership training, and to better define the actions to be developed and improved according to the type of employees.

The survey, which as conducted at the organization in August 2006, included a first questionnaire distributed to citizens visiting the organization’s four centres in Montreal and surrounding areas, as well as a centre in Trois-Rivières. A second questionnaire was distributed to employees providing Canadian citizens with face-to-face service interactions with the population. Given the insufficient number of employees at these offices, we decided to collect data from frontline employees throughout Quebec. A similar poll was distributed to the same employees and all levels of management within the organization, measuring the leadership style of their immediate supervisors. Finally, the fourth questionnaire was distributed to all levels of management for self-evaluation of their leadership style with their team.

Five months later, a second measure was collected after the three pilot offices had completed the training and the new experiential leadership techniques were implemented in their daily activities. This time, the survey aimed to measure the impact of the training and the experiential leadership development into the pilot offices.

The similar survey was conducted in February 2007 using four questionnaires. The main difference between the two data collection exercises was the target population. In the second poll, the questionnaire distributed to citizens was completed only at the three pilot offices. The other three questionnaires were also distributed to all personnel at the three branches.
5.2.1 Measure of citizens’ experience with the organization

The data collection instrument used to conduct the study with citizens is a questionnaire distributed in the form of a poll. The questionnaire distributed to customers consisted of four sections. The first section included an introduction to the use of the services provided by the organization. The second section involved the service encounter with the employee during the citizen’s visit to the organization, which was measured using a statement grid in the interaction experience between the citizen and contact personnel. The respondents gave their opinion on each statement of the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). The third section of the questionnaire was an overall evaluation of the service received and intentions of future purchases, while the fourth and last section consists of the respondent’s profile. The poll was developed in French and translated into English, since customers spoke either English or French. The data collection with citizens was conducted at the five offices of Services Canada throughout Canada. The collection lasted two weeks, from August 14 to 25, 2006.

In August 2006, five interviewers, graduate students at the Université du Québec, were selected to conduct the poll at the offices with customers. A meeting was held with the group of interviewers, research team and Service Canada representatives to put the poll into context for individuals and provide them with some instructions and guidelines regarding data collection. The questionnaires were read on site in French and English to ensure that questions and statements were clearly understood and that customer approach was consistent.

In February 2007, three interviewers were selected to provide data collection services at the three pilot offices, two of which had participated in the first study. They were asked in a telephone conversation to recall instructions and assure uniformity of data collection.

To facilitate data entry and quickness in collection, interviewers were assigned two to three computers for each branch to complete the data collection. The interviewer approached respondents before they left the branch so as to obtain their opinion on the service encounter with the employee(s) of the organization. If respondents agreed to participate in the study, the interviewer then led them to a computer to complete the questionnaire on their own. If individuals were not comfortable with completing the questionnaire online, the interviewer would then help them to enter the information and complete the answers or give the option to fill out a paper questionnaire. In this case, the interviewer would have had to continue entering the data into the computer when the customer left. It was possible to help several respondents at once, provided they had completed the poll answers on their own.

The information was gathered from samples of citizens directly within the branches of the organization. The time frame for these contacts was not measured, but we can assume that the interactions lasted between one and thirty minutes each. Given that the interviewers at the branches had approached everyone leaving the office, this technique could be referred to as accidental sampling. Indeed, interviewers approached everyone, except those already busy with someone else. Referring to customer traffic, the total number of respondents for each office
varied. The interviewers were at the branches between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm for 10 days. In August, the total number of respondents was 1,032 and in February, the total number was 558.

The organization decided on which offices would be participating in the data collection. It is important to note that among the offices sampled in the survey in August, three were modified through physical interventions and different training processes for employees to enhance their offer of services. In addition, the other two offices were traditional and had not been physically redeveloped. The distribution of respondents at the branches was evaluated according to customer traffic. Thus, 49% of respondents from a modified office completed the questionnaire, while 51% responded in a non-modified office. The second study in February was conducted with only three pilot offices that were also modified.

5.2.2 Measure of employee self-perception of the service experience provided to citizens

In the same manner as for citizens, the data collection instrument used to conduct the survey with employees was a questionnaire distributed in the form of an online poll. Employees were given a questionnaire consisting of three sections: the first section comprised the employee’s overall assessment of the service provided by the organization as a whole and his or her own service delivery to citizens. The second section involved an assessment of the employee’s approach during service encounters with citizens. The final section addressed the respondent's profile. Once again, given that employees in the offices across Quebec spoke either English or French, the poll was developed in French and translated into English.

The questions regarding the interaction experience between contact personnel and customers contained the same parameters as those included in the questionnaire addressed to citizens, except that the first-person pronoun referred to employees and the third-person pronoun referred to customers. This section of the questionnaire allowed respondents to give their opinion on each statement of the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

The data collection in August included the measure of contact personnel with citizens of the organization throughout Quebec. Thus, we approached each frontline employee on a census basis as they were all invited to complete the questionnaire. This first collection from employees was conducted from August 14 to 18, 2006. To facilitate the self-evaluation by frontline employees regarding service delivery to customers, an email message was sent to each of them containing the link to the online questionnaire. Out of a total service population of 483, 311 employees completed the poll. In total, the sample represented 64% of the service population within this organization in Quebec.

The poll conducted in February 2007 followed the same methodology, except that it was only sent to the contact personnel of the three pilot branches. A similar email message was sent to all contact personnel containing the link to the online questionnaire. The collection period
lasted February 12 to 16. In total, 20 out of 22 employees completed the questionnaire, which indicated we achieved a response rate of 91%.

5.2.3 Measure of employee perception towards the leadership style of the immediate supervisor

Employees of the organization were also required to complete a questionnaire measuring their perception of their immediate supervisor, which was distributed as an online survey consisting of three sections. The first section included an overall evaluation of the leadership style practiced by executives within the organization. The second section involved the employee's evaluation of the leadership style of his or her immediate supervisor. The final section consisted of the respondent's profile. Again, given that employees of the offices across Quebec spoke either French or English, the survey was developed in French and translated into English.

The questionnaire measuring the leadership style practiced by executives with their employees included 25 attributes, allowing employees to evaluate their immediate supervisor. The statements were very similar to the ones used to measure the relationship between citizens and employees. This section of the questionnaire also allowed respondents to give their opinion on each statement of the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

The collection in August 2006 included the measure with employees from the organization throughout Quebec. Thus, we approached each employee on a census basis as they were all invited to complete the questionnaire. This collection period also lasted from August 14 to 18, 2006. To facilitate the employees’ evaluation regarding the leadership style of their immediate supervisor, an email message was sent to each of them with the link to the online questionnaire. Out of a total service population of 620, 458 employees completed the survey. In total, the sample represented 74% of all employees within the organization.

The second collection with employees was made during the period of February 12 to 16, 2006. An email message containing the link to the online questionnaire was sent to all employees of the three pilot branches. Out of a total service population of 29, 24 employees answered the survey. In total, the sample represented 83% of the employee population at all levels of the three branches.
5.2.4 Measure of executive perception regarding the leadership style practiced with their team

The online survey conducted with executives also consisted of three sections. The first section involved an overall evaluation of the service provided by the organization and the leadership style practiced. The second section included a self-evaluation by executives regarding their leadership styles with their team. The final section concerned the respondent’s profile. In addition, given that employees of the offices across Quebec spoke either French or English, the survey was developed in French and translated into English.

The questions regarding the leadership style practiced by executives with their employees had the same factor structure for the ones used in the questionnaire addressed to employees evaluating their immediate supervisor, except that the first-person pronoun referred to executives and the third-person pronoun referred to employees. This section of the questionnaire also allowed respondents to give their opinion on each statement of the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5.

The measure with executives of the organization was performed throughout Quebec during the first collection in August 2006. The executive population consisted of all executives within the organization in Quebec supervising a minimum of one employee. Therefore, we addressed each executive on a consensus basis since they were all invited to complete the questionnaire. This collection with executives was performed during the period August 14 to 18, 2006. To facilitate the self-evaluation by executives regarding their leadership styles practiced with their team, an email message containing the link to the online questionnaire was sent to each of them. Out of a total population of 137, 93 executives completed the survey. In total, the sample represented 68% of the executive population within the organization in Quebec.

The second collection was performed during the period of February 12 to 16, 2006 at the three pilot offices participating in the study. To facilitate the self-evaluation by executives on their leadership style practiced with their team, an email message containing the link to the online questionnaire was sent to each of them. Out of a total population of 7, 6 executives completed the survey. In total, the sample represented 85% of the executive population of this organization under the pilot branches.
6. RESULTS

6.1 Organization profile in August 2006

The survey in August 2006 was used to validate the presence of three environments in the experiential leadership evaluation of the organization. Among the 25 skills listed, using a Varimax SPSS factorial analysis, 20 were grouped into three (3) specific factors rather than the anticipated five (5). The same three factors were identified for citizens towards employees and for employees towards their immediate supervisors. We defined these three worlds as magnetic experience, action-based experience and anchorage experience. They, however, have relatively different values according to citizen and employee perceptions. This chapter attempts to validate the following H1, H2 and H3 hypotheses:

H1: The experiential leadership skills of frontline employees are considered important by citizens using the services of the organization

H2: The experiential leadership skills of supervisors are considered important by employees within the organization

H3: The significant experiential leadership skills of frontline employees with citizens are similar to the significant experiential leadership skills of immediate supervisors with their employees

According to the results obtained, magnetic experience consists of passion for one’s cause, control of emotions, positive attitude, appearance, warmth, open-mindedness and apathy (Langlois and Boivin, 2007). Referring to our foundation model (Langlois and Tocquer, 1992), we found that the elements of seduction form an integral part of the magnetic experience. Action-based experience refers to the ability to influence and succeed in concluding a fair transaction (Langlois and Boivin, 2007). The variables associated with the action-based experience are control of expertise, expression of objectives, convincing language, transaction leadership, flexibility and negotiation, the closing of the transaction and reinforcement of solution. Anchorage experience is evaluated according to the variables of the service quality dimension presented in the foundation model, as well as those associated with anchorage (Langlois and Tocquer, 1992). The variables associated with the delivery experience are feedback, reliability, access, team valorization, respect and politeness, concern for the customer’s physical comfort, the goal of exceeding expectations and pleasant surprises (Langlois and Boivin, 2007).

6.1.1 Comparison between citizens perception and employee self-perception

It is interesting to note that when we asked citizens and employees to evaluate service delivery, the three domains, recovered on a scale of 100%, meant different things according to the two public opinion polls studied (Figure 5). For citizens, the largest part of the evaluation was
devoted to a magnetic experience, while for employees, the major part of their self-evaluation was related to an action-based experience. This difference must be considered in order to improve the delivery of memorable services experiences.

When comparing the experiential leadership components based on citizens and employees perception, we found that the three factors traced the same curve (Figure 6). In addition, we found that citizens gave a more positive opinion of the service provided by employees than the employees themselves.

Figure 5: The three LEADEX factors of experiential leadership according to Quebec citizens and employees (August 2006)
Figure 6: Experiential leadership within the organization according to Quebec citizens and employees (August 2006)
6.1.2 Comparison between employee perception of their immediate supervisor and executive self-perception of their leadership style.

When comparing the experiential leadership factors in the relationship between employees and their immediate supervisor, we could observe in Figure 7 that executive self-perception was more positive than how employees perceived them. We observed, however, that the curves of the three experiences follow a similar pattern. In both cases, the best evaluation was given to magnetic experience.

**Figure 7: Experiential leadership within the organization according to Quebec citizens and employees (August 2006)**
6.2 Impact of the LEADEX transformation process:
Comparison of results of August 2006 and February 2007

Considering that the aim of the experiment is to determine the impact of experiential leadership implementation within the organization, it is necessary to compare the results of August 2006 and February 2007 for the pilot branches. The February survey was conducted in three centres of the organization only. The same experiential leadership components were used to analyze the results, since there was evidence of universal use in the first study. This chapter also attempts to validate the following H4 and H5 hypotheses:

H4: The improvement in the significant experiential leadership skills of executives has a significant positive impact on the satisfaction level of employees with their immediate supervisor and the organization

H5: The improvement in the significant experiential leadership skills of contact personnel has a significant positive impact on the satisfaction level of citizens with the contact personnel and organization
6.2.1 Measure of citizens' experiences with the organization

The descriptive results of the statements in the LEADEX grid are shown in Table 1 below. We noted that the results of February 2007 were very high, the lowest being 4.74 out of 5. The indicators have increased since August 2006 for all cases.

Table 1: Descriptive results (Citizens: August vs. February)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN MY RECENT SERVICE EXPERIENCE WITH AN EMPLOYEE OF THE ORGANIZATION, I FOUND THAT HE/SHE …</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was in control of his or her emotions</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was friendly</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a positive attitude</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was empathic, listened to me and understood my situation</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had a well-groomed and credible appearance</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believed strongly in the services he/she provided</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was competent and an expert in the programs of the organization</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used simple and convincing language</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took the time to explain the different services and options</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made an effort to find a solution to my needs</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was determined to find a solution</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisted me in my search for solutions</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was flexible and negotiable in the search for solutions</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found a solution to my needs</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged my choices and actions, and helped to clear my doubts related to the effectiveness of the solution</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was reliable and inspired trust and confidence</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was accessible and available</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was enthusiastic and dynamic</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was concerned for my physical comfort</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeded my expectations and pleasantly surprised me with his/her service approach</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stayed focused on the objectives of the encounter</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed me sufficient time to deal with my situation throughout the encounter</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was respectful, polite and courteous</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was fair and equal towards me</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeared positive with his/her colleagues and the organization</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When we reviewed the LEADEX components in Figure 8, we found that citizens gave a more positive evaluation about magnetic experience and anchorage experience. The action-based experience remained the most reliable, although it was very high. The curve remained the same as in August 2006. The greatest increase occurred in the anchorage experience.

![Comparison of the citizen satisfaction towards experiential leadership in the three pilot offices (August vs February)](image-url)
6.2.2 Measure of employee perception towards the service experience provided to citizens

The results of the statements in the LEAD/EX grid for February 2007 fell between 3.94 and 4.68. The comparison of results of each statement between August 2006 and February 2007 are presented in Table 2. Indicators showing an increase are the ones the teams focused on during the last months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN MY DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO CITIZENS, I FEEL THAT …</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am in control of my emotions</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am friendly</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a positive attitude</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am emphatic, I listen and I understand their situation</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a neat and professional appearance</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe strongly in the services provided</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am competent and an expert in the programs of the organization</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use simple and convincing language</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take the time to explain the different services and options</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make efforts to find solutions to meet the citizens’ needs</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am determined to find a solution</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I help citizens in the search for solutions</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am flexible and negotiable in the search for solutions</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find solutions to meet the citizens’ needs</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I encourage the choices and actions of citizens, and I clarify doubts over the effectiveness of the solutions</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am reliable and inspire trust and confidence</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am accessible and available</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am enthusiastic and dynamic</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned for the citizen’s physical comfort</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I exceed expectations and citizens are pleasantly surprised by my service approach</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I stay focused on the objectives of the encounter</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I allow sufficient time for citizens to analyze their situation throughout the encounter</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I treat citizens in a respectful, polite and courteous manner</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am fair and equal towards all citizens</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a positive attitude towards my colleagues and the organization</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When we reviewed Figure 9, we found that employees gave a more positive opinion of the magnetic experience they had with citizens in February 2007. The anchorage experience was second, while the action-based experience was last. However, we also noted that the three LEADEX indicators decreased between the two periods. We attribute this to the fact that employees were more aware of their actions and were harder on themselves.

Figure 9: LEADEX Indicators (Employees-citizens: February 2007)
6.2.3 Comparison between citizen perception and employee self-perception

When we consider the results of the experiential leadership components as determined by citizens and employees, we found an interesting difference in Figure 10. Indeed, citizens had a very positive opinion of the experience provided by frontline employees. It is interesting to note that the curve of the three experiences showed the same for citizens and employees, which means that both points of view are consistent. Overall, the best component was magnetic experience, followed by anchorage experience, and then action-based experience.

Figure 10: Experiential leadership within the organization according to citizens and employees of Quebec (February 2007)
6.2.4 Measure of employee perception towards the leadership type of the immediate supervisor

Following the employee survey responding to questions about the different levels of experiential leadership style of their immediate supervisor, we found that the ratio hovered between 3.52 and 4.57 in February 2007. The results of each statement are presented in Table 3. The most prominent differences are highlighted in red and pink.

Table 3: Descriptive results (Employees-immediate supervisor: August vs. February)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of Leadership Style</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is in control of their emotions</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is friendly</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a positive attitude</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is empathic, listens to me and understands my situation</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a well-groomed and credible appearance</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes strongly in the services provided</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is competent and an expert in the programs offered</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses simple and convincing language</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes the time to explain his expectations regarding my work</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always presents requests that focus on citizens' satisfaction</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is determined to take action</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes active leadership</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is flexible and negotiable in his/her actions</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knows how to take action</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages my choices and actions and clarifies my doubts regarding the effectiveness of my solution</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is reliable and inspires trust and confidence</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is accessible and available</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is enthusiastic and dynamic</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is concerned for my physical comfort</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds my expectations and pleasantly surprises me with his/her approach</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remains focused on my objectives</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives me feedback on a regular basis</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is respectful, polite and courteous</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is fair and equal towards me</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appears positive towards our colleagues and the organization</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We found that the indicators showing the greatest improvement were most notably associated with motivating and attitude factors as described by Langlois (1981). The three factors identified were feedback, training and information, and the manager’s attitude; we grouped the different statements into these three categories.
The results obtained for each experiential leadership component revealed that managers provided their employees with a magnetic experience over anchorage or action-based experiences. The data is illustrated in Figure 11. With regard to their immediate supervisor, the greatest increase between August 2006 and February 2007 was shown at the anchorage experience level of executives towards their team.

Figure 11: LEADEX indicators (Employees-immediate supervisor: August vs. February)

6.2.5 Measure of executive perception towards the leadership style practiced with their team

A comparison between the results of August 2006 and February 2007 was difficult since only one employee at one of the pilot offices mentioned appearance at one of the branches in August 2006.

When executives performed a self-evaluation of their leadership style with their employees in February, the results were very positive. The results of the statements in the LEADEX grid ranged from 4.50 to 5. Note that the average values were calculated based on only six respondents and are presented in the following table:
Table 5: Descriptive results (Executives: February 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN MY LEADERSHIP WITH MY IMMEDIATE EMPLOYEES, I FIND THAT…</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am in control of my emotions</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am friendly</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a positive attitude</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am empathetic, I listen and I understand their situation</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a well-groomed and credible appearance</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe strongly in the services provided by the organization</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am competent and an expert in the programs of the organization</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use simple and convincing language</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take the time to clearly explain my expectations regarding their work</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always present requests focused on citizens' satisfaction</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am determined to take action</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I assume active leadership with them</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am flexible and negotiable in my actions</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to put ideas into action</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I encourage their choices and actions and help clarify their doubts regarding the effectiveness of the solution</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am reliable and convey trust and confidence</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am accessible and available</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am enthusiastic and dynamic</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned for their physical comfort</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I exceed expectations and pleasantly surprise them with my approach</td>
<td>4.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am focused on their objectives</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I provide them with feedback on a regular basis</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am respectful, polite and courteous towards them</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am fair and equal to each of them</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have positive attitude towards my colleagues and the organization</td>
<td>4.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• The total number of executive respondents was 7 in February. These results are to be used with caution.

According to the executives of the pilot branches within the organization, the magnetic experience was the best component of their experiential leadership style, followed by the action-based experience and then the anchorage experience. These results are presented in Figure 12.
Figure 12: LEADEX indicators (Executives: February 2007)

- The total number of executive respondents was 7
- These results are to be used with caution
6.2.6 Comparison between employee perception of their immediate supervisor and executive self-perception of their leadership style in February 2007.

Figure 13 compares the experiential leadership components based on employees’ point of view towards their immediate supervisor and that of executives towards their team. First, we found that the curve of the three experiences were essentially the same. We also noted that executives were more positive than employees. Both groups agreed that the magnetic experience was the best component.

Figure 13: Experiential leadership within the organization according to executives and employees of Quebec (February 2007)
7. CONCLUSION AND MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

To clearly show the increase in the results of surveys conducted between August 2006 and February 2007, Tables 6 to 9 below illustrate the percentage increase, calculated by the growth potential of each index. The overall index of citizens' satisfaction therefore showed a 50% increase in relation to its opportunity to increase.

Table 6: Overall index (Citizens)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>August</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction index within the organization</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall employee satisfaction index of the leadership style of the organization increased at all levels. The largest increase was observed at the immediate supervisor’s level of satisfaction.

Table 7: Overall index (Employees-immediate supervisor)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>August</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction index for immediate supervisor</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction index for all executives</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall satisfaction index</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The LEADEX indicators identified by citizens also increased significantly, with the largest increase observed at the anchorage leadership level, showing a 46% increase in relation to its growth potential. There was a 41% increase at the magnetic experience level and a 33% increase at the action-based experience level.

Table 8: LEADEX indicators (Citizens)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>August</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magnetic experience</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action-based experience</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage experience</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the LEADEX indicators of employees towards their immediate supervisor also increased. The largest increase was also observed at the anchorage leadership level, with a 28% increase in relation to its growth potential. There was a 25% increase at the magnetic experience level and an 11% increase at the action-based experience level.
Table 9: LEADEX indicators (Employees-immediate supervisor)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magnetic experience</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action-based experience</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage experience</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can conclude that the implementation of the LEADEX transformation system within the pilot group was a tremendous success, notably as a result of considering the following essential factors in the intervention process:

- Working within transformation units, comprised of employees, team leader, service manager and manager
- Working more than one transformation unit to maximize benefits through healthy competition and emulation
- Reducing the number of employees supervised by the immediate supervisor by establishing team leaders
- Following up actively with each unit
- Maintaining a sustained interest in the teams by encouraging the highest level management to become involved in the process

These new patterns of work must now be reinforced throughout the organization and experiential leadership behaviour must be a daily leitmotiv for employees and executives to assure the creation of memorable experiences for all the players in the service delivery process.

Our intervention with Service Canada consisted of reducing the perceived disparity around personnel experiential leadership skills and improving the overall service experience. Indeed, through a better understanding of citizens’ expectations of service and employee expectations of their employers, we were able to establish the experience standards for these two types of relationships, as well as implement and enforce them within the comparison group.

To the extent that the employer is a creator of memorable experiences for his team just as the frontline employee is for the citizen, we proposed and validated the same experiential leadership factors with two populations, the customers and employees of Service Canada, in order to establish a universal model of experiential leadership within service organizations and thus improve the delivery of quality public services.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Journal articles


Monographs


**Theses and Dissertations**

