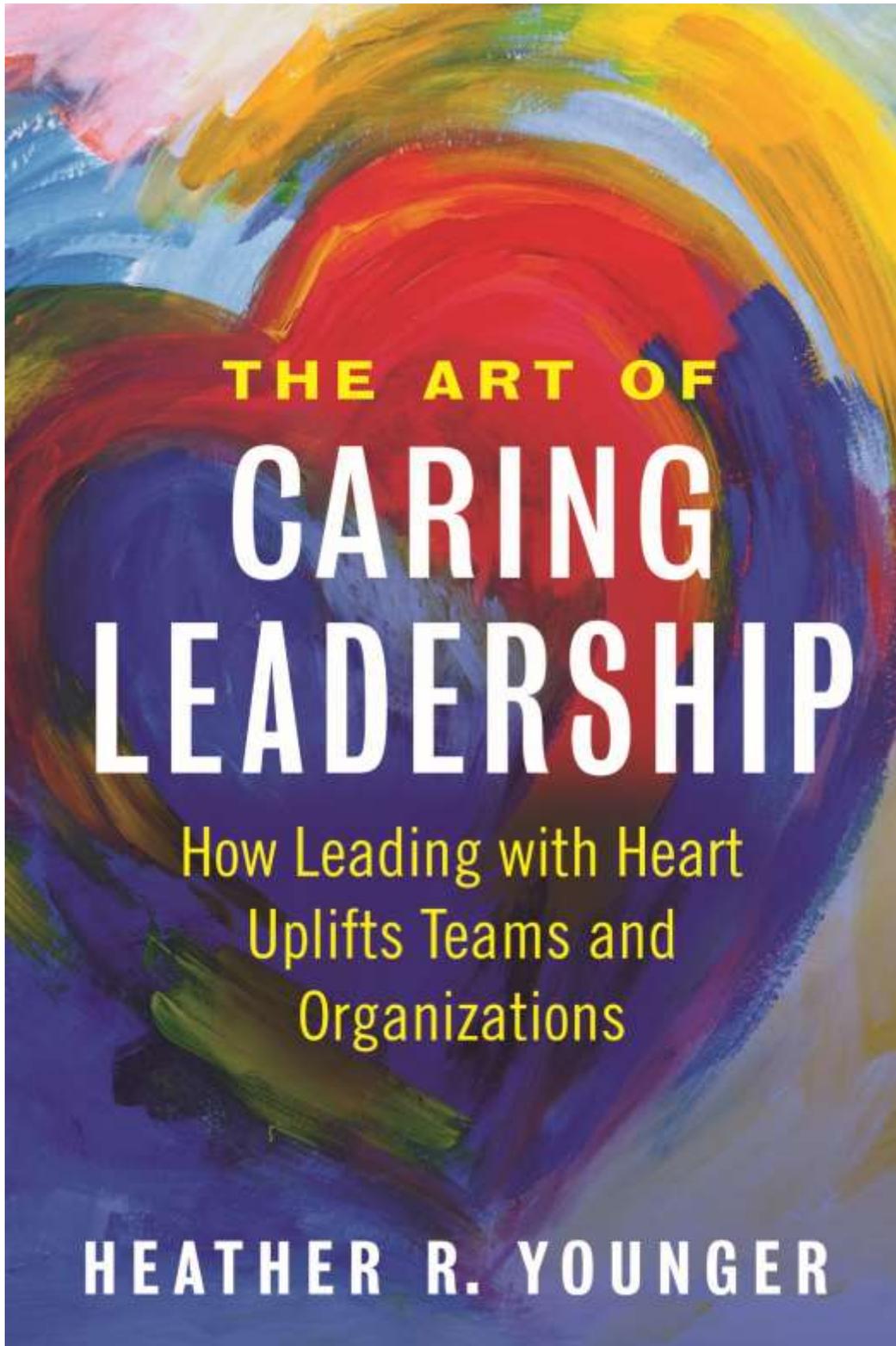


**Caring Leadership Self-Assessment
Technical Manual**



Caring Leadership Self-Assessment

Executive Summary

The Caring Leadership Self-Assessment was created to measure leadership style associated with caring towards one's team members. Caring Leadership is characterized by behaviors associated with acting for the benefit of others, empathy, kindness, interest in the wellbeing of others, creating psychological safety, and much more. In summary, the research described in this report outlines the creation of an assessment that measures caring leadership. Data were collected and analyzed to build out items and scales to measure nine distinct domains of caring leadership.



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Introduction

Workforce Lifecycle Analytics has developed a caring leadership assessment based upon several indices of caring leadership from subject matter expert interviews. This content is consolidated in the book, *The Art of Caring Leadership: How Leading With Heart Uplifts Teams and Organizations* (Younger, 2021). This technical manual describes the process of developing the Caring Leadership Self-Assessment and outlines how to best utilize the assessment feedback. This technical manual contains an overview of related literature and a detailed description of the development of the Caring Leadership Self-Assessment will be presented. Following the description of the development of the assessment, empirical results revealing the psychometric properties of the assessment are provided.

Leadership has been suggested to be a key factor for engaged employees (Luthans 2002) and for innovative organizations (Garcia-Morales et al. 2008). Specifically, interest has focused in improving motivation and social responsibility with the hopes that profit and accomplishment of organizational goals will be secured. Something that might be of great value in this regard is the idea of Caring Leadership. A closely related theory of servant leadership, first introduced by Greenleaf (1977), focuses on a more ethical and people-centered approach, where the leader genuinely cares about his followers (not just the organizational goals). Research indicates that positive affect, a sense of predictability, recognition of self-worth, engagement, job satisfaction, and performance are all correlated with servant leadership (Dierendonck, 2010).



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Overview

The Caring Leadership Self-Assessment measures how a leader is genuinely concerned with their employees. It aims to evaluate the degree to which a leader is attuned to the needs of the followers while providing an environment where people feel included and empowered. To leverage the construct of caring leadership for leadership development, we developed items and analyzed data across multiple samples to inform the creation of an assessment of caring leadership. By measuring behavioral tendencies that are directly aligned to the caring leadership framework, individuals can understand how their natural tendencies impact their effectiveness as a leader. Additionally, this assessment provides the power of scientific rigor in its development, implementation, and interpretation to inform leadership development plans. Leadership behaviors were aligned into 9 subscales of the construct based on different chapters of *The Art of Caring Leadership: How Leading With Heart Uplifts Teams and Organizations* (Younger, 2021).

Scale Definitions

To arrive at a number of accurate caring leadership behavioral items the researchers reviewed the leader interview content included in the book, *The Art of Caring Leadership*. The researchers consolidated the information into the nine leadership behavioral dimensions below.

1. *Creating a Listening Culture*: The leader's ability to listen to others and promote a work culture that is accepting of listening to feedback.



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2. Cultivate Self-Leadership Skills: Self-Leadership is a path towards more effectively leading others. It's the ability to become a self-leader who sets priorities, takes initiative, and solves problems.
3. Empowering Others to Make Decisions: Putting power into and bringing energy and enthusiasm to employees and followers.
4. Building Resilience: The ability to encourage followers to be more resilient in harsh or challenging situations.
5. Involve Others: The ability of the leader to effectively engage employees and followers into the tasks and projects of the organization.
6. Lead the Whole Person: Leadership based on the personal values and life experiences, as well as the understanding of one own's strengths and growth points.
7. Look for Greatness in Others: The ability to notice the strengths and virtues in others.
8. Make Others Feel Important: The ability to make followers and employees feel that their work is contributing to the organization in a significant way.
9. Provide Others Safe Spaces: The ability to administer followers and employees spaces where they won't feel marginalized, excluded or threatened.

Assessment Characteristics

Validity

Validity is the most fundamental consideration in developing and evaluating tests (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999). Validity, as a unitary concept, is the accumulated empirical evidence and theoretical rationales that support the appropriateness of inferences and actions based on assessment scores (Messick, 1989). Validity is based upon the idea that through psychological measurement we are making inferences



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that connect individual characteristics, measurement characteristics, outcomes measure characteristics, and outcome behavior (Binning & Barrett, 1989). Through these inferences, we are able to derive predictions of behavior and targets for development. As such, it becomes important for the measurements we make to be accurate and actually measure their intended target (e.g., Involve Others). This concern is considered *construct validity*. As we provide evidence for construct validity of measurements, we can build confidence in the inferences we make between the measurement and actual behavior, thus increasing the accuracy of our predictions based upon the measurement. Within a unitary view of validity, multiple forms of validity evidence can be collected (e.g., construct, content, and criterion-related validity), each with a unique contribution to showing how the assessment is measuring the intended construct.

Construct Validity

Often regarded as the most important element of validity is construct validity. This form of validity focuses on the degree to which the assessment measures its targeted construct (Binning & Barrett, 1989). For example, an assessment measuring caring leadership should actually reflect the level of caring leadership style in people.

Content Validity

Content validity evidence is considered apparent when the information contained within the assessment reflects the targeted construct (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999). Closely related, face validity, is the degree to which the psychological measurement appears to be related to the targeted construct.



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Reliability

Another important consideration when choosing a psychological assessment for selection is reliability. Simply put, reliability is consistency of measurement (Cronbach, 1947). This consistency is important because it is based upon Classical Test Theory. CTT posits that when people are measured there are three forms of variability that can be derived: observed variance, true-score variance, and error variance. Observed variance is simply the variability amount peoples' responses to psychological measurements (e.g., the score they get on an assessment). True score variance is the amount of variability in persons responses that are attributable to their actual differences (e.g., differences that reflect how person A is more influencing than person B). Error variance is changes in people scores that are not attributable to their own individual differences (e.g., some trying to seem better than they are, confusing items that people don't understand). The purpose of estimating reliability is to determine what amount of the observed variance is true score variance versus error variance.

Internal Consistency Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha, a common index of reliability that is often assessed in psychological measurement is internal consistency reliability. This form of reliability is based upon the homogeneity of responses to items in a psychological assessment. This correlation between responses, commonly referred to as *alpha*, to items is understood to indicate the degree to which all the items are measuring the same thing (Cronbach, 1951). This form of reliability is best used to show evidence that facets of a psychological assessment are consistently measuring something. The evidence that the test is measuring what you are targeting comes from evidence of validity.



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Application of the Assessment

1. Leadership Development

This assessment can help identify and serve as a platform for the assessment and development of leadership potential. It provides insight into behavioral tendencies related to caring leadership. Assessment results on each of the caring leadership dimensions can be used to structure discussion for leadership coaching and developmental processes, as individuals can look to address gaps and leverage strengths.

2. Team Effectiveness

This assessment provides feedback on an individual's preferences and caring leadership behaviors, highlighting how they may approach team members to the potential benefit or disadvantage of the individual or team's performance. The assessment allows the identification of gaps within the team and helps team members understand each other's leadership styles and how they can better interact with one another for maximum positive benefits.

3. Personal and Career Growth

This assessment helps individuals understand their caring leadership strengths and developmental opportunities and how that information could help them identify which work environments best maximize their impact. As a result, individuals may be able to make decisions on what career paths mostly align with their leadership style and how to thrive across situations by leveraging the insight they gain from knowing their leadership tendencies. In an organizational setting, the results from this assessment can help with kickstarting a development conversation for an individual to learn their strengths and gaps as it relates to becoming a caring leader.



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From this conversation, the organization and the individual can work together to create a path that best helps the individual grow according to where their caring leadership tendencies will thrive.

Misuse

1. Performance Evaluation/Termination

This assessment is not designed to help managers identify which employees to terminate using this assessment as a proxy for performance at any point in time. A person should not be assigned a pass or fail score, which is then used to make a decision on their continued employment based on this assessment. All employment decisions should be based on appropriate, job relevant criteria.

2. Mental Health

This assessment is not designed as an assessment for mental health. This could include assessment for emotional or psychological stability, substance abuse, eating disorders, physiological disorders, depression, or for creating a treatment program. In these cases, a clinical assessment should be used.

Test Development and Research Methods

Item Development

The purpose of the caring leadership assessment is to help measure one's leadership style in the workplace, which can help inform leadership development, team effectiveness, and personal career growth. The first stage was to operationalize the construct definitions based on "The Art of Caring Leadership" (Younger, in press). The



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next stage in the development process was to compile and generate items aligned to each behavioral operationalization; the team used previous studies and scholarly articles, as well as Younger's book, to create the items.

Using "The Art of Caring Leadership" as a baseline, more items were created in the categories through each individual's work experiences. Initially, 124 items were created, between 8-16 items for each scale across the nine scales, corresponding to the nine dimensions highlighted in the "Art of Caring Leadership" book.

Item Writing and Review Criteria

1. Targeted – The objective of the individual items is to measure the specific scales/constructs.
2. Simple – The items were written to be simple and easy to understand. Commonly used words were preferred over more complex ones. Since only one behavior is being measured with each item, conjunction words were avoided so that there were no double-barreled items.
3. Short – The items were written as short as possible while still conveying the intended meaning and measuring the behavior because longer items tend to have lower reliability than shorter ones which can impact their validity.
4. Coherent – The items were worded so that the respondents all reach the same conclusion on the meaning of the items.
5. Straightforward– The items were worded so their meaning is transparent, so the participants are clear on what is being asked.
6. Avoiding Idioms and Metaphors – Items were written without idioms and metaphors, so all participants have the same interpretation of the item.



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7. Positively/ Negatively Phrased – Positive and negative items were included to reduce acquiescence responding and improve construct coverage.
8. Behavioral – The items focus on behaviors that are easily observable.
9. Avoiding Biased content – Items were written to avoid focusing on knowledge or experience of a specific group. The items reviewed with consideration to age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, race and culture.
10. Work Relevant - The items were written to be work relevant and apply to different levels and job categories.

Attention Check

As a quality control instrument attention check items were included in the assessment.

In order to confirm that respondents were paying attention to the items, the four attention check items below were included.

1. There are 80 letters in the English alphabet.
2. Answer "Undecided" to this question.
3. I was born on February 30th.
4. Answer "Moderately agree" to this question.

People that answered incorrectly to two or more were excluded from the analyses.

Convergent Validity - Servant Leadership Assessment

In order to establish convergent validity with a similar construct, the caring leadership assessment was correlated with a related leadership measure. Servant leadership stresses personal integrity and serving others, including employees, customers, and communities (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson 2008). Liden et al. (2008) developed a measure of servant leadership with seven dimensions that mapped well to the



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dimensions of Caring Leadership. The servant leadership measure includes scales for Behaving Ethically, Conceptual Skills, Creating Value for the Community, Emotional Healing, Empowering, Helping subordinates grow and succeed, and Putting subordinates first. The servant leadership items were developed to be evaluated by individuals reflecting their experience with the leader. Given the caring leader assessment will be completed by individuals reflecting on their own behavior, the servant leadership items were adjusted to a self-report format. For example, the item “My manager cares about my personal well-being” was changed to “I care about my employees’ personal well-being”. This 28 item assessment was used to show convergent validity with the Caring Leadership assessment.

Data Collection and Sample Description

Data were gathered from two different samples from October 2020 to December 2020. One sample was gathered from an online data forum while another sample was gathered from organizational leaders who were colleagues associated with the author. According to Aguinis et al. (2020), some of the issues of using online marketplace data collection are: (a) inattention, (b) self-misrepresentation, (c) self-selection bias, (d) high attrition, (e) inconsistent English language fluency, (f) non-naïveté, (g) growth of online communities, (h) vulnerability to web robots (or “bots”), (i) social desirability bias, and (j) perceived researcher unfairness.

To address these issues, Aguinis et al. (2020) propose a series of suggestions that help prevent the negative effects. We followed these suggestions and we evaluated the appropriateness of using an online marketplace to develop or test our theory, decided on qualifications used to screen online respondents, established required sample size,



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formulated compensation rules, designed data collection tools, approved or denied compensation for completed responses, and reported details to ensure transparency.

The demographics for all studies completed are included in the tables below.

Table 1. Age Breakdown

Age	Convenience Sample	Online Crowdsourcing Sample	Overall Sample
No response	2 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.8%)
25-34 years old	5 (4.8%)	55 (38.5%)	60 (24.2%)
35-44 years old	26 (24.8%)	55 (38.5%)	81 (32.7%)
45-54 years old	42 (40.0%)	21 (14.7%)	63 (25.4%)
55-64 years old	27 (25.7%)	9 (6.3%)	36 (14.5%)
65-74 years old	3 (2.9%)	3 (2.1%)	6 (2.4%)
Total	105	143	248

Table 2. Race/Ethnicity Breakdown

Race	Convenience Sample	Online Crowdsourcing Sample	Overall Sample
No response	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
African-American/Black	10 (9.5%)	8 (5.6%)	18 (7.3%)
Asian	3 (2.9%)	32 (22.4%)	35 (14.1%)
Caucasian/White	82 (78.1%)	96 (67.1%)	178 (71.8%)
Hispanic or Latino	7 (6.7%)	6 (4.2%)	13 (5.2%)
Other	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
Two or more races	1 (1.0%)	1 (0.7%)	2 (0.8%)
Total	105	143	248

Table 3. Gender Breakdown

Gender	Convenience Sample	Online Crowdsourcing Sample	Overall Sample
No response	2 (1.9%)	1 (0.7%)	3 (1.2%)
Female	64 (61.0%)	59 (41.3%)	123 (49.6%)
Male	39 (37.1%)	83 (58.0%)	122 (49.2%)
Total	105	143	248



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Table 4. Industry Breakdown

Industry	Convenience Sample	Online Crowdsourcing Sample	Overall Sample
No response	2 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.8%)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3 (2.9%)	5 (3.5%)	8 (3.2%)
Data and Telecommunications	1 (1.0%)	25 (17.5%)	26 (10.5%)
Education	6 (5.7%)	20 (14.0%)	26 (10.5%)
Energy and Utilities	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
Finance and Insurance	12 (11.4%)	14 (9.8%)	26 (10.5%)
Government and Public Administration	10 (9.5%)	6 (4.2%)	16 (6.5%)
Health Care, Hospital and Social Assistance	9 (8.6%)	10 (7.0%)	19 (7.7%)
Hospitality, Hotel and Food Services	5 (4.8%)	11 (7.7%)	16 (6.5%)
Manufacturing and Construction	8 (7.6%)	9 (6.3%)	17 (6.9%)
Other	19 (18.1%)	2 (1.4%)	21 (8.5%)
Professional and Business Services	20 (19%)	17 (11.9%)	37 (14.9%)
Retail and Ecommerce	6 (5.7%)	17 (11.9%)	23 (9.3%)
Transportation, Logistics and Warehousing	2 (1.9%)	6 (4.2%)	8 (3.2%)
Waste Management	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.4%)
Total	105	143	248



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Table 5. Business Function Breakdown

Function	Convenience Sample	Online Crowdsourcing Sample	Overall Sample
No response	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
Business Development/Sales/Marketing	16 (15.2%)	15 (10.5%)	31 (12.5%)
Customer Service	5 (4.8%)	20 (14.0%)	25 (10.1%)
Finance/Accounting	3 (2.9%)	11 (7.7%)	14 (5.6%)
Human Resources/Personnel	37 (35.2%)	3 (2.1%)	40 (16.1%)
Information Technology	2 (1.9%)	40 (28.0%)	42 (16.9%)
Legal	2 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.8%)
Operations	16 (15.2%)	29 (20.3%)	45 (18.1%)
Other	19 (18.1%)	11 (7.7%)	30 (12.1%)
Purchasing	2 (1.9%)	3 (2.1%)	5 (2.0%)
Research and Development	2 (1.9%)	11 (7.7%)	13 (5.2%)
Total	105	143	248

Table 6. Occupation Group Breakdown

Function	Convenience Sample	Online Crowdsourcing Sample	Overall Sample
No response	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
Consultant	4 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.6%)
Management	88 (83.8%)	79 (55.2%)	167 (67.3%)
Other	1 (1.0%)	1 (0.7%)	2 (0.8%)
Professional	8 (7.6%)	25 (17.5%)	33 (13.3%)
Skilled employee	2 (1.9%)	11 (7.7%)	13 (5.2%)
Support/Administrative	1 (1.0%)	15 (10.5%)	16 (6.5%)
Technician/Skilled	0 (0.0%)	12 (8.4%)	12 (4.8%)
Total	105	143	248



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Table 7. Level Breakdown

Function	Convenience Sample	Online Crowdsourcing Sample	Overall Sample
No response	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)
Director	20 (19.0%)	8 (5.6%)	28 (11.3%)
Entry Level Individual Contributor	0 (0.0%)	3 (2.1%)	3 (1.2%)
Executive	36 (34.3%)	4 (2.8%)	40 (16.1%)
Other	4 (3.8%)	2 (1.4%)	6 (2.4%)
Professional Individual Contributor	7 (6.7%)	12 (8.4%)	19 (7.7%)
Supervisor/Manager	29 (27.6%)	112 (78.3%)	141 (56.9%)
Vice President	8 (7.6%)	2 (1.4%)	10 (4.0%)
Total	105	143	248

Note: Participants were asked on a voluntary basis to complete a questionnaire that addressed age, race, and gender. Because of this, age data are missing for 24 participants, race data are missing for 25 participants, and gender data are missing for 24 participants.

Results

Reliability

Cronbach Alpha was computed to assess the internal reliability of the items of the different scales. Results are displayed in table 10. As it can be seen, the alphas range from 0.59 to 0.79, which is a good indicator of internal consistency between the items for each subscale. The overall alpha for all items in the assessment was ($\alpha=.92$), which indicates a very high internal consistency.



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Table 8. Cronbach Alpha's for Scales

Scale	Alpha
Create a Listening Culture	0.79
Self-Leadership Skills	0.61
Empower Others to Make Decisions	0.61
Building Resilience	0.78
Involve Others	0.69
Lead the Whole Person	0.60
Look for Greatness in Others	0.59
Make Others Feel Important	0.79
Overall	0.92

Validity Evidence

Factor Structure

Table 9-17 below represents the currently best-fit model of the Caring Leadership Assessment. Of the 124 original items, 45 showed unidimensional factors with item loadings above (>0.5). With the exception of "Lead the Whole Person", where items loaded into two factors, all the other scales loaded into a single factor.

Table 9: Listening Culture Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
When someone has a differing minority opinion I make sure that they are heard.	0.79
My employees have confidence that I will act on their feedback.	0.77
I share how my employees' voices were heard and acted upon in my decisions.	0.75
I take action on relevant feedback from my team.	0.72
I reflect and share what I hear from my direct reports.	0.65

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Table 10: Cultivate Self-Leadership Skills Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
I manage to portray a positive tone/attitude in all communications.	0.72
I remain true to my core values.	0.69
I am intentional with my words and actions.	0.66
It is important to take initiative for my own self-development.	0.61
Always manage my personal reactions to negative situations.	0.52

Table 11: Empowering Others to Make Decisions Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
I serve as a resource to guide my team as opposed to tell them exactly what to do.	0.76
I find it easy for my teams to manage themselves.	0.65
I am very clear about my expectations of others.	0.62
I feel comfortable delegating and then letting go.	0.58
It is important to connect each employees work to the overall goals of the organization.	0.52

Table 12: Building Resilience Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
I support those around me when they are facing opposition.	0.82
I ensure there is additional support to help my team work positively through obstacles.	0.77
I provide encouragement to others during challenging times.	0.76
I put others in positions where they build their comfort and resilience.	0.70
I try and help people reframe their fears into more rational thoughts.	0.63



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Table 13: Involve Others Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
In meetings I make sure everyone has a voice.	0.78
I invite input for challenging decisions.	0.77
In group discussions I make sure to reach out to those that are less likely to speak up.	0.68
I give stretch assignments to help build the capabilities of my team.	0.60
I appreciate others' perspectives when making decisions.	0.59

Table 14: Lead the Whole Person Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
I can sometimes overlook subtle changes in the people I lead.	0.67
It is easy for me to understand the motivations of others.	0.67
I can sometimes miss the underlying emotions in a situation.	0.64
When listening to others I take time to consider their perspective and empathize.	0.62
I am understanding of the unique circumstances of my employees lives outside of work.	0.59

Table 15: Look for Greatness in Others Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
I provide several training opportunities to my team.	0.75
I have given candid and constructive feedback to people on my team.	0.69
I look for opportunities to showcase my team's talents.	0.67
I am hesitant to provide feedback to others.	0.65
I get impatient with employees that are not able to deliver results.	0.43



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Table 16: Make Others Feel Important Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
I have made a genuine connection with several of my direct reports.	0.82
I recognize the positive contributions my direct reports have made.	0.78
I have shown my team that I am willing to do hard work alongside them.	0.78
I do not seek to know my direct reports on a deeper level.	0.74
I am quick to respond when a direct report reaches out to me.	0.69

Table 17: Provide Others Safe Spaces Principle Components Analysis

Item	Loading
I have explicit ways to include others in a team conversation.	0.70
I invite open and honest dialogue when speaking with my team.	0.68
If someone is being silent during a heated team discussion I make sure to ask them for their input.	0.68
I welcome others to correct my way of thinking.	0.63
I welcome others to challenge my ideas.	0.63

Construct Validity

To assess convergent validity, correlations were produced between the Caring Leadership and the Servant Leadership scale. Results are displayed in table 18. As it can be seen, all subscales show medium to strong significant correlations, indicating convergent validity.

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Table 18. Correlations between Caring and Servants leadership

	Caring Leadership	Listening culture	Self-leadership	Empower Others	Building Resilience	Involve Others	Whole Person	Look for Greatness	Feel Important	Safe Spaces
Servant Leadership	.78**	.68**	.57**	.62**	.73**	.68**	.45**	.52**	.73**	.65**
Behaving Ethically	.60**	.48**	.54**	.48**	.58**	.44**	.27**	.33**	.63**	.50**
Conceptual Skills	.66**	.64**	.55**	.42**	.57**	.54**	.42**	.41**	.57**	.53**
Creating Value for Community	.36**	.32**	.23**	.26**	.31**	.38**	.18**	.27**	.34**	.34**
Emotional Healing	.69**	.62**	.54**	.42**	.62**	.52**	.48**	.39**	.69**	.54**
Empowering	.44**	.36**	.25**	.50**	.39**	.36**	.27**	.29**	.39**	.32**
Helping Subordinates	.74**	.60**	.50**	.61**	.66**	.64**	.39**	.55**	.67**	.60**
Putting Subordinates First	.49**	.45**	.31**	.38**	.52**	.51**	.23**	.29**	.42**	.43**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To guide interpretation for development purposes, rating bands were created to help individuals understand how they compare to other leaders on each of the subscales for caring leadership. Bands for each scale and the overall score were aligned to approximate a low (20%), medium (35%), and high (45%) scoring distribution based on the initial sample population. Meaning that 20% of respondents are expected to score in the low band, 35% in the medium band, and 45% in high the high band for each dimension and overall assessment score. The raw score cutoffs for each band are included in the table below.



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Table 19. Caring Leadership Raw Score Assessment and Scale Bands

Scale	Low	Medium	High
Overall Caring Leadership	45-241	242-269	270-315
Listening culture	5-27	28-31	32-35
Self-leadership	5-28	29-31	32-35
Empower Others	5-26	27-30	31-35
Building Resilience	5-28	29-31	32-35
Involve Others	5-26	27-31	32-35
Whole Person	5-21	22-26	23-35
Look for Greatness	5-22	23-27	24-35
Feel Important	5-26	27-31	28-35
Safe Spaces	5-26	27-30	28-35



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