

# MOTIVATION TO LEAD, MOTIVATION TO FOLLOW: THE ROLE OF THE SELF-REGULATORY FOCUS IN LEADERSHIP PROCESSES

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**In this paper we integrate recent theories of motivation and leadership. Drawing on the self-regulatory focus theory and on self-concept based theories of leadership, we develop a conceptual framework proposing that leaders' chronic self-regulatory focus (promotion versus prevention), in conjunction with their values, influences their motivation to lead and, subsequently, their leadership behavior. We further suggest that leaders may influence the motivational self-regulatory foci of their followers, which will mediate different follower outcomes at the individual and group level.**

In the last two decades, evidence has accumulated that transformational and charismatic leadership is an influential mode of leadership that is associated with high levels of individual and organizational performance (e.g., Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Leadership effectiveness is critically contingent on, and often defined in terms of, leaders' ability to motivate followers toward collective goals or a collective mission or vision (Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, & Popper, 1998). Scholars who have investigated transformational and charismatic leadership have, in many cases, discussed motivational constructs as central components in their frameworks (e.g., Bass, 1985; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). In fact, researchers have explicitly defined transformational leadership in terms of the motivational effects it has on followers (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978).

Although recent work has stressed the importance of motivation to leadership processes (e.g., Yukl, 1998), the leadership literature, in general, has paid limited attention to the underlying psy-

chological processes and mechanisms through which leaders motivate followers. Recent developments in motivation theory stress the importance of people's self-regulatory focus as a central component shaping their motivations and behavior (Higgins, 1997, 1998). This theoretical development may be helpful in attempting to understand the ability of leaders to influence and motivate followers by arousing different self-regulatory foci of followers.

Our goal here is to draw from transformational and charismatic leadership theory (e.g., Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Conger & Kanungo, 1998) and from identity and self-concept-based theories of leadership (e.g., Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999; Shamir et al., 1993; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), as well as from the theory of regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997, 1998), to develop a conceptual framework to advance further studies on the underlying mechanisms that enable leaders to behave in a transformational/charismatic manner and to influence followers' motivation and, ultimately, their behaviors and organizational-related outcomes.

Thus, our aim here is twofold. First, we aim to understand how leaders' self-regulatory foci (chronic and situational) and leaders' values, which serve as strong regulatory guides (Schwartz, 1992), affect leaders' motivation to lead (MTL) and their subsequent behavior (i.e.,

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We thank Elizabeth Mannix and three anonymous *AMR* reviewers for their constructive and helpful feedback, and we appreciate the comments of Ahron Bizman and Leah Rabinovits on an earlier version of this paper. The International Leadership Association awarded this paper the Best Paper Prize (runner-up) at the ILA conference in Amsterdam, 2005.

leadership style). Second, we aim to decipher how different leadership behaviors affect followers' motivation and performance by priming different modes of followers' self-regulatory foci (i.e., promotion or prevention). By focusing on both leaders' and followers' motivations, we develop a theoretical framework that traces a full course of the workings of motivation in the leadership process—starting from the exploration of leaders' inner self and the way it influences their leadership style and proceeding through an exploration of how this leadership style affects followers' aspects of the self and, ultimately, their behavior and organizational outcomes.

In the following, we define and review the literature on transformational/charismatic leadership and on identity and self-concept-based theories of leadership, as well as the literature on self-regulatory focus theory. We then present a framework for understanding leaders' and followers' motivation, using Higgins' (1997, 1998) theory of the self-regulatory focus. This framework focuses first on *leaders'* motivations, exploring the role of leaders' self-regulatory foci and their value structure in determining their MTL and the effect of these motivations on their behavior. We then focus on the *followers'* motivations, discussing the role of regulatory focus as mediating between leaders' behavior and follower outcomes. We develop propositions that differentiate between various leadership behaviors that prime different aspects of followers' self-regulatory foci. Finally, we investigate various possible individual- and group-level outcomes of the leaders' activation of followers' promotion or prevention foci. We conclude with implications and future directions for research.

### SELF-IDENTITY AND LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Recently, there has been growing interest in understanding the influence of charismatic and transformational leadership on followers as a process that is related to followers' identity and self-concept (e.g., Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord & Brown, 2004; Lord et al., 1999). However, scholars have given little attention to the question of what characterizes transformational and charismatic leaders' MTL and what underlying mechanisms enable transformational leaders to affect followers and to arouse different types of motivation among their followers. In this paper

we propose that leaders' and followers' self-regulatory focus plays a central role in determining their respective motivations.

Transformational and charismatic leadership has been portrayed in the literature as different from transactional or monitoring types of leadership. While transactional and monitoring leadership has been defined as an exchange of rewards for compliance, transformational and charismatic leadership has been defined on the basis of its effects—transforming the values and priorities of followers and motivating them to perform beyond their expectations (Yukl, 1998). Bass and Avolio (1994) proposed that transformational leadership behaviors include four components: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Inspirational motivation includes the creation and presentation of an attractive vision of the future, the use of symbols and emotional arguments, and the demonstration of optimism and enthusiasm. Idealized influence includes such behaviors as sacrificing for the benefit of the group, setting a personal example, and demonstrating high ethical standards. Individualized consideration includes providing support, encouragement, and coaching to followers. Finally, intellectual stimulation involves behaviors that increase awareness of problems and challenge followers to view problems from new perspectives. Previous research has shown that these behaviors are related to leadership effectiveness and high employee performance (Lowe et al., 1996).

Similarly, charismatic leadership behaviors and attributes have also been found to be associated with effective follower performance and positive follower attitudes (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Yukl, 1998). Recent theory and research suggest that charismatic leaders are distinguished by a number of characteristics and behaviors. According to Ehrhart and Klein's (2001) review of the charismatic leadership literature, four leadership behaviors were repeatedly identified as "charismatic": (1) communicating high performance expectations, (2) exhibiting confidence in followers' ability to reach goals, (3) taking calculated risks that oppose the status quo, and (4) articulating a value-based vision of the future.

Engendering motivation among followers recently has been understood in terms of leadership theories that are focused on followers' self-

concept (e.g., Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord et al., 1999; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). This framework for understanding leadership and the self promotes a view of the self-concept as dynamic and multifaceted (Lord & Brown, 2004). According to this conceptualization, people's self-perception is composed of different aspects. Forces at various levels of analysis (e.g., personality traits, dyadic relationships, organizational culture) can influence the cognitive accessibility of a given self-concept, leading to the activation of a particular identity level at a given point in time (Brickson, 2000). Thus, different situations may bring different aspects of the self to the fore, and the self-concept may change through exposure to various external stimuli, among them the influence and behavior of leaders (Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord & Brown, 2004). This dynamic enables leaders to play a major role in the activation of the various levels and aspects of the self. Thus, leaders may affect which aspects of the self are salient by acting in ways that prime various self-concepts. For example, by emphasizing similarities among workers, leaders can increase activation of collective identities and, at the same time, inhibit individual-level identities.

Research on leadership and the self has mostly focused on different levels of the self-concept: the relational self and the collective self (e.g., Kark & Shamir, 2002; Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003; Lord & Brown, 2004). In a recent extensive review of the leadership and the self literature, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cermer, and Hogg (2004) conclude by remarking that it is important to develop a theory that considers different aspects of follower self-concept that have not yet been considered. According to these authors, one promising direction for future development of the theory of "leadership and the self" is Higgins' (1987) theory of possible selves. In this paper we draw on Higgins' (1997) theory of possible selves and regulatory focus in order to understand leaders' MTL and their behavior, as well as to explore possible ways in which leaders can influence followers, affecting the salience of followers' different self-regulatory foci.

In this regard, we note that our aim is not to understand how self-regulatory focus affects which particular individuals will emerge as leaders but, rather, to focus on individuals in positions of authority and leadership roles in

order to understand the underlying motivational processes that shape their behavior.

## REGULATORY FOCUS THEORY

Higgins (1997, 1998) developed the regulatory focus theory, which describes important differences in the processes through which people approach pleasure and avoid pain. Self-regulation refers to the process by which people seek to align themselves (i.e., their behaviors and self-conceptions) with appropriate goals or standards (Brockner & Higgins, 2001). Specifically, Higgins (1997) proposed that people have two basic self-regulation systems. One regulates the achievement of rewards and focuses individuals on *promotion* goals, while the other regulates the avoidance of punishments and focuses individuals on *prevention* goals. Promotion goals represent the "ideal self" and include hopes, wishes, and aspirations, whereas prevention goals represent the "ought self" and include duties, obligations, and responsibilities.

Each regulatory focus has different consequences for perception, decision making, and emotions, as well as for individuals' behavior and performance (Higgins, 1997, 1998). Individuals who operate primarily within the promotion focus are more concerned with accomplishments and aspirations, are likely to be sensitive to the presence or absence of rewards, use approach as a goal attainment strategy, are more creative in problem-solving processes, show more willingness to take risks, and experience emotions ranging from elation and happiness to dejection (e.g., Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Friedman & Förster, 2001). In contrast, individuals who operate primarily within the prevention focus are more concerned with duties and obligations, are likely to be sensitive to the presence or absence of punishments, use avoidance as a goal attainment strategy, and experience emotions ranging from agitation or anxiety to quiescence or calmness. The regulatory focus is determined both by situational and chronic factors (Higgins, 1997, 1998).

Recent studies on prevention-promotion effects have suggested that the regulatory foci can be thought of as rich syndromes that differ from each other on multiple variables (Kluger, Stephan, Ganzach, & Hershkovitz, 2004; Van Dijk & Kluger, 2004). The basic motivations that un-

derlie these two syndromes are two conflicting motivations: the motivation for stability versus the motivation for change. Both motivations are important for survival of the human being (Levontin, Kluger, & Van Dijk, 2004). According to this notion, the purpose of the prevention focus is to assure one's safety and security, to maintain routines, and to preserve the status quo. In contrast, the purpose of the promotion focus is to pursue development and change and to explore the advantage of creative and novel behaviors.

Researchers have used regulatory focus theory to study goal attainment (e.g., Förster, Higgins, & Idson, 1998; Shah, Higgins, & Friedman, 1998), decision making (e.g., Crowe & Higgins, 1997), creativity (Friedman & Förster, 2001), information processing and persuasion (Aaker & Lee, 2001), and feedback and motivation (Förster, Grant, Idson, & Higgins, 2001; Van Dijk & Kluger, 2004). However, the theory has not been applied to the study of leadership.

Regulatory focus theory can be thought of as one of the most comprehensive motivation theories, since its constructs seem to comprise a primary element of human motivation. Supporting physiological evidence for this premise can be found in the work of Shah et al. (1998), who showed that differences between a chronic prevention or promotion focus are associated with asymmetrical frontal cortical activity (as measured by EEG). Specifically, the promotion regulatory focus is associated with greater left frontal activity, while the prevention regulatory focus is associated with greater right frontal activity.

This work extends previous psychobiology investigations (e.g., Gray, 1982; Sutton & Davidson, 1997) focusing on individual differences in approach-related versus avoidance-related emotions. In contrast to the approach-avoidance literature (e.g., Gray, 1982), regulatory focus theory suggests that there are different pathways to achieve different desired end states (Higgins, 1997). Since leadership focuses on bringing about desired end states, this theory is particularly appropriate for analyzing the different possible outcomes of leadership influence. The use of regulatory foci and the exploration of their role in eliciting different leadership outcomes also prevent us from taking a one-sided view in (over)valuing transformational leadership and a promotion focus over transactional leadership and a prevention focus. Rather, it enables us to

understand the unique positive outcomes along with the possible limitations of each mode of leadership (e.g., a promotion focus can lead to a lack of attention to detail, whereas a prevention focus can lead to greater accuracy).

We propose that the regulatory focus plays two important roles in the leadership arena. First, the more chronic component of the regulatory foci, in conjunction with a situational regulatory focus, can partially determine individual MTL and leadership behavior (i.e., leadership style). Second, leaders, through the manipulation of work context, can affect the situational factors of the regulatory focus, priming followers' promotion or prevention focus and shaping their motivations. We next present a framework for understanding leaders' and followers' motivation, following Higgins' (1997, 1998) theory of the self-regulatory focus.

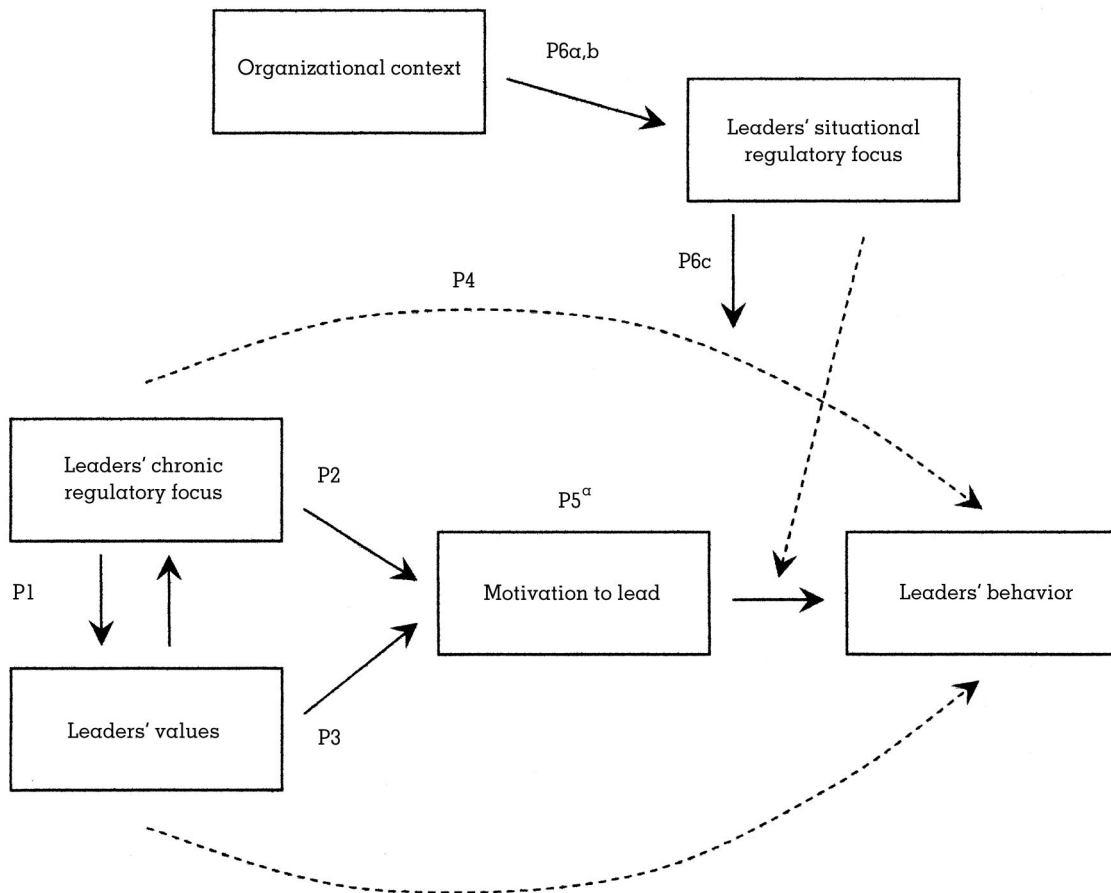
### **LEADERS' MOTIVATIONS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR**

In this section we explore the relationships between determinants of leaders' motivations (i.e., leaders' regulatory focus, values, and MTL) and their leadership behavior. We first explore the relationship between leaders' values and their regulatory focus. We then suggest how these variables affect leaders' MTL. We conclude this section by considering how leaders' MTL can mediate the relationships between the regulatory focus and values and between leaders' behaviors. We acknowledge that other determinants may also mediate this relationship (e.g., emotions), but we focus on the MTL since our major interest here is to decipher the motivational processes underlying leadership processes. The framework proposed in this section is shown in Figure 1 and summarized in Table 1.

#### **The Relationship Between Leaders' Values and Leaders' Chronic Regulatory Focus**

Individuals, including leaders, hold different values and give prominence to certain values over others. Various researchers have asserted that the values held by leaders are related to their behaviors and effectiveness (Thomas, Dickson, & Bliese, 2001). Ghiselli's (1968) review of earlier research showed a consistent relationship between the personal values of managers and several criteria of

**FIGURE 1**  
**Leaders' Motivation to Lead As Mediating Among Leaders' Regulatory Focus, Values, and Leadership Behavior**



<sup>a</sup>P5—the mediation hypothesis.

**TABLE 1**  
**The Effect of Leaders' Motivations on Leadership Behavior**

| Regulatory Focus | Leaders' Values                                     | Leaders' Motivation to Lead | Work Context Characteristics <sup>a</sup>  | Leaders' Behaviors (Leadership Style)  |
|------------------|---|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Promotion        | Openness to change (self-direction and stimulation) | Affective                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dynamic</li> <li>• Change oriented</li> <li>• Organic</li> <li>• Clan mode of governance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformational</li> <li>• Charismatic</li> </ul>                              |
| Prevention       | Conservation (safety, conformity, and tradition)    | Social normative            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable</li> <li>• Noncreative</li> <li>• Mechanistic</li> <li>• Bureaucratic</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring</li> <li>• Transactional (management by exception active)</li> </ul> |

<sup>a</sup> These characteristics are related to the *situational* self-regulatory focus.

managerial effectiveness. More recent work by Trow and Smith (1983) showed that leaders hold the values of the groups they lead more strongly

than do the followers in those groups so that followers have a model on which they can focus and to which they can aspire.



Values and identities are internal to leaders and can be viewed as relatively enduring criteria used in generating and evaluating behavior, cognitions, and affect (Lord & Brown, 2001). Values serve as strong regulatory guides and play an important role in influencing leaders' and subordinates' motivational, affective, and cognitive processes (Lord & Brown, 2001). Schwartz defines values as "desirable states, objects, goals, or behaviors transcending specific situations and applied as normative standards to judge and to choose among alternative modes of behavior" (1992: 2). This definition of values implies that they can affect leaders' MTL, as well as their behavior (i.e., leadership style), two effects we discuss in this paper. Although values are likely to be central in defining who will become a charismatic/transformational leader, and in which ways their followers will be affected, this issue has not been widely researched. In our discussion of leadership and motivation, we assert that values will have an effect—in relation to and in conjunction with the regulatory focus—on shaping leaders' motivations.

There is evidence that values show a clear pattern of organization across different national cultures (e.g., Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000; Schwartz, 1999). Schwartz (1992) presented a value map with ten values organized as a circle: hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, and stimulation. The value circle is organized by two sets of higher-order values that are in conflict: change versus conservation (self-direction and stimulation versus security, conformity, and tradition) and self-enhancement versus self-transcendence (power, achievement, and hedonism versus benevolence and universalism).

In recent work on leadership, self, and values, Lord and Brown (2001) focused on the latter dimension of self-enhancement versus self-transcendence, which corresponds to independent versus interdependent views of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and to individual versus collective identities (Lord & Brown, 2001). Here we wish to focus on the second higher-level dimension of values, which has received limited attention in the study of leadership and values—that of openness to change versus conservation. This dimension of values would appear to be related to the prevention-promotion

focus. Recently, Kluger et al. (2004) suggested that the structure of human values is similar to the structure of human motivation. Specifically, Kluger argues that the conservation–openness to change dimension of values is equivalent to the security–self-actualization dimension of needs and to the prevention–promotion foci. There is also some empirical evidence (e.g., Liberman, Idson, Camacho, & Higgins, 1999) showing that prevention–promotion regulatory foci are connected to values of conservation–openness to change. Specifically, Liberman et al. (1999) show that individuals in a prevention focus are more inclined than individuals in a promotion focus to resume an interrupted task than do a substitute task, and they exhibit a reluctance to exchange currently or previously possessed objects. Consistent with Liberman's findings, Van Dijk and Kluger (2004) show that people who hold security and conformity values are more motivated by negative feedback (a pattern that characterizes prevention-focused people), whereas people who hold self-direction and stimulation values are more motivated by positive feedback (a pattern that characterizes promotion-focused people).

In conclusion, the difference between prevention and promotion chronic foci can emerge in a person's values profile. Specifically, people (i.e., leaders) who hold security, tradition, and conformity values tend to have a chronic prevention focus, whereas people who hold self-direction and stimulation values tend to have a chronic promotion focus. Based on the relationships suggested between values and regulatory focus, Van Dijk and Kluger (2004) have used values as a proxy measure of the chronic regulatory focus. Hence, we could expect to find a relationship between leaders' values and their regulatory focus in a manner in which leaders' values and their self-regulatory focus are likely to have an effect on leaders' motivation and their subsequent behavior.

*Proposition 1: A relationship will be found between leaders' chronic regulatory focus and their values.*

*Proposition 1a: A positive relationship will be found between leaders' promotion focus and values of openness to change (self-direction and stimulation).*

*Proposition 1b: A positive relationship will be found between leaders' prevention focus and values of conservation (safety, conformity, and tradition).*

### The Effect of the Chronic Regulatory Focus System on MTL

The importance of individual differences has been recognized by researchers as a central component in their attempts to explain leadership behavior (e.g., House & Howell, 1992; Lord & Hall, 1992). As a part of this stream, Chan and his coauthors (Chan & Drasgow, 2001; Chan, Rounds, & Drasgow, 2000) have developed a construct for understanding individuals' MTL. According to their conception, noncognitive ability constructs such as personality and values relate to leader behaviors through the individual's MTL, which, in turn, affects the individual's participation in leadership roles and activities. As they state, "It is through such activities that the individual acquires the social skills and knowledge required for leading . . . and possibly his or her leadership style" (Chan & Drasgow, 2001: 481).

Chan and Drasgow (2001) define MTL as an individual-differences construct that affects the decision of individuals aspiring to leadership roles; leaders' decisions to assume leadership training, roles, and responsibilities; their persistence as leaders; and the extent of their efforts to lead. MTL refers to a type of motivation, rather than the amount or level of motivation. One of these authors' key assumptions is that individual differences in MTL are relatively stable over time, although they can change to some extent in a learning process as leaders acquire experience and training.

According to Chan and Drasgow's definition and findings, there are three related but distinct components underlying individual differences in MTL. These include, first, *affective MTL*, in which individuals are motivated to lead because they like to lead others. People who score high on this dimension enjoy leading and see themselves as leaders. The second motivational component is *social normative MTL*, which implies leading out of a sense of duty or responsibility. Individuals scoring high on the social normative MTL dimension are motivated by a sense of social duty and obligation. The third component is *noncalculative MTL*, which is a motiva-

tion of individuals who do not take into account the costs of leading relative to the benefits. This last component is based on the assumption that leadership usually involves certain responsibilities or costs, and the less calculative one is about leading others, the less one would wish to avoid leadership roles.

In their attempts to define and understand the new concept of MTL, Chan and Drasgow (2001) studied the antecedents of MTL. They propose various constructs as possible antecedents to MTL, among them personality constructs, general cognitive ability, and sociocultural values, as well as leadership experience and leadership self-efficacy. Here we suggest another related construct—namely, the self-regulatory focus (e.g., Higgins, 1998)—as a possible antecedent to MTL.

The self-regulatory focus is a fundamental motivational principle influencing multiple human activities (Higgins, 1997, 1998). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that, among leaders, a more *domain-specific* motivation, leaders' MTL, is likely to be affected by this basic motivational mechanism. At first glance, it seems that MTL is derived from the promotion system, because MTL stems from the desire to make change, to influence, and to achieve power or success. However, a careful examination of MTL reveals a more complex picture, suggesting that MTL could stem from various motives and, in some instances, could be aroused by the wish to do what "one ought to do," to fulfill the expectations of others, or to avoid criticism. Following the self-regulatory focus theory, it can be asserted that different regulatory foci might be manifested in different types of MTL. Thus, leaders characterized by different chronic regulatory foci are likely to be driven to lead by different underlying types of motivations.

Promotion-focused individuals are motivated mainly by internal motives like growth, development, and self-actualization. They seek to do things because they *want to*, not because they *have to* (Van Dijk & Kluger, 2004), and they wish to actualize their ideal self (aspirations and hopes). Therefore, in the context of MTL, they are more likely to be characterized by an affective MTL—namely, leading out of enjoyment.

Prevention-focused individuals, in contrast, are motivated mainly by external motives like social pressures, obligations, and social responsibilities (Aaker & Lee, 2001). They do things out

of necessity, because they have to. Therefore, in terms of their MTL, they are more likely to be characterized by the social normative MTL.

Noncalculative MTL seems to be unrelated to the prevention-promotion modes of motivation. It is possible that it relates to values of benevolence, altruism, or collectivism. The willingness to lead without calculations of cost can be influenced either by a promotional motive (i.e., because one truly wants to lead) or by a prevention motive (i.e., because one feels obligated to lead). Therefore, we will not specify a proposition regarding the association between noncalculative MTL and regulatory focus. Hence, we suggest the following propositions.

*Proposition 2: The type of MTL among leaders and individuals in positions of authority will be related to (and possibly determined by) their regulatory focus.*

*Proposition 2a: A positive relationship will be found between leaders' promotion focus and affective MTL.*

*Proposition 2b: A positive relationship will be found between leaders' prevention focus and normative social MTL.*

### **The Effect of Leaders' Values on MTL**

Values are conceptualized as being latent constructs involved in evaluating activities or outcomes—as having a general nature, rather than a person-, object-, or task-specific nature (Lord & Brown, 2001; Roe & Ester, 1999). Maio and Olson (1998), for example, conclude that values are truisms that lack cognitive support and can be applied in an automatic unquestioned manner, suggesting that values reflect fundamental, rather than surface, differences among individuals (Schein, 1992). MTL, however, has a more focused, task-specific nature.

According to Chan and Drasgow (2001), non-cognitive ability constructs such as personality and values relate to leader behaviors through the individual's domain-specific MTL. Thus, they suggest that values are distal antecedents to MTL. Chan and Drasgow (2001) measured their participants' values using a conceptualization of values and a measurement designed by Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, and Gelfand (1995),

which focuses on two fundamental dimensions of social behavior: individualism versus collectivism and vertical or hierarchical versus horizontal aspects of social behavior. According to this conceptualization, people high in horizontal individualism can be assumed to value their individuality and uniqueness, whereas people high in vertical individualism tend to be achievement oriented and competitive. In contrast, high vertical collectivism people accept social hierarchies and tend to subordinate their goals to the majority, whereas high horizontal collectivism people value collective harmony and equality (Chan et al., 2000). Using this conceptualization of values, Chan and Drasgow (2001) show that people who score high on the dimension of affective MTL value competition and achievement (i.e., are vertical individualists), and individuals high on the social normative MTL dimension value social hierarchies (i.e., vertical collectivists) yet reject social equality (i.e., score low on horizontal collectivism).

In the theoretical framework we develop in this paper, we draw on the value theory of Schwartz (1992, 1999). According to this conception, we focus on the dimension of openness to change versus conservation. Considering the different aspects of MTL in conjunction with this dimension of values, it seems reasonable to assert that leaders motivated to lead by the affective MTL, who value competition and achievement, will also hold values of self-direction and stimulation, scoring high on openness to change. In contrast, leaders who are motivated by the social normative MTL, who tend to value social hierarchies and to subordinate their goals to the majority or to authorities, are more likely to hold values of conservation (i.e., safety, conformity, and tradition). Thus, we hypothesize the following.

*Proposition 3: A relationship will be found between leaders' values and their MTL.*

*Proposition 3a: A positive relationship will be found between leaders' values of openness to change (self-direction and stimulation) and affective MTL.*

*Proposition 3b: A positive relationship will be found between leaders' values of conservatism (safety, conformity,*



and tradition) and social normative MTL.

### **The Relationship Among Leadership Style, Chronic Regulatory Focus, and Values, and the Role of MTL As a Mediator of This Relationship**

Recently, researchers who have dealt with the prevention-promotion focus have mentioned the possible connection between these two motivations and leadership (Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Van Dijk & Kluger, 2004). It seems that the concern of those characterized by a promotion focus with change, and with the pursuit of ideals and aspirations, could be related to charismatic or transformational leadership, whereas the concern of prevention-focused people with stability, and with meeting obligation and duties, could be related to monitoring or transactional leadership. The literature on the full-range leadership model distinguishes among three leadership styles: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire (Avolio et al., 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1994). In this paper we focus on transformational and charismatic leadership versus monitoring and transactional leadership.

Theories of transformational and charismatic leadership suggest that there is a significant relationship among leadership, organizational change, and entrepreneurship. Transformational and charismatic leaders have been often associated with an innovation and change orientation (Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1998; House, 1977; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Higgins, 1990). Charismatic leaders, according to Conger and Kanungo, "are by nature entrepreneurial and change oriented" (1998: 133). Transformational leadership, as is evident from its name, has been broadly defined as resulting in the transformation of individual followers or of entire organizations (Yukl, 1998).

According to the behaviors specified above, we suggest that transformational and charismatic leaders may be motivated by a promotion focus, which is more concerned with accomplishments and aspirations. Individuals who are promotion focused show more willingness to take risks, use approach as a behavioral strategy, and are more likely to explore the advantage of novel directions of behaviors. This promotion focus, which we asserted above to be related to values of openness to change, is likely

to be evident in behaviors that characterize transformational and charismatic leaders (e.g., envision a hopeful and different future, lead changes, question traditional ways of thinking, etc.).

Furthermore, we assert that the relationship among a promotion focus, values of openness to change, and leadership behavior (i.e., transformational and/or charismatic leadership) is likely to be mediated by an affective MTL. Thus, a person who is promotion focused will be motivated to lead out of his or her desire to lead, enjoyment and pleasure in leading, and a need for personal development and growth (i.e., affective MTL). Consequently, he or she will present a transformational/charismatic leadership style (for the full mediation model, see Figure 1). Research on leadership personality also provides some reason to believe that affective MTL among leaders will be related to transformational and charismatic behaviors. More specifically, Chan and Drasgow (2001) found that extraverted people like to lead and see themselves as having leadership qualities (affective MTL), whereas studies on transformational and charismatic leadership show that such leadership behaviors are also positively associated with extraversion (e.g., Bono & Judge, 2004; Judge & Bono, 2000; Lim & Ployhart, 2004). This supports our assertion that it is likely that leaders motivated by an affective MTL will employ a transformational or charismatic style.

Transactional leadership is a second major style identified in the literature. It involves an exchange process between the leader and the followers, intended to increase followers' compliance to the leader and to the organizational rules (Yukl, 1998). Leaders who maintain tight logistical control by emphasizing compliance with regulations, by checking on the progress and quality of work, and by evaluating the performance of individuals and the work unit will rate high in transactional and monitoring behaviors (Quinn, 1988; Spreitzer, Janasz, & Quinn, 1999).

Transactional and monitoring behaviors are often linked to the concept of "management" (in contrast to "leadership"). In the controversy in the literature over how to distinguish managers from leaders, researchers suggest that management is stability oriented, whereas leadership is innovation oriented (e.g., Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Yukl, 1998; Zaleznik, 1977). Monitoring implies

behaviors aimed at controlling others in order to preserve stability in the workplace (Bass, 1985; Kotter, 1990) or, at best, advocacy of incremental changes to organizational systems in an effort to make the existing processes more efficient. Eyal and Kark (2004) found that monitoring leadership (mostly with regard to the transactional leadership component of management by exception active) is related to moderate to low levels of leaders' entrepreneurship.

With these assumptions in mind, we argue that monitoring or transactional leadership is related to the prevention focus, which is more concerned with deviations, details, duties and obligations, safety and security, and the maintenance of routines and the status quo. Some support for this proposition comes from preliminary findings from an empirical study of 153 managers (Friman, 2001), testing the relationship between different leadership behaviors and Schwartz's theory of values. According to this study, transactional leadership is related to values of security and conformity. Transformational leadership was found to be negatively related to values of tradition. Furthermore, we suggest that prevention-focused individuals will be motivated to lead out of a sense of duty or responsibility and based on reasoning of conformity and need for security (i.e., social normative MTL). This social normative MTL will subsequently affect leaders' behaviors and will be evident in a monitoring leadership style. Thus, we hypothesize that social normative MTL will mediate the relationship among leaders' prevention focus, values of conservation, and monitoring/transactional behaviors.

*Proposition 4: A relationship will be found between (1) leaders' regulatory focus and their leadership behaviors and (2) leaders' values and their leadership behaviors.*

*Proposition 4a: A positive relationship will be found between (1) leaders' promotion focus and a transformational/charismatic leadership style and (2) leaders' values of openness to change and a transformational/charismatic leadership style.*

*Proposition 4b: A positive relationship will be found between (1) leaders' prevention focus and a transactional/*

*monitoring leadership style and (2) leaders' values of conservation and a transactional/monitoring leadership style.*

Based on all of the hypotheses above, the full mediation model, as presented in Figure 1 and Table 1, suggests the following.

*Proposition 5: Leaders' MTL will mediate the relationship between (1) leaders' regulatory focus and leaders' behaviors and (2) leaders' values and leaders' behaviors.*

*Proposition 5a: Leaders' affective MTL will mediate the relationship between (1) leaders' promotion focus and a charismatic/transformational leadership style and (2) leaders' values of openness to change and a charismatic/transformational leadership style.*

*Proposition 5b: Leaders' social normative MTL will mediate the relationship between (1) leaders' prevention focus and a transactional/monitoring leadership style and (2) leaders' values of conservation and a transactional/monitoring leadership style.*

### **Situational Regulatory Focus As a Moderator of the Relationship Between Leaders' Chronic Regulatory Focus and Their Behavior**

Above, we discussed the effect of a leader's chronic regulatory focus (and other personal attributes—values and MTL) on the leadership style displayed by the leader. According to regulatory focus theory, the behavior of individuals is affected by the chronic and the situational regulatory foci simultaneously (Shah et al., 1998). Therefore, in this section we further explore the effect of leaders' situational self-regulatory focus on leadership style, contending that the relationship between the personal characteristics of a leader (i.e., chronic regulatory focus) and leadership style could be moderated by the leader's situational regulatory focus.

Findings from regulatory focus theory show that contextual cues can affect an individual's situational regulatory focus (e.g., the framing of the rewards system, the priming of hopes or duties; Higgins, 2000). In the case of leadership, this implies that leaders' situational regulatory

focus is likely to be affected by the organizational context and environment. According to various writers in the leadership field (e.g., Hunt, 1991; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999; Tosi, 1991), the macro-organizational level and the organizational context play important roles in determining leadership processes. Here we offer an explanation as to the psychological mechanism that underlies the influence of the organizational context on leadership style. We contend that different characteristics of the organizational context affect individuals' leadership style because they promote the salience of leaders' situational prevention or promotion focus. Thus, the different regulatory foci that are primed (by the organizational context) can partially determine leadership style.

Shamir and Howell (1999) offer a variety of contextual characteristics that can affect the emergence of charismatic and transformational leadership: dynamic organizational environments (that require and enable the introduction of new strategies, markets, products, and technologies), ambiguity (when performance goals are not clarified and extrinsic rewards cannot be strongly linked to performance), organic organizations (loosely structured, flexible and innovative, less formalized, and with few hierarchical distinctions), and a clan mode of governance (the use of shared values, beliefs, and commitments to control behavior). In comparison, exchange-based leadership (e.g., transactional and monitoring leadership), which relies on clear specification of duties and rewards, is more likely to emerge in stable environments operating under routine and standardized conditions, in mechanistic organizations (organizations that tend to be strictly controlled, highly formalized, and mechanized), and in bureaucratic organizations, which have elaborate rules, policies, and a hierarchical distribution of authority, status, and rewards (for reviews, see Pawar & Eastman, 1997, and Shamir & Howell, 1999).

Drawing on self-regulatory focus theory and applying it to the leadership field enables us to further develop the works presented above (e.g., Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Shamir & Howell, 1999) and to explain why, in certain environments, leaders tend to display a charismatic or transformational leadership style and tend to display a monitoring or transactional leadership style in others. We contend that organizational settings

that are dynamic, change oriented, organic, and characterized by a clan mode of governance form a promotion-oriented context and, thus, are likely to prime leaders' situational promotion focus. Because of the facilitation of a promotion focus among leaders, they are more likely to display charismatic or transformational behaviors. In contrast, organizational environments and structures that are characterized by a mechanistic and bureaucratic structure that stresses the importance of rules, regulations, stability, and standardization form a prevention-oriented context. Such a work context is likely to elicit leaders' situational prevention focus, thus enhancing their tendency to use exchange-based leadership behaviors, leading to the enactment of a transactional or monitoring leadership style.

Shah et al. (1998) found that greater person-environment regulatory fit heightens work motivation, meaning that congruence between the chronic and the situational regulatory focus leads to better performance. They found that chronic prevention is positively correlated with performance under prevention-induced situations, and negatively correlated with performance under promotion-induced situations. These findings suggest that the situational and chronic regulatory foci interact in their effect on behavior such that the positive relation between leaders' promotion focus and their transformational or charismatic style will increase under an organizational context that elicits a promotion focus. In addition, the positive relation between the prevention focus and leaders' transactional or monitoring style will increase under an organizational context that induces prevention focus. Based on the above, we hypothesize the following.

*Proposition 6: Organizational context characteristics will elicit leaders' situational regulatory focus, moderating the effect of the leaders' chronic self-regulatory focus on their leadership style.*

*Proposition 6a: Organizational contexts that are dynamic, change oriented, organic, and characterized by a clan mode of governance will elicit leaders' situational promotion focus.*

*Proposition 6b: Organizational contexts that are stable, noncreative, mechanistic, and bureaucratic will elicit leaders' situational prevention focus.*

*Proposition 6c: Congruence between the situational regulatory focus elicited by the organizational context and the leaders' chronic regulatory focus will moderate the relationship between the chronic self-regulatory focus and leadership style, leading to a stronger relationship between leaders' self-regulatory focus and leadership behavior.*

It should be further noted that the situational regulatory focus can also affect the relationship between MTL and the enacted leadership style by moderating the effect of MTL on the displayed behavior.

#### **FOLLOWERS' MOTIVATION: PRIMING FOLLOWERS' REGULATORY FOCUS**

There is accumulating evidence that transformational and charismatic leadership substantially influences employee motivation and performance very differently from transactional and monitoring leadership (e.g., Dvir et al., 2002; Lowe et al., 1996). However, only recently have transformational and charismatic leadership researchers attempted to reveal the processes by which transformational leadership exerts its influence on followers. Here we suggest that one of the mechanisms by which transformational and/or charismatic leaders exert their influence on followers, and differ from transactional and/or monitoring leaders, is by eliciting a promotion focus among their followers.

#### **Priming Followers' Regulatory Focus at the Individual Level**

Following the self-concept-based motivational theory of charismatic leadership (Shamir et al., 1993, 1998) and the followers' levels of self-concept theory (e.g., Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord & Brown, 2004; van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), scholars have proposed that leaders exert their effects by strongly engaging different aspects of self-concept. According to these theories, the self is regarded as dynamic in nature,

meaning that the content of the self-concept is dependent partially on the situation, context, and external cues. As such, the self may be seen as a collection of more modular processing structures (self-schemas) that are elicited in different contexts and have specific cognitive, affective, and behavioral consequences on the individual (e.g., Lord et al., 1999). One aspect of followers' self-concept that has barely received attention in the research field of leadership is the self-regulatory focus.

Brockner and Higgins (2001) first suggested that leaders, as "makers of meaning," may influence followers' regulatory focus through the use of language and symbols. The more the rhetoric of leaders focuses on ideals, the more likely followers' promotion focus will be activated. The more the rhetoric focuses on responsibilities, obligations, and accuracy, the more likely followers will adopt a prevention focus. This reasoning suggests that transformational and charismatic leaders may elicit more of a promotion focus in their followers, whereas transactional and monitoring leaders may elicit more of a prevention focus in their followers.

Transformational and charismatic leaders persuade their followers through inspirational and visionary messages (e.g., Burns, 1978; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Gardner & Avolio, 1998). One way they do so is by appealing to their followers' higher values, ideological goals, and ideal notions of how the organization, society, or world could be. Another way is by engaging in image-based rhetoric, motivating followers by "painting" a verbal picture of what can ideally be accomplished with their help (e.g., Emrich, Brower, Feldman, & Garland, 2001). When leaders' behavior focuses followers' attention on the ideal self, followers are likely to have a promotion focus. That is, they concentrate on what they aspire to be as they work on tasks they want to work on, attempting to achieve goals that they perceive they have set for themselves.

A promotion focus is also primed through the framing of the situation in terms of gain or non-gain. Transformational and charismatic leaders tend to articulate what the followers and the organization can gain and what they can develop into. Furthermore, the promotion focus can be activated by focusing on nurturance needs (Higgins, 1998). Thus, transformational leaders, who bring forth the behavioral component of "individualized consideration" and who nurture



the growth and development of their followers (e.g., Kark & Shamir, 2002), are likely to elicit a promotion focus among their followers. Last, leaders can influence their followers' regulatory foci by providing a behavioral role model. Shamir et al. (1993) posit role modeling as one of the major processes by which charismatic leaders influence followers. Role modeling implies a process by which followers mold their beliefs, feelings, and behavior according to those of the leader. Thus, if transformational and charismatic behaviors mirror the promotion focus that is likely to characterize these leaders (see Proposition 4a), they will provide a role model for promotion. This is likely to elicit a promotion focus among their followers.

Transactional and monitoring leaders, however, are more practical and less idealistic. Their work is centered more on the implementation of change and not as much on the articulation or formulation of change. Monitoring implies behaviors aimed at controlling others in order to preserve stability and security in the workplace (Bass, 1985; Kotter, 1990) or, at best, advocacy of incremental changes to organizational systems in an effort to make the existing processes more efficient (e.g., Eyal & Kark, 2004). In essence, transactional and monitoring leaders clarify to their followers what they need to do in order to enable the task to move in a certain decided direction, and how to detect deviations.

To the extent that followers perceive their work in terms of responsibilities, obligations, or things they ought to do, they are likely to focus on their ought self. This implies that they will be attuned to what others (i.e., the leader) expect them to be, as they work on tasks they are supposed to, or forced to, work on. Leaders who draw followers' attention to these aspects of work are likely to elicit the adoption of a prevention focus (Brockner & Higgins, 2001).

Furthermore, monitoring leaders (e.g., leaders applying the styles of management-by-exception) are active mostly when followers are not working as required and there are mishaps, exceptions, and irregularities. Thus, the leaders point to possible organizational losses and are likely to frame the situation in terms of loss or nonloss. In such cases they can react toward their followers in a negative or punishing manner (Bass & Avolio, 1994). This behavior is likely to put followers in a mode in which they concen-

trate on security needs, strong obligations, and avoidance of failure. This framing is likely to prime followers' prevention focus. Moreover, if leaders who apply a transactional and monitoring leadership style are motivated by a self-regulatory prevention focus (see Proposition 4b), they are likely to act in ways that highlight a prevention mode (e.g., focus in their job on their responsibilities, regulations, deadlines, possible losses). Thus, they provide their followers with a preventive role model. This, in turn, can elicit a prevention focus among their followers.

Therefore, we propose that different leadership behaviors can prime different self-regulatory foci among followers in the following manner.

*Proposition 7: Leadership behaviors will prime followers' regulatory focus.*

*Proposition 7a: Charismatic and transformational leadership will prime followers' promotion motivational focus.*

*Proposition 7b: Monitoring and transactional leadership will prime followers' prevention motivational focus.*

### **Priming Followers' Regulatory Focus at the Group Level**

Apart from leaders' influence on the motivation of individual followers, it is important to note that leaders are likely to influence motivations at the group and organizational levels. Recent interest in levels of leadership and levels of analysis has raised the issue of whether transformational and charismatic leadership is primarily a group-level phenomenon or a dyadic phenomenon. According to Yukl (1998), transformational leadership theories tend to describe leadership using a dyadic perspective. Within this perspective, it can be seen that some leader behaviors (e.g., individualized consideration) are directed toward individual followers and emphasize the distinctiveness of each follower, as well as the unique relationship between the leader and the individual follower (e.g., Dansereau et al., 1998; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). These behaviors are likely to affect followers at the dyadic level.

In contrast, however, there are leader behaviors that represent "ambient" behaviors directed toward the entire group of followers. These be-

haviors do not differentiate between followers, portraying them as a large collective or group. Therefore, these behaviors are likely to operate at the group or unit level (Kark & Shamir, 2002). Within the conceptual framework suggested in this paper, we maintain that a leadership style that primes a promotion or prevention focus among followers can also be evident at the group level. The effects at the group level are of interest since they can lead to important outcomes at the organizational level.

Initial support for the effect of prevention/promotion on group level comes from the regulatory focus literature. Levine, Higgins, and Choi (1998) investigated how groups develop shared reality concerning the strategic orientations of risk and conservatism. They found that group strategies orientation for solving a problem had converged as a result of priming the promotion or prevention focus. This convergence was associated with a directional bias in strategic orientation (i.e., promotion groups took more work-associated risks than prevention groups). This finding suggests that the situational regulatory focus affects behavior not only at the individual level but also at the group level.

Although the self-regulatory focus is a psychological characteristic of the individual follower, we believe that there are different ways in which leaders can elicit a shared regulatory focus among a group of followers (i.e., the work-group). First, since a leader is often seen as a representative character who embodies a unit's identity and values (Shamir et al., 1998), certain behaviors of leaders may increase not only the regulatory focus of a limited number of individuals but can influence the group as a whole. Thus, a leader behaving in a transformational (or transactional) manner, enacting a promotion (or prevention) orientation, can provide the group as a whole with an emulative role model for promotion (or prevention).

Furthermore, various researchers assert that leaders' (e.g., CEOs') personalities and related behaviors play a major role in determining the group dynamics among their group of followers (e.g., top management teams, organizational units, organizations; e.g., Hambrick & Finkelstein, 1987; Peterson, Smith, Martorana, & Owens, 2003). Kets de Vries and associates (Kets de Vries, 1984; Miller, Kets de Vries, & Toulouse, 1982) have suggested that the executive's personality pervades many aspects of the organi-

zation, affecting its strategy, structure, and culture. They contend, for instance, that depressive executives will breed cultures of helplessness. Thus, if transformational and charismatic leaders are characterized by a chronic promotion focus (as suggested in Proposition 4a), this personal characteristic of the leader is likely to influence not only the individual followers but also possibly the group and organizational level, leading to the formation of a climate in the group, unit, or organization that is focused on promotion. In contrast, a transactional and monitoring leader, characterized by a prevention focus, is likely to determine different types of group dynamics and related outcomes.

Second, leaders can give rise to a promotion or prevention focus at the group level by engaging in various symbolic, verbal, and performative acts aimed at the collective. A skillful use of slogans and symbols (e.g., flags, tags, logos), rituals (e.g., singing the organizational songs), labels, metaphors, and ceremonies (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Shamir et al., 1998) and the creation of attractive organizational images (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994) can affect not only the individual but also the shared group regulatory orientation. A leader may enhance the regulatory foci at the group level by emphasizing common ground, stressing shared values and ideology, and connecting followers' personal goals to the group's interests. If this is done stressing a promotion focus (e.g., framing change as a desired challenge) or using a prevention focus (e.g., focusing on ceremonies that highlight tradition and conformity), it is likely that the relevant regulatory focus will be enhanced among the group of followers.

Another major mechanism by which a leader can affect motivational foci at the group level is through leader-follower emotional contagion processes. Various researchers have described how leaders, by creating a certain emotional environment, can affect followers (e.g., Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2003; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Fredrickson (2003) suggests that the emotions expressed by leaders may be especially contagious because of their position of power. Several recent empirical studies have examined the mood contagion process in work-groups, documenting the spread of emotions from leaders to followers and among group members (e.g., Barsade, 2002; Cherulnik et al., 2001). This may imply that leaders exhibiting

emotions that have been found to relate to a promotion focus (i.e., happiness and dejection) may affect the transfer of emotions and prime a promotion focus, whereas leaders expressing emotions of quiescence or anxiety may prime a prevention focus among group members. These processes may be reinforced at the group level owing to group emotional contagion processes (Barsade, 2002), as well as more general processes of social contagion among followers (Meindl, 1990).

Last, leaders can also give rise to followers' shared sense of regulatory foci at the group level by shaping the work context (e.g., choice of tasks for the workgroup, task structure, allocation of rewards). For example, leaders can choose to reward followers' innovative ideas or followers' conformity or loyalty to the organization. Each mode of reward is likely to elicit at the group level a different shared motivational orientation (i.e., promotion versus prevention, accordingly). Thus we reinforce Proposition 7(a and b) by further stressing the following.

*Proposition 8: Leadership behaviors will prime a shared regulatory focus orientation among workgroup members.*

*Proposition 8a: Charismatic and transformational leadership will prime a shared promotion motivational orientation among members of the workgroup.*

*Proposition 8b: Monitoring and transactional leadership will prime a shared prevention motivational orientation among members of the workgroup.*

## OUTCOMES OF PRIMING FOLLOWERS' PREVENTION OR PROMOTION FOCUS

Different levels of possible selves and different regulatory foci are important because they have perceptual, motivational, emotional, and behavioral consequences (e.g., Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Förster, Higgins, & Idson, 2003; Higgins, 1997, 1998; Liberman et al., 1999). As Brewer postulates, "When the definition of self changes, the meaning of self-interest and self-serving motivations also changes significantly" (1991: 476). Transforma-

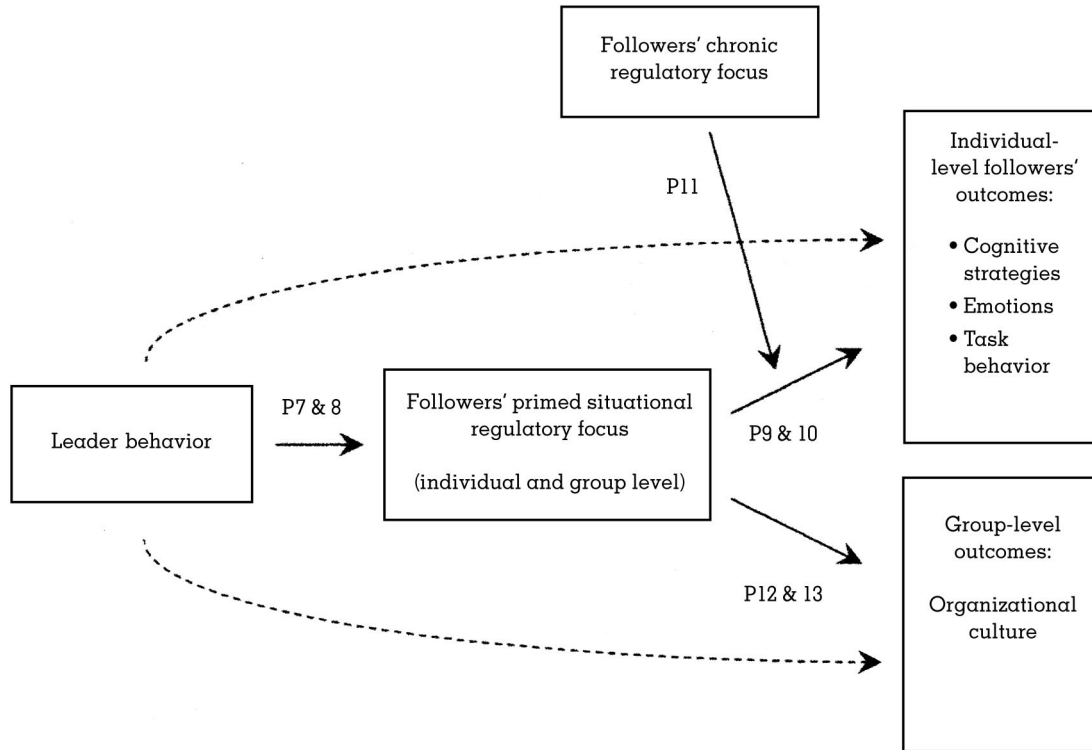
tional and charismatic leadership theory suggests that such leadership is likely to result in a wide range of outcomes that differ from the outcomes of transactional and monitoring leadership. In this section we suggest that these outcomes are mediated by identity shifts and the priming of certain self-perceptions, specifically the regulatory focus.

Higgins and colleagues' empirical studies show a variety of outcomes derived from the two regulatory foci (e.g., Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Förster et al., 2003; Friedman & Förster, 2001; Higgins, 1997, 1998, 2000; Liberman et al., 1999; Shah et al., 1998). This variety of outcomes includes behavioral tendencies, emotions, cognitions, decision-making styles, and problem-solving strategies. To manipulate the situational regulatory focus, Higgins and his colleagues usually used manipulations of framing situations or priming (e.g., Förster et al., 1998; Higgins, 2000). For example, one of the most common manipulations of framing the situational promotion focus is to tell participants that they can either gain something (i.e., money, doing a desirable task) or not gain it, depending on their task performance. The manipulation of the situational prevention focus is to inform the participants that they can either lose something (i.e., money, doing an undesirable task) or not lose it, depending on their performance (e.g., Crowe & Higgins, 1997). Another way to manipulate the situational regulatory focus is by priming the ideal self or the ought self. For example Higgins, Roney, Crowe, and Hymes (1994) asked participants to think about their ideals, hopes, and aspirations in order to prime the ideal self and to think about their obligations, duties, and responsibilities in order to prime their ought self. In the following section we explore possible cognitive, emotional, and task behavior outcomes of priming followers' different regulatory foci by leaders (see Figure 2 for the framework we suggest and Table 2 for a summary of the outcomes we explore).

### Followers' Cognitive Strategies

**Sensitivity to positive outcomes versus negative outcomes.** One of the consequences of the regulatory foci is sensitivity to positive outcomes versus negative outcomes. Higgins and Tykocinski (1992) found that promotion-focused subjects remembered more positive events from

**FIGURE 2**  
**Followers' Regulatory Focus As Mediating Between Leaders' Behaviors and Followers' Outcomes**



**TABLE 2**  
**The Effect of Leaders on Followers' Situational Regulatory Focus and Outcomes**

| Leadership Behavior          | Followers' Regulatory Focus Primed | Followers' Cognitive Strategies  | Followers' Task Behavior   | Followers' Emotions  | Organizational Culture  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Charismatic/transformational | Promotion focus                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attentiveness to positive outcomes</li> <li>• Openness to change</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Eagerness</li> <li>• Speed</li> <li>• Risk taking</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive affectivity</li> <li>• Affective commitment</li> </ul>                                   | Innovation-oriented culture   |
| Monitoring/transactional     | Prevention focus                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attentiveness to negative outcomes</li> <li>• Preference for stability</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noncreative repetitiveness</li> <li>• Vigilance</li> <li>• Accuracy</li> <li>• Risk averse</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative affectivity</li> <li>• Normative commitment</li> <li>• Continuance commitment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality-oriented culture</li> <li>• Efficiency-oriented culture</li> </ul> |

a person's biography, whereas prevention-focused subjects remembered more negative events from the same biography. Furthermore, Van Dijk and Kluger (2004) found that promotion-focused people are more attentive to positive feedback, whereas prevention-focused people are more attentive to negative feedback.

Research has shown that transformational leaders are more optimistic, have strong positive perceptions, and have a positive current and future outlook in comparison to other leaders (e.g., Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000). Thus, if transformational and charismatic leaders can provide a vision of an optimistic or ideal future and



prime followers' promotion focus, then their followers are likely to become more sensitive to positive outcomes and positive feedback. Monitoring and transactional leadership, which is more attentive to exceptions and deviations, is more likely to prime the followers' prevention focus and, thus, to elicit among followers sensitivity to negative outcomes and responsiveness to negative feedback.

**Change preference versus stability preference.** Liberman and her associates (1999) examined individual preferences for stability versus change in two kinds of tasks: task substitution, which deals with choosing between resuming an interrupted activity and doing a substitute activity, and endowment, which deals with choosing between a possessed object and an alternative new object. The researchers found, in five experiments, that individuals in a prevention focus were more inclined than individuals in a promotion focus to resume an interrupted task rather than do a new and different substitute task. Moreover, unlike the promotion-focused individuals, the prevention-focused individuals exhibited a reluctance to exchange currently possessed objects. These findings show that a promotion focus is associated with openness to change, whereas a prevention focus is associated with preference for stability.

Theories of transformational and charismatic leadership suggest that there is a significant relationship between this type of leadership and the promotion of change and innovation in organizations (Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Higgins, 1990). Furthermore, charismatic leadership has been suggested to be of greater prominence (e.g., Beyer, 1999; Emrich et al., 2001; Shamir et al., 1993) and more effective (e.g., Flynn & Staw, 2004; Shamir & Howell, 1999) in times of turbulence and crisis, during which change is needed, compared to times of stability.

### Followers' Emotions

**Positive and negative affectivity.** Regulatory foci seem to be associated with emotionality (Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Higgins, 1997). Regulatory focus theory suggests that when promotion goals are salient, success and failure lead to emotions of elation and dejection, respectively. These emotions belong to the positive affectivity (PA) dimension (e.g., Watson, Wiese,

Vaidya, & Tellegen, 1999). Similarly, when prevention goals are salient, success and failure lead to quiescence and agitation, respectively. These emotions belong to the negative affectivity (NA) dimension. Thus, it seems that the PA system is the emotional monitoring system of the success or failure of promotion goals, whereas the NA system is the emotional monitoring system of the success or failure of prevention goals (Carver, Sutton, & Scheier, 2000).

According to the leadership literature, charismatic and transformational leaders have a strong emotional influence on their followers, shaping the affective events that determine employees' attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2003). Friedman, Riggio, and Caselia (1988) found that charismatic leadership involves the ability to enhance group members' feelings of positive emotion and reduce unpleasant feelings. Furthermore, when leaders acted in a controlling and monitoring style, or employees felt they were being forced to perform work activities, the employees became annoyed and frustrated (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2003). Thus, we suggest that leaders may affect and shape their followers' emotions by giving prominence to different components of the self-regulatory focus. When priming a promotion focus, they will give rise to PA, whereas when priming the prevention focus, they will enhance NA.

**Organizational commitment.** Commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action that is of relevance to a particular target (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Meyer and Allen (1991) suggest a three-component model of organizational commitment. The main differences among the three components are in the mindsets presumed to characterize the commitment. These mindsets reflect three distinguishable themes: affective attachment to the organization—*affective commitment*; obligation to remain—*normative commitment*; and perceived cost of leaving—*continuance commitment* (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004). The reason for distinguishing the three organizational commitment types is that they have different implications for behavior (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Meyer & Allen, 1991). For example, affective commitment has the strongest positive correlation with job performance.

Recently, researchers asserted that the different types of commitment could be related to

different regulatory foci (Meyer et al., 2004; Van Dijk & Kluger, 2004). Specifically, they suggested that a promotion focus is related to affective commitment, while a prevention focus is likely to be related to normative and continuance commitment. Promotion-focused individuals are intrinsically motivated and are mostly guided by their inner ideals and not by external forces. Thus, they are likely to be committed to the organization in an autonomous form (affective commitment). In contrast, prevention-focused individuals are more influenced by external or social pressure and attempt to fulfill obligations and avoid losses. Thus, they are more likely to be committed to the organization out of a sense of obligation or necessity (normative or continuance commitment).

Prior studies have shown that transformational leadership is positively related to followers' affective commitment to the organization, and management by exception is more strongly related to continuance commitment (e.g., Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Dvir et al., 2002). Using our framework, we suggest that one of the mechanisms through which transformational and charismatic leaders elicit affective commitment is by priming the followers' promotion focus. Monitoring leaders are more likely to elicit a normative or continuance commitment by priming followers' prevention focus.

### Followers' Task Behavior

**Risk-taking tendency versus risk avoidance tendency.** Crowe and Higgins (1997) showed that for individuals engaged in a signal detection task requiring them to decide whether they did or did not detect a signal, those in a promotion focus had a "risky" response bias (said "yes" even when they were not sure), and those in a prevention focus had a "conservative" response (said "no" when they were not sure). Later, these findings were expanded by Friedman and Förster (2001), who showed that promotion cues, relative to prevention cues, produce a risky response bias. This suggests that followers whose promotion focus is primed by their leaders (i.e., charismatic or transformational) are more likely to take risks, experiment, and try new directions in their work, even at the expense of possibly making a mistake. Followers whose prevention focus is primed are more prone to "play on the safe side" and "work by the book," adhering to

leaders' instructions and organizational regulations without taking risks.

In line with this assertion, recent findings suggest that charismatic leadership convinces investors to take greater investment risks in firms managed by such leaders, when under difficult economic circumstances (Flynn & Staw, 2004). Based on our assertions, it is possible that charismatic leaders achieve this outcome by behaving in ways that prime the promotion focus of the investors, leading them to accept larger risks.

**Creativity versus noncreativity and repetitiveness.** Crowe and Higgins (1997) indicate that a promotion focus is associated with enhanced creativity relative to a prevention focus. In an initial experiment, they manipulated the situational regulatory focus and subsequently administered a sorting task that gauged the ability to generate alternatives. As predicted, promotion-focused participants generated more subgroups than those with a prevention focus. Those with a prevention focus were more repetitive and persevering in their selection of sorting criteria. Higgins (1997) interpreted this as indicating greater "abstract thinking" or "creativity" under a promotion focus.

Recently, Friedman and Förster (2001) showed that promotion cues bolster both creative insight and creative generation relative to prevention cues. Prior studies have shown that transformational leadership is more strongly related to followers' creativity in comparison to transactional leadership (e.g., Jung, 2001; Rickards, Chen, & Moger, 2001; Sosik, Kahai, & Avolio, 1998). According to the findings regarding the regulatory focus theory, we suggest that leaders' behaviors (e.g., transformational or charismatic) that prime followers' promotion focus will enhance their creativity. Leaders' behaviors that prime followers' prevention focus (e.g., monitoring behaviors) are likely to induce preservation and repetitive behaviors among followers.

**Speed versus accuracy in task performance.** Förster et al. (2003) have shown that a promotion focus leads to faster performance and less accuracy in a simple drawing task, compared to a prevention focus. In another experiment they showed that, in a proofreading task, an induced promotion focus led to faster proofreading compared to a prevention focus, whereas an induced prevention focus led to higher accuracy in detecting more difficult errors than did a promo-

tion focus. These findings suggest that, under a prevention focus, people are more vigilant, cautious, and attentive to details, whereas under a promotion focus, people are more eager, enthusiastic, fast, and pay less attention to details.

This suggests that charismatic and transformational leadership behavior, which is likely to focus followers on their ideal self and encourage a promotion focus among followers, will result in followers' eagerness and enthusiasm toward their work and a faster task performance with less attention to detail. A monitoring leadership style that highlights exceptions and deviations is likely to make salient followers' ought self and prevention focus, resulting in task behavior that is more vigilant and attentive to details, leading to followers' higher task accuracy. On the basis of these considerations, we offer the following propositions, summarized in Table 2.

*Proposition 9: The more a leader engages in transformational and charismatic behaviors that make salient the ideal self and elicit followers' situational promotion focus, the higher the level of followers' sensitivity to positive outcomes, preference for change, risk-taking behavior, creativity, speed in task performance, PA, and affective commitment.*

*Proposition 10: The more leaders engage in monitoring behaviors that give salience to the ought self and elicit followers' situational prevention focus, the higher the level of followers' sensitivity to negative outcomes, preference for stability and vigilance, risk avoidance behavior, noncreativity and repetitiveness, accuracy and attention to details in task behavior, NA, and normative and continuance commitment.*

### **Followers' Chronic Regulatory Focus As a Moderator of the Relationship Between Primed Regulatory Focus and Followers' Individual-Level Outcomes**

In the above propositions we focused on the effect of the primed regulatory focus of followers (elicited by the leader's behavior) on the followers' outcomes. However, we did not take into

consideration how differences in followers' initial chronic self-regulatory focus may influence this dynamic. Studies of charismatic and transformational leadership (e.g., Ehrhart & Klein, 2001; Yammarino, Dubinsky, Comer, & Jolson, 1997) have shown significant individual differences in subordinates' reactions to the same leader. This can be attributed to personal differences among followers. According to regulatory focus theory, the behavior of individuals is likely to be affected by an interaction between the chronic and the situational regulatory foci (Shah et al., 1998). As noted earlier in this paper, congruency between the situational and the chronic regulatory focus is likely to lead to higher levels of performance (Shah et al., 1998).

Therefore, we suggest that the effect of the primed situational regulatory focus of followers on followers' outcome will be stronger when there is congruency between their aroused situational focus and chronic regulatory focus. This interaction effect implies that the relationship between followers' primed promotion regulatory focus (elicited by transformational leadership) and the related outcomes (e.g. risk taking, creativity) will be at its highest levels among followers who are characterized by a chronic promotion regulatory focus.

*Proposition 11: Followers' chronic regulatory focus will moderate the relationship between followers' situational regulatory focus (elicited by the leaders' behavior) and related outcomes.*

*Proposition 11a: The effect of the situational promotion focus (elicited by transformational or charismatic leadership styles) on followers' related outcomes will be stronger when the followers are characterized by a chronic promotion focus, compared to when the followers are characterized by a chronic prevention focus.*

*Proposition 11b: The effect of a situational prevention focus (elicited by transactional or monitoring leadership styles) on followers' related outcomes will be stronger when the followers are characterized by a chronic prevention focus, compared to when*

*the followers are characterized by a chronic promotion focus.*

### Group-Level Outcomes

Research on organizational culture provides insights into the dynamics of transformational leadership and the process by which a leader's charisma can be institutionalized (Yukl, 1998). Within the conceptual framework suggested in this paper, we maintain that leader behaviors that prime a promotion or prevention focus among followers can also be evident at the group level, affecting the organizational culture. According to Trice and Beyer (1993), leaders can make changes in the organizational culture or establish a new organization with a different culture, but they can also maintain and reinforce an existing organizational culture. Leaders can influence the culture of organizations in a variety of ways (Yukl, 1998). According to Schein (1992), there are various mechanisms leaders can use to shape culture, among them the communication of priorities and values, the reaction to a crisis situation, role modeling, allocation of rewards, and criteria for selection and dismissal.

Organizational culture is a set of assumptions, beliefs, and values shared by members of the same organization that influence their behaviors (Schein, 1996, 1999). It reflects a common mode of thinking, which drives a commonality of performing work in the work unit or organization (Miron, Erez, & Naveh, 2004). Organizational culture is an important component in the competitive advantage of companies since it cannot be copied easily (Barney, 1988). Here we focus on three central cultural features: innovation, quality performance, and efficiency, which tend to appear repeatedly as measures of organizational culture (e.g., Miron et al., 2004; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Rousseau, 1990).

**Innovation-oriented culture.** Scholars have recently conducted extensive research on the culture of innovation. Dimensions such as high autonomy, risk taking, tolerance of mistakes, and low bureaucracy were found to be the most prevalent characteristics of a culture of innovation (e.g., Brown & Eisenhardt, 1998; Van de Ven, Polley, Garud, & Venkataraman, 1999). Innovation can be both incremental and transformational (Weick, 2000). An innovative culture reflects a learning orientation that facilitates inventive-

ness, combined with the pursuit of new and prospective knowledge (Miron et al., 2004). Innovative performance outcomes are more likely to occur when innovative behavior is supported and rewarded (West, 2002).

Theories of transformational and charismatic leadership suggest that there is a significant relationship between these types of leadership and organizational innovativeness (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). Transformational leadership has been linked to the promotion of change and innovation in organizations (Eyal & Kark, 2004; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Higgins, 1990). Accordingly, charismatic leadership has been associated with innovation (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; House, 1977). We suggest that one of the underlying psychological mechanisms that enable transformational and charismatic leaders to promote an innovative culture is the priming of a promotion focus. Leaders' behaviors, which are aimed at the entire group and are likely to arouse a promotion focus among group members, are likely to result in the embeddedness or reinforcement of a culture of innovation.

As suggested above, various leader behaviors can arouse a promotion focus at the group level. For example, charismatic and transformational leaders are likely to inspire their followers by articulating a vision of exceptional and innovative achievements (e.g., Ehrhart & Klein, 2001). Such a vision, presented to the group as a whole, is likely to arouse the followers' promotion focus and reinforce organizational innovation. Apart from a vision, transformational or charismatic leaders can make use of slogans, symbols, rituals, and ceremonies in ways that give salience to the group's ideals, wishes, and aspirations, eliciting a shared sense of promotion orientation among group members and contributing to the formation of an innovation-oriented culture. Another example of how charismatic and transformational leaders can reinforce a culture of innovation is by the way they shape incentives. If transformational leaders design an organizational incentive structure that benefits risk taking and creativity and encourages implementation of new ideas, they are likely to promote the group's promotion focus and to foster an environment of innovation.

**Quality-oriented culture.** Emphasis on the quality of products and services has increased with the establishment of the ISO 9000 quality standard. The major requirements of ISO 9000



are that organizations develop and implement a set of routines and procedures for product design, manufacturing, delivery, and service. Standardization ensures that all customers get the same product or service as promised (e.g., Cole, 1999). A culture that supports quality implementation is one that emphasizes standardization, reliability, conformity to rules and procedures, and attention to detail (Miron et al., 2004).

**Efficiency-focused culture.** Organizational efficiency is often measured by meeting budget and time constraints. A culture that emphasizes efficiency and productivity is outcome oriented, stressing goals, feedback, and incentives (O'Reilly et al., 1991). This organizational culture emphasizes the importance of getting things done, on-time delivery of products and services, and maintenance of a pace faster than that of competitors, while simultaneously controlling operation costs (e.g., Amabile, Hadley, & Kramer, 2002).

Both quality and efficiency cultures emphasize conforming to routines and procedures and avoiding errors. A monitoring leadership style that highlights organizational goals of maintaining the existing order, rewarding the avoidance of exceptions, or punishing subordinates for their mistakes is likely to make salient for the entire group or for a large portion of the followers their ought self. Furthermore, a leader who behaves in a vigilant manner, adhering to rules and procedures, focusing on error detection, avoiding risks, meeting deadlines, and focusing on the details, may put forth a role model for follower emulation—one that elicits a prevention focus among the group of followers. Thus, monitoring and transactional leadership emphasizing a prevention focus targeted toward the group as a whole is likely to result in a workgroup culture of quality and/or efficiency.

*Proposition 12: The more a leader engages in transformational and charismatic behaviors that give salience to the ideal self and that elicit the followers' promotion focus, the higher the group and organizational level of innovation (innovative culture).*

*Proposition 13: The more a leader engages in monitoring behaviors that give salience to the ought self and that elicit the followers' prevention fo-*

*cus, the higher the group and organizational level of attention to detail (quality culture) and outcome orientation (efficiency culture).*

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

The conceptualization of leadership and leadership influence presented here and summarized in Tables 1 and 2 and Figures 1 and 2 portrays leadership as deeply tied to individuals' (both leaders' and followers') internal motivational systems of the situational and chronic self-regulatory focus. Focusing on the leaders' self, the theoretical framework we offer first suggests that leaders with a chronic promotion focus and values of openness to change are likely to have an affective MTL and will enact transformational or charismatic leadership styles. In contrast, leaders with a prevention focus, holding values of conservation, are most likely to lead based on a social normative MTL, and this will be evident in a transactional or monitoring leadership style. Furthermore, contextual characteristics of the organization are likely to affect the leaders' situational regulatory focus, thus moderating the effect of the chronic regulatory focus on leaders' behavior.

Focusing on the dynamics of leadership influence on followers, the framework outlined in this paper further suggests that leaders can affect followers by highlighting different aspects of followers' self-concept and their self-regulatory foci (i.e., prevention or promotion), and possibly changing their regulatory focus from one level to the other. This is likely to influence whether followers view themselves primarily in terms of their ideals, hopes, wishes, and aspirations or in terms of their duties, obligations, and responsibilities. We suggest that different leadership behaviors can partially account for priming these distinct aspects of followers' regulatory focus at both the individual and the group or organizational level.

Moreover, the different forms of leadership influence suggested above are important because they can lead to different outcomes. A promotion focus can result in followers' creativity, eagerness, attentiveness to positive outcomes, risk taking, willingness to make change, PA, affective commitment, and an innovative organizational or unit culture. A prevention focus can

result in followers' preference for stability, tendency for accuracy, risk aversion behavior, attentiveness to negative outcomes, NA, normative or continuance commitment, and a culture that values quality and efficiency.

The theoretical framework we suggest in this paper begins to shed light on the processes by which leaders' regulatory focus (chronic and situational), values, and MTL contribute to the formulation of leadership behavior, and on the complex ways in which leadership can affect diverse aspects of followers' perceptions and behaviors, resulting in followers' motivation and organizational effectiveness. Up until now, most leadership theories of the self have focused mainly on *followers'* self-identity, overlooking leaders' self-identity (e.g., Kark & Shamir, 2002; Lord & Brown, 2004; Shamir et al., 1993). A main contribution of this paper is the attempt to simultaneously explore aspects of both leaders' and followers' self-construct (self-regulatory focus). This enables us to gain a broader understanding of the leadership process and its workings by tracing the elusive path of leaders' influence as a process that originates within the leaders' inner self and motivations, affecting their behavior (leadership style) and, in turn, affecting transformation of the followers' inner self and behavior. Charting a more comprehensive leadership process, we gain insight into a sequence by which a leader's self-regulatory focus is translated into action, thereby affecting leadership style and subsequently affecting aspects of followers' self-regulatory foci, impinging on followers' behavior (e.g., willingness to take risks, creativity, and commitment), and ultimately affecting outcomes at the organizational level.

Furthermore, this paper addresses the effects of both the situational and chronic regulatory focus of leaders and followers, and it explores how they interact to influence the behavior of leaders and followers. This allows us to consider the effects of the more stable characteristics of the leader and follower on the leadership process, as well as to explore the more transitional aspects of this process, a direction not often pursued in the leadership literature. Apart from considering the effects of the stable and more situational aspects of leaders' and followers' self-regulatory foci, we address here different levels of the possible effects leaders can exert on the regulatory focus at the individual

and group levels. This allows us a more complex (multilevel) understanding of the variety of ways in which leaders can assert their power to influence.

Another contribution of this paper lies in weaving and integrating concepts and insights from regulatory focus theory with leadership theory. The field of regulatory focus is a widely researched field (for reviews, see Higgins, 1998, 2000). Drawing on findings from the regulatory focus literature enables us to reach a deeper understanding of the psychological processes underlying prior findings in the leadership field. For example, leaders' ability to prime their followers' promotion focus helps us understand why transformational and charismatic leadership has been found, in prior works, to be positively related to followers' affective commitment and to organizational innovation.

Drawing on findings from research on the self-regulatory focus not only allows us to better explain prior findings in the leadership field but also enables us to offer new predictions. For example, as noted above, prior research on the effect of positive versus negative feedback shows that relatively high levels of motivation are induced either by failure under the prevention focus—failure to meet obligations—or by success under the promotion focus—fulfilling a desire (Van Dijk & Kluger, 2004). Therefore, when people are in promotion focus, positive feedback seems to increase their motivation more than negative feedback. However, when people are in prevention focus, negative feedback seems to increase their motivation more than positive feedback.

Thus, following the theoretical framework suggested here, if leaders, using a transformational or charismatic leadership style, are motivated by a chronic promotion self-regulatory focus, positive feedback (e.g., organizational success, followers' display of enthusiasm, or customer satisfaction) will likely increase their motivation. If, however, they experience negative feedback (e.g., organizational loss, followers' resistance, or customer dissatisfaction), this will likely reduce their motivation. In the case of leaders who enact a monitoring style, the reverse can be expected. Thus, linking regulatory focus theory with leadership theory enables us to think of novel predictions in the leadership field.

We have offered a series of propositions that may contribute to guiding further research on leadership processes. In addition, we have raised some issues that merit attention in future studies. Four qualifications should be added at this point. First, while we maintain that leaders can affect followers' regulatory foci, we do not imply that leaders can always consciously control this influence. Affective and emotional processes related to motivational foci may be particularly difficult to manage consciously and may occur without the leader's awareness.

Second, although we maintain that different leadership behaviors can prime different aspects of identity, effective leaders use transformational and transactional behaviors together to augment their ability to influence followers (Avolio et al., 1999). Therefore, it is possible that the same leader, while enacting different leadership styles, will be able to prime both prevention and promotion foci among his or her followers at different points in time. It is also possible that the same leader will prime different regulatory foci among different groups of followers. According to leader-member exchange theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Uhl-Bien & Arnaud, 2001) and the conception of Klein and House (1995) on heterogeneous charismatic effects, it is possible that the same leader will be able to behave differently toward different followers who have different motivational needs. Thus, the leader can improve his or her influence and effectiveness by enhancing the congruency between his or her behavior and followers' chronic self-regulatory foci.

Moreover, leaders' abilities to prime both prevention and promotion foci among their followers at different points in time, or among different subgroups of followers, are likely to explain the array of different outcomes that leaders can promote. The outcomes proposed in the framework at the individual level (e.g., creativity versus attention to details) and organizational or unit level (a culture of innovation versus a culture of quality and efficiency), although seemingly contradictory, are not mutually exclusive. According to the findings of Miron and coauthors (2004), employees have the ability to both be creative and pay attention to detail, and they suggest that an innovative culture does not necessarily compete with a culture of quality and efficiency. These findings are in line with the approach arguing that the competitive advantage of orga-

nizations depends on their preservation of existing knowledge—for example, existing rules and standards—and on exploration—for example, the creation of novel knowledge (Levinthal & March, 1993; Miron et al., 2004). Thus, understanding the possibility of a leader to arouse, at different points in time, a prevention or a promotion focus among followers enables us to better understand how leaders can promote the survival of the organization by balancing different requirements of innovation, quality, and efficiency.

Third, although we suggest that leaders can directly affect followers' self-regulatory focus at both the individual level and the group level, it is premature for us to specify how these different levels of analysis are likely to interact. It is more than likely that if leaders prime followers' self-regulatory focus at the individual level, this will further affect, indirectly, the self-regulatory focus at the group level (e.g., through the process of contagion among followers). Furthermore, it is likely that when leaders affect their followers' self-regulatory focus as a group, this can influence the self-regulatory focus at the individual level. The mechanisms by which these processes interact, interrelate, and affect each other, in direct and indirect pathways, need to be further elucidated.

Fourth, we do not contend that one type of focus with its related outcomes is superior or more effective than the other. Rather, we believe that the relative effectiveness of each focus activated is contingent on the circumstances and the various attributes of the context (e.g., follower group composition, task characteristics, situation of the economic markets).

Finally, although the framework we offer explores both leaders' and followers' chronic self-regulatory focus, we have not taken into consideration the possibility of an interaction between the chronic self-regulatory focus of leaders and their followers. The self-regulatory focus theory stresses the importance of *congruence*, or fit, between the salient regulation focus and type of situational stimuli (Higgins, 2000; Van Dijk & Kluger, 2004), contending that congruence will contribute to higher motivation. Lockwood, Jordan, and Kunda (2002) found one example of the congruency effect. They demonstrated that individuals are motivated by role models who encourage strategies that fit their chronic regulatory focus. Specifically, promotion-focused

individuals are most inspired by positive role models, who have succeeded and thus highlight strategies for achieving success. In contrast, prevention-focused individuals are mostly motivated by negative role models, who have failed and thus highlight the risk of failure, motivating the prevention-focused individuals to behave in ways that will enable them to avoid failure.

Applying the reasoning of congruence raised above to the leader-follower relationship suggests that congruence or fit between followers' chronic regulatory focus and leaders' regulatory focus will possibly result in higher satisfaction and motivation among followers, as well as more effective outcomes on their behalf (e.g., followers with a promotion focus will be more motivated, effective, satisfied, and attracted to a leader with a promotion-focused leadership style—that is, transformational or charismatic). The ways in which the congruency effect is likely to interact with the priming effect suggested in the theoretical framework we have offered should be the focus of future studies.

Future research should address some of these issues raised and should study the dynamic of leader and followers shifting from one self-regulatory focus to another and the ways in which a leader can influence these shifts among followers. Several questions arise in this regard. What other variables can mediate the relationship among leaders' values, self-regulatory foci, and their behavior? Can the same leader activate a prevention and a promotion focus at different points in time, or even simultaneously, or are there negative relations among different identity components such that activating one level inhibits the other, as Lord and coauthors (1999) suggest? Can leaders consciously manipulate these shifts of identity? Can leaders be trained to emphasize certain behaviors in order to prime a certain level of followers' regulatory focus?

The framework suggested above has focused on leaders' behaviors and their effects on followers. However, the followers are also likely to contribute to the dynamics suggested in this paper. According to the work of Shamir and Howell (2000; Howell & Shamir, 2005), leadership and followership may both play an active role in forming mutual relationships. Dvir and Shamir (2003) further demonstrate that follower characteristics are likely to contribute to the shaping of leaders' transformational leadership. Here we

argue that leaders can influence followers by affecting their regulatory focus. However, based on the above perspectives, it is also possible that this is a bidirectional influence in which followers can also play a role, activating a certain regulatory focus among leaders, thus affecting their leadership style and behavior. For example, highly inspirational and empowered followers who enjoy their work may elicit leaders' situational promotion focus.

This suggested reciprocal dynamic in follower-leader relationships may serve as a focus of future research in the field. Future research needs to address whether different contextual factors, both those that can be shaped by the leader and those that are not within a leader's control, can foster different identities and moderate the leader's influence. Van Dijk and Kluger (2004), for example, found that employees from different professions are motivated by a different chronic regulatory focus (e.g., accountants by a prevention focus and artists by a promotion focus). However, the ways in which this can interact with leadership still need to be examined.

Furthermore, the effect of national culture on the perceptions of charismatic and transformational leadership has been demonstrated in the GLOBE study (e.g., House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002). However, the effect of national culture on chronic and situational regulatory foci, and on leadership style in conjunction, still needs to be explored further. Such an exploration can, for example, test if national cultures that are more focused on details and accuracy (possibly more prevention focused) will elicit higher levels of monitoring leadership in comparison with more promotion-focused national cultures.

In conclusion, it should be acknowledged that we do not know the extent to which leaders' MTL and behavior are affected by their regulatory focus and values, nor the extent to which leaders' influence on their followers is mediated by the self-regulatory focus and the dynamics discussed above. However, the strong evidence for the effects of transformational and charismatic leadership, on the one hand, and the lack of sufficient understanding of the mechanisms by which these leadership styles are shaped, on the other, suggest that theoretical frameworks such as the one proposed in this paper are needed at this stage in the development of leadership theory. We believe that because the con-



ceptual framework proposed rests on a relatively strong theoretical rationale and is supported by empirical evidence from the field of the regulatory focus theory, it deserves a place on the agenda of future research on leadership.

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