

**Exploring What it Is Like to Work for a Servant Leader:  
Perspectives of Three Generational Cohorts**

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**Background**

It now seems obvious that the recent poor economy coupled with the often spectacular failures in leadership, many involving ethics, have left us searching for new leadership solutions. Consequently, there has been an increase in interest among scholars and practitioners in more values-based leadership approaches and theories where employees are treated as more than just a means to an end (Bass, 1990). Peter Ducker pointed out as far back as 1959 that one of the great challenges management will face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is finding the best approach to lead, inspire, motivate, and continually challenge what he called “knowledge workers” (Drucker, 1999). Furthermore, many scholars, consultants, and commentators propose leaders will have to adjust their leadership style for an increasingly diverse (gender, age, ethnicity, generation) workforce (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010). Generational diversity is a result of the modern workforce being comprised primarily of three cohorts: Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1981), and Generation Y (1982-2002). The similarities and differences between generational cohort characteristics are subject to intense investigation by consumer research organizations (Schewe & Meredith, 2004), nursing (Swearingen & Liberman, 2004), business (Papenhausen, 2006), and academia (Smola & Sutton, 2002). In particular, the leadership needs and wants of the different generational cohorts are of interest as generationally based differences of approaching life hint at

generational differences with respect to leadership needs (Arsenault, 2004; Twenge et al., 2010). Servant leadership as an individual-focused and highly ethical approach has the potential to appeal to followers from all three cohorts. Servant leaders focus on meeting follower needs first and organizational needs are met as an outcome of satisfied followers being more productive, innovative, and loyal (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011). What is needed is a leadership approach that has the potential for leaders to connect with followers at a deeper level and repair the often broken leader-follower relationships as well as develop leader-follower relationships based on respect and loyalty with a high level of trust and fairness.

### **Problem and Purpose**

In the last decade there has been an increase in academic interest in servant leadership resulting in several models and survey instruments (Dinh, Lord, Gardner, Meuser, Liden, Hu, 2014). Two of the most recent and prominent instruments are those by van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) and Liden, et al. (2008). Both of these instruments have strengths and limitations including the degree to which they address all of the servant leadership concepts and the lack of agreement on definition of constructs and the elements they contain (Table A-1). For example, the construct “Interpersonal Acceptance” was removed during the confirmatory factor analysis by van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) and only the “Forgiveness” items remained yet this construct appears to be an important dimension of servant leadership. It is time to go beyond the growing body of quantitative research and existing theory synthesis and find out from followers what it is like to work for a servant leader and use the results from such investigations to help refine the quantitative instruments and leadership practice.

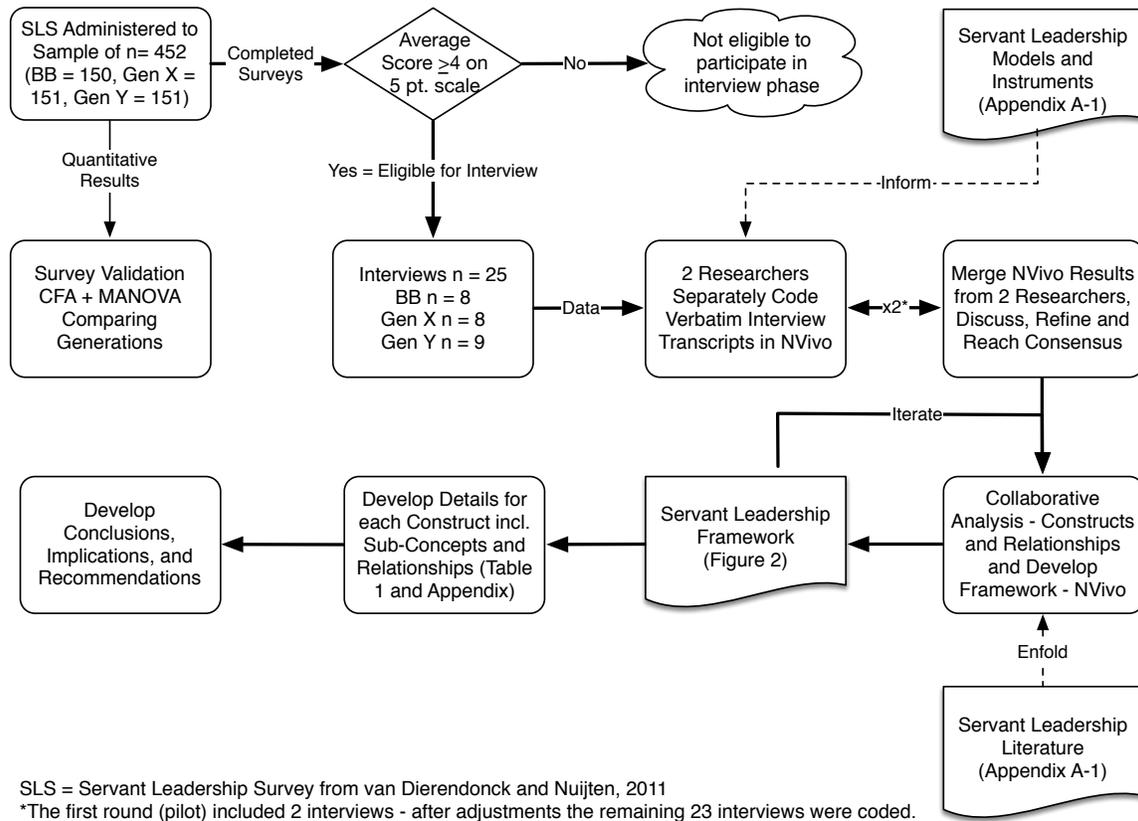
This study addressed three research questions: 1. What are the key servant leadership activities and behaviors and how do followers perceive and respond to those activities and behaviors? 2. What key individual leader characteristics are needed to be an authentic servant leader? 3. What are the differences in the perceptions and responses to servant leaders among three generational cohorts? To answer these questions this study examined the perceptions, opinions, and feelings of followers from three generations regarding their experiences with servant leaders.

### **Methodology**

This study was a quasi-deductive qualitative exploration of servant leadership based on verbatim interview transcripts (Interview Guide Table A-4) from a sample of followers who worked for servant leaders (Figure 1). Eligibility for selection was based on a Servant Leadership Survey (SLS) score of  $\geq 4$  on a 5 point scale (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011). The overall sample size was  $n = 25$  which was more than enough to reach saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). An initial coding structure was developed based on previous models and instruments including van Dierendonck (2011), van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011), and Liden et al., (2008) (Table A-1). Two researchers individually coded two of the 25 interview transcripts using NVivo10 and then the results were merged, discussed, and refined to increase inter-coder agreement. Then the remaining 23 interview transcripts were coded by the same two researchers separately and subsequently merged. The results were discussed and refined until consensus was reached. Several rounds of collaborative analysis were conducted using qualitative data analysis tools and techniques as described in Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) to develop and refine the servant leadership framework (Figure 2). As part of the analysis and refinement process the key constructs, concepts, and relationships were compared to

the servant leadership literature (Eisenhardt, 1989). Eventually, the details for each top-level construct were developed including key concepts and relationships.

**Figure 1 Methodology**



## Results

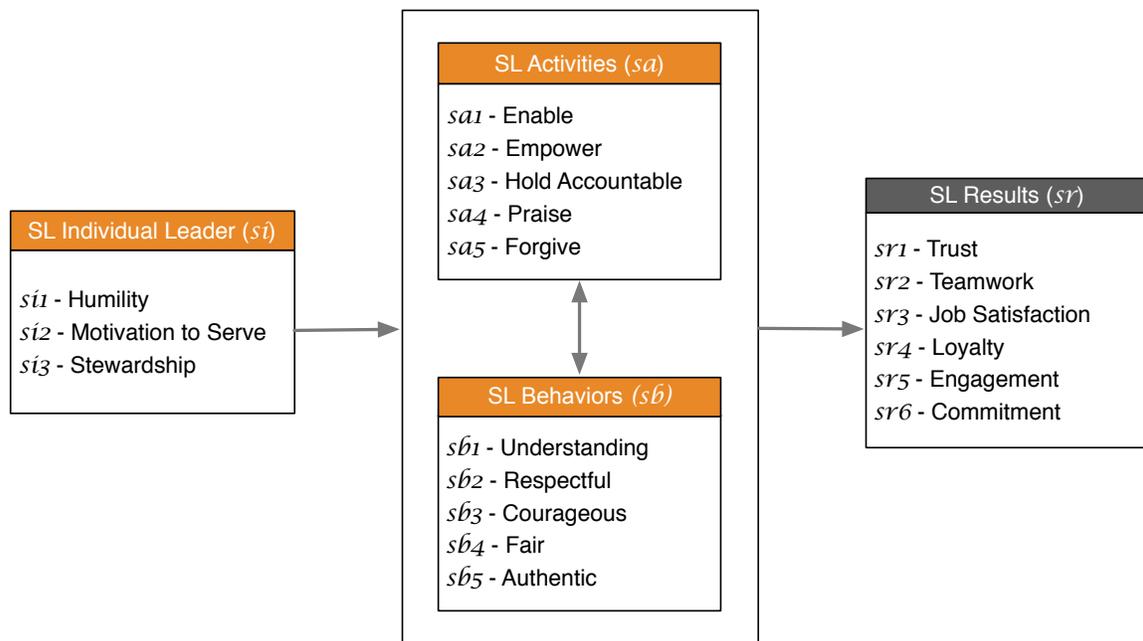
The results of this study are organized into four interrelated groups including the individual leader characteristics, leader activities, leader behaviors, and follower responses and results (Figure 2).

### Servant Leader Individual Characteristics

Interview data analysis identified three key individual leader characteristics (Table A-3.1) necessary to authentically lead in a manner consistent with the servant leadership activities and behaviors. The first two, and possibly most important, characteristics of servant leaders are that they are humble and put others first or are

motivated to serve (van Dierendonck 2011, Liden et al. 2008). The *motivation to serve* has been a central feature of servant leadership since it was proposed by Robert Greenleaf in his 1970 essay and while we can infer from *humility* and *stewardship* that it is a core concept, it did not emerge as a prominent concept from the data in this study (Table A-2). *Humility* is characterized by an egalitarian approach to leadership supported by an awareness of leaders’ fallibility and limitations. *Humility* provided the foundation for a selfless motivation to serve their followers and the stakeholders of the organization. *Stewardship* emerged as the leader having a long term vision as well as care and concern for all stakeholders.

**Figure 2 Servant Leadership Framework**



**Servant Leader Activities**

The study identified five activities that were common to servant leaders: Enable and empower followers, hold them accountable, praise, and when necessary, forgive them (Table A-3.2). It seemed clear in this study that the activity of enabling their followers was a major task in and of itself. Liden et al. (2008) identified this as helping

subordinates grow and succeed and van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) include this with empowerment. Once enabled, servant leaders empowered their followers and did not micromanage their activities. While the leaders created a safe environment for making mistakes, they did hold their followers accountable for goals and objectives, provided feedback and opportunities for development to improve performance. Success was celebrated and leaders ensured that followers received the credit while they stood back (van Dierendonck, 2011). Leaders also forgave followers for mistakes, helping them heal and creating a risk and innovation friendly environment. These five activities (Table A-3.2) were shaped by five cross-cutting behaviors.

### **Servant Leader Behaviors**

Servant leaders in this study were understanding and empathetic, treated their followers with respect, and were courageous, fair, and authentic (Table A-3.3). The two most identified behaviors by the participants who worked for servant leaders were understanding and respectful (Table A-2). These servant leaders were caring, empathetic, and good listeners who truly appreciated their followers. The participants felt understood and appreciated. This was enhanced by leaders who were nice and polite even when providing feedback for improvement. These leaders did not yell or use demeaning language and treated everyone with respect regardless of position or title. In addition, they were courageous and stood up for their followers even when they made mistakes, were fair and treated their followers equally and consistently whether providing growth opportunities, critiquing performance, or celebrating success. Finally, the servant leaders were authentic which was based on their individual characteristics of humility and motivation to serve.

**Table 1 Servant Leader Activities x Cross Cutting Behaviors**

	<i>sa1</i> Enable	<i>sa2</i> Empower	<i>sa3</i> Hold Accountable	<i>sa4</i> Praise	<i>sa5</i> Forgive
<i>sb1</i> Understanding	Empathizes with what it is like to be asked to do a job without training, tools, and resources.	Knows what it is like to be asked to take risks without clear expectations and support.	Empathizes with feelings and human failings. Self aware of own faults and limitations.	Knows what it feels like to do all the work and have the boss take the credit.	Understands how it feels to make a mistake. Understands the need for healing to improve performance.
<i>sb2</i> Respectful	Respects the individual follower’s personal desires as well as the needs of the organization.	Respects their skills and character enough to trust them to do the job.	Provides negative feedback when necessary in private. Never uses demeaning language or words.	Praises in public. Makes it appropriate to the individual’s personality and wishes.	Respects them enough as people to forgive them and does it in a way that is respectful and without conditions.
<i>sb3</i> Courageous	Lobbies for growth opportunities for followers including budget \$\$\$	Willing to take risks. Willing to let go of the desire to control and does not micromanage	Stands up for employees even when they make mistakes. Character to tell them the truth. Doesn’t avoid conflict.	Stands up for employees – ensures they are recognized.	Character and humility to forgive and to admit when they are wrong.
<i>sb4</i> Fair	Provides team members with equal opportunities for growth and development.	Doesn’t empower those that are not capable. Doesn’t ask follower to do anything they would not do themselves.	Equity and consistent expectations, standards, and feedback among followers.	Recognition and rewards are consistent among team members.	Forgives everyone equally – not just those they like – not just their favorites.
<i>sb5</i> Authentic	Truly cares about the growth and development of followers.	Truly empowers vs. saying they are empowered then continuing to micromanage.	Standards and requirements are transparent. Decisions and feedback is transparent.	Genuine appreciation and praise – no false humility.	Truly forgives – as if it never happened. Doesn’t hold grudges.

See Table 1 for more on the specific linkages (intersections) between the five activities and five behaviors. It is in these intersections that servant leadership comes “alive” and creates an experience for the follower.

## **Servant Leader – Follower Results**

Six interrelated follower results emerged from the perspectives of all three generations (Figure 2). This study identified trust as a key outcome of servant leadership. Participants in this study perceived their servant leaders as competent and knowledgeable with a long-term vision for the organization and who were also honest, respectful, and fair. This led to trust among their team members and increased teamwork. While having conceptual skills and knowledge was identified by participants these concepts did not rise to the level of a top level code. In addition, high job satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement were attributed to the leader activity and behavior combinations (Table 1). A few participants identified organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as a result of servant leader activities and behaviors but it did not rise to the level of a top level code. See Table A-3.4 in the appendix for more examples of the relationships between servant leadership and organizational results.

## **Generational Cohorts**

Based on previous research on generations and leadership such as Arsenault, (2004) and Twenge et al. (2010) we expected to see differences in how the members of different generational cohorts perceived and responded to servant leaders. However, no differences between the three generational cohorts were found in either the coding frequency (Table A-2) or the content of the qualitative data (Table A-3.1-4). Experiences with, and responses to, servant leadership was similar across all three generations.

## **Discussion**

Finding a leadership approach that resonates with all three generational cohorts and that has the ability to restore the trust of followers in leaders may be crucial to organizational outcomes and success for organizations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The outcomes

of servant leadership have been shown to: (a) be greater follower commitment and engagement; (b) greater OCB; and (c) improved organizational outcomes through corporate social responsibility and sustainability (van Dierendonck, 2011). The results findings are consistent with previous research including trust (Liden et al. 2008); team confidence and performance (Hu & Liden, 2011), organizational commitment (van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011); and even financial performance which was not identified in this study (Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012). In addition, CEOs who led successful organization transformations resulting in sustained high performance across a comprehensive scorecard demonstrated many servant leadership characteristics including empowerment, accountability, humility, authenticity (integrity), and interpersonal acceptance resulting in high levels of trust (Latham, 2013a, 2013b).

This study found that followers from different generations value servant leaders equally as no substantive differences were identified between generations with regard to their perceptions of, or response to, servant leaders and results in positive organizational outcomes. The servant leadership construct proposed by van Dierendonck and Nuijten (2011) has been expanded to include the following dimensions: Enable, Understanding, Respectful, and Fair. The van Dierendonck (2011) servant leadership conceptual framework was reorganized to bring forth relationships discovered in the interview data. Further efforts could be focused on further refining the framework created and further developing a survey instrument that closes the gaps identified in Table A-1. In conclusion, leadership teams could benefit from embracing servant leadership attributes as an approach for leading members from several generations. Current and future leaders working on empowering their followers by treating them with respect and as equals, listening to and acting upon their input and ideas, treating all members of a team equally,

and being flexible will be seen as supportive of their followers and should see positive organizational outcomes in return.

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## APPENDIX

Table A-1 Top Level Coding Structure Compared with Two Quantitative Instruments

Top Level Coding Structure	van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)	Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson (2008) Servant Leadership Scale (SLSC)
<b>si1 Humility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Egalitarian</li> <li>Aware of their own fallibility</li> <li>Aware of limitations</li> </ul>	<b>Humility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leader accomplishments and talents into perspective (SLS Q 25)</li> <li>Fallibility (SLS Q 25)</li> <li>Understanding leader strengths and weaknesses (SLS Q 18, 30)</li> <li>Know limitations and actively seek follower contribution to overcome weaknesses (SLS Q 10, 29)</li> </ul>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLSC</i>
<b>si2 Motivation to Serve</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selflessness</li> </ul>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLS</i>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLSC</i>
<b>si3 Stewardship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long term vision</li> <li>Concern for the larger community</li> <li>Concern for all stakeholders</li> </ul>	<b>Stewardship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service and larger institution ahead of self-interest (SLS Q 11)</li> <li>Long term vision (SLS Q 19)</li> <li>Emphasizes the societal responsibility of work (SLS Q 26)</li> <li><i>Caretaker*</i></li> <li><i>Role model*</i></li> </ul>	<b>Creating Value for the Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serves others first, even if self-sacrifice is required</li> <li>A conscious, genuine, concern for helping the community (SLSC Q 5, 6, 7, 8)</li> </ul>
<b>sa1 Enable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate expectations (e.g. goals, objectives)</li> <li>Access to information</li> <li>Tools and resources</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Opportunities to grow</li> <li>Coaching/Mentoring</li> <li>Individual career attention</li> </ul>	<i>Captured as part of one constructs under "Empowerment" – Calculated as a single latent variable by the SLS Also captured in part in Standing Back.</i>	<b>Helping subordinates grow and succeed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerned for employee career growth, support, mentoring (SLSC Q 17, 18, 19, 20)</li> </ul>
<b>sa2 Empower</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust/ have confidence in employees</li> <li>Encourage self-directed decision making</li> <li>Make it safe for employees to problem solve on their own</li> <li>Build self-confidence in your employees by valuing input and acting upon input</li> </ul>	<b>Empowerment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging (helps) personal development including offering abundant opportunities to learn new skills (SLS Q 3, 27)</li> <li>Personal power (authority) (SLS Q 12)</li> <li>Self-directed decision making including making my work easier for followers</li> </ul>	<b>Empowering</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging and facilitating others in identifying problems (SLSC Q 16) <i>and when and how to complete work tasks*</i></li> <li>Responsibility to make/handle important decisions, freedom to decide how to handle issues (SLSC Q 13, 14, 15, 16)</li> </ul>

Top Level Coding Structure	van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)	Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson (2008) Servant Leadership Scale (SLSC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't be a micromanager</li> </ul>	<p>(SLS Q 12, 20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information sharing (SLS Q 1)</li> <li>Coaching for innovative performance and encouraging staff to come up with new ideas (SLS Q 4)</li> <li>Recognition, acknowledgement, each person's ability (SLS Q 27)</li> <li>My manager encourages me to use my talents (SLS Q 2)</li> <li><i>Pro-active*</i></li> <li><i>Self-confident*</i></li> <li><i>Each employee is valuable*</i></li> <li><i>Person can still learn*</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>sa3 Hold Accountable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear goals and objectives</li> <li>Review performance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accountability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager holds followers responsible for the work they carry out, performance and execution (SLS Q 6, 14, 22)</li> <li><i>For performance they can control*</i></li> <li><i>Know what is expected</i></li> <li><i>Shows confidence in followers*</i></li> <li><i>Boundaries for goal achievement*</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Captured in part under "Empowerment"</i></p>
<p><b>sa4 Praise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give credit where credit is due</li> <li>Celebrate success/team accomplishments of the followers/team</li> </ul>	<p><b>Standing Back</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders gives priority to the interest of others first (SLS 13, 21)</li> <li>Gives credit (SLS Q 5)</li> <li>Manager appears to enjoy his/her colleagues success more than his or her own (SLS Q 21)</li> <li><i>Provides support (enablement)*</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Putting Subordinates First</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actions and words indicating that follower needs come first (SLSC Q 21, 22, 23, 24)</li> </ul>
<p><b>sa5 Forgive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's OK to fail and make mistakes so that we don't hinder innovation</li> <li>Encourage risk taking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Forgiveness</b></p> <p><i>Originally called "Interpersonal Acceptance" and removed after only the 'Forgiveness' items remained</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criticizing people for the mistakes they have made in their work (SLS 7)</li> <li>Maintaining a hard attitude toward people who have</li> </ul>	<p><i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLSC</i></p>

Top Level Coding Structure	van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)	Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson (2008) Servant Leadership Scale (SLSC)
	offended the manager (SLS Q 15) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finds it difficult to forget things that went wrong in the past (SLS Q 23)</li> </ul>	
<b>sb1 Understanding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Compassion</li> <li>• Appreciate/value employees</li> <li>• Listening</li> <li>• Open minded</li> <li>• Actions are validation</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> </ul>	<b><i>Interpersonal acceptance item was removed from the SLS after CFA when only the 'Forgiveness' items remained.</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understand the feelings of others**</i></li> <li>• <i>Understand where people come from**</i></li> <li>• <i>Empathy, warmth, compassion**</i></li> <li>• <i>Create an atmosphere of trust**</i></li> </ul>	<b>Emotional Healing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing sensitivity to others' personal concerns (SLSC Q 2, 3, 4)</li> <li>• Relationships (SLSC Q 1), make effort to know, understand, support others in the organization, <i>long term relationships with followers</i></li> </ul>
<b>sb2 Respectful</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be Nice</li> <li>• Be Polite</li> <li>• When you must criticize, do it in private</li> <li>• Never berate, demean, or say derogatory things to someone in public OR private</li> <li>• No yelling!</li> <li>• Treat everyone with the same respect regardless of position or title</li> <li>• Collaborate</li> </ul>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLS</i>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLSC</i>
<b>sb3 Courageous</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stands up for people</li> <li>• Fights for the advancement of their people.</li> <li>• Doesn't enjoy but doesn't avoid conflict</li> <li>• Innovative</li> </ul>	<b>Courage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take risks and try new things even when uncertain of support from his/her own managers (SLS Q 8)</li> <li>• Strongly relying on values and convictions that govern one's actions (SLS Q 16)</li> <li>• <i>Challenging conventional models of working behaviors*</i></li> </ul>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLSC</i>
<b>sb4 Fair</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable, treat followers equally – no favorites</li> <li>• Equitable, treat yourself and people the same</li> <li>• Consistent</li> </ul>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the SLS</i>	<i>Not explicitly addressed or captured in the captured in the SLSC</i>

Top Level Coding Structure	van Dierendonck & Nuijten (2011) Servant Leadership Survey (SLS)	Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson (2008) Servant Leadership Scale (SLSC)
<p><b>sb5 Authentic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Honesty</li> <li>• Integrity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Authenticity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing true self consistent with inner thoughts and feelings (SLS Q 28)</li> <li>• Manager is open about his/her limitations and weaknesses (SLS Q 9)</li> <li>• Manager is often touched by things he/she sees happening around him/her (SLS Q 17)</li> <li>• Manager expresses his/her opinion regardless of repercussions (SLS Q 24)</li> <li>• <i>Walk the walk, talk the talk*</i></li> <li>• <i>Professional roles are secondary to the person*</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Behaving Ethically</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interacting openly, ethically, honestly (SLSC Q 25, 26, 27, 28)</li> </ul>

\*Concept included in the paper but not explicitly addressed or captured in the associated instrument.

\*\*Removed from the instrument based on confirmatory factor analysis. New measures need to be developed and tested.

**Table A-2 NVivo Nodes/Codes by Cases Matrix**

Coding Structure	Total	Baby Boomer								Generation X								Generation Y								
		B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9
SI1 Humility	121	3	8	3	5	6	7	3	9	4	3	3	4	1	7	5	7	7	7	5	1	3	3	3	9	5
SI2 Motivation to Serve	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SI3 Stewardship	95	2	8	4	4	5	4	4	6	1	4	7	3	5	1	5	6	1	6	0	2	3	6	4	3	
SA1 Enable	65	4	2	1	1	5	1	2	4	1	3	4	4	1	1	2	4	2	4	1	2	3	1	7	3	
SA2 Empower	72	6	7	1	3	3	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	2	0	2	4	6	5	4	2	2	2	3	4	
SA3 Hold Accountable	106	1	5	2	3	2	3	3	5	11	3	1	3	4	3	2	6	6	5	6	1	5	7	6	6	
SA4 Praise	116	2	7	1	4	5	5	7	7	2	4	5	5	6	5	3	6	3	9	4	7	3	5	4	5	
SA5 Forgive	57	3	2	2	1	4	2	3	3	1	2	1	3	2	3	3	1	6	0	4	2	2	4	1	1	
SB1 Understanding	146	1	5	5	3	5	8	9	11	4	5	9	2	5	6	7	7	8	7	7	3	5	6	8	6	
SB2 Respectful	145	4	9	6	8	7	7	11	7	1	4	6	3	3	6	6	4	6	6	8	5	4	4	7	8	
SB3 Courageous	39	1	6	3	1	0	1	2	0	2	2	4	0	0	0	2	1	2	2	0	3	0	3	2	1	
SB4 Fair	58	1	2	4	3	1	1	2	7	0	2	2	0	3	1	4	2	6	6	0	2	4	2	2	0	
SB5 Authentic	54	1	3	4	1	1	1	3	8	5	2	4	1	2	0	2	1	2	4	0	1	5	1	0	1	
SR1 Trust	71	0	8	3	3	2	2	5	5	3	1	6	1	1	2	3	4	9	3	1	3	1	0	1	0	
SR2 Team effectiveness	40	1	1	1	2	4	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	2	3	4	2	0	0	1	2	2	2	
SR3 Job Satisfaction	71	3	4	2	4	1	4	4	1	1	3	2	6	1	3	5	2	5	3	4	2	3	0	1	2	
SR4 Loyalty	66	0	4	1	2	2	1	3	1	2	1	9	4	2	3	1	1	7	6	1	3	4	1	3	2	
SR5 Engagement	63	1	4	1	4	1	3	6	1	0	0	4	1	2	1	5	2	2	6	3	1	3	1	2	4	

Note: Quantities are the number of times each code was coded in each interview transcript.

Table A-3.1 Individual Servant Leader – Example Data

si1 Humility Concepts	Example Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Egalitarian</li> <li>• Aware of their own fallibility</li> <li>• Aware of limitations</li> </ul>	<p>“No she doesn’t have a huge ego and she would rather brag on her staff than on herself any day. If somebody complements the school as a whole she never takes credit for it because she says it comes back to us, you know, she is definitely humble.”</p> <p>“Have a lot of empathy too, you can’t be heartless. You have to have a genuine interest in people and their well being, people orientation more than task orientation for a boss.”</p> <p>“I’m very fortunate to have a boss that’s open minded, he treats everyone equally, I’ve never really seen even much of a hint of favoritism no belligerent back biting anything like that, if I have a problem I can go to him and he listens I couldn’t say anything negative about that guy.”</p>
si2 Motivation to Serve	Example Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selflessness</li> </ul>	<p>“Any leader that demeans the people under him demeans the whole process.”</p> <p>“I know my boss is not here to be looking out for himself he is all about looking out for his or people that work for him first and foremost. It’s also that they really and genuinely believe in what they are doing and they want to do a good job. So in order to do a good job they have to look out for everyone.”</p> <p>“It is a company that is big on integrity. The CEO, the COO, most of upper management are good Christians. They believe in honesty and integrity and they believe in rewarding their people and appreciating their people and trusting their people. So, it is a very positive culture to be in.”</p>
si3 Stewardship	Example Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term vision</li> <li>• Concern for the larger community</li> <li>• Concern for all stakeholders</li> </ul>	<p>“Our whole hospital, our whole thing is about that. This is where we are going, this is where we are at and this is what we need to do to get there. There are tons of opportunity to show how what we do relates to the community and especially our office where we deal with so many of those communities, Drs offices, outlying hospitals and nearby communities.”</p> <p>“So one lady in our department sent out an email to the rest of the department, we gave her what we collected today, our department is about 15 people, and we raised 580 dollars for her. <i>That</i> is the kind of department we are. That is an average of almost 20.00 a person. And that is not the first time we’ve done something like that. We do things, we find out somebody is getting married we go and buy them a gift we find out somebody is in the hospital or somebody’s spouse is in the hospital we take meals to them. We pass prayer requests around. We are always praying for each other. Encouraging others we send cards, that is the kind of group I work for.”</p>

Table A-3.2 Servant Leader Activities – Example Data

sa1 Enable	Example Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate expectations (e.g. goals, objectives)</li> <li>• Access to information</li> <li>• Tools and resources</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Opportunities to grow</li> <li>• Coaching/Mentoring</li> <li>• Individual career attention</li> </ul>	<p>“Laid-back, respectful of your skills and knowledge, have high expectations, my current boss not self-centered, passes the rewards on to the people doing the work, very good at verbal praise, good at providing the tools, training, knowledge and skill set that is needed, trying to provide that to the best of his abilities, good at trying to position a person in a career path that they want to, very helpful in helping identify a person’s career path, and making sure they can go down that path.”</p> <p>“My boss treats me absolutely fantastically, he gives me all the responsibility that I am willing to take, he gives me credit for the things that I do, he acts as a mentor to me he is completely invested in wanting to see me succeed.”</p>
sa2 Empower	Example Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust/ have confidence in employees</li> <li>• Encourage self-directed decision making</li> <li>• Make it safe for employees to problem solve on their own</li> <li>• Build self-confidence in your employees by valuing input and acting upon input</li> <li>• Don’t be a micromanager</li> </ul>	<p>“But it comes back to respecting your people and their abilities and giving them their tools they need and getting out of their way. Micromanaging doesn’t really help. If they don’t need it there is no benefit to doing it. Some bosses think they really have to do that and that is really wrong.”</p> <p>“I know he’s got my back if I have a problem, if I can’t figure something out he’ll figure it out or he’ll find someone that will and I don’t worry about any undermining my credibility, I feel real good working under him, he is a pleasure to work with”</p> <p>“The whole thing about how you motivate people, people who feel appreciated want to do more for you than people who feel afraid that you will, you know write them up or fire them or whatever. You can make people do what you want them to by maken’ ‘em scared but if you have a willing person because you encourage them and because you trust them and tell them you believe they can do the job, they are going to do a lot more than you want them to do. And the atmosphere is going to be a lot more pleasant.”</p>
sa3 Hold Accountable	Example Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear goals and objectives</li> <li>• Review performance</li> <li>• Provides feedback</li> </ul>	<p>“They had a vision. They communicated it. And they listened to what was going on, and they worked their vision and they made sure the people below them knew what they wanted them to do...”</p> <p>“...there are things that need to be done, they are being checked, She notices if things don’t get done – she follows up...”</p> <p>“Honesty is really important, somebody who is not afraid to give feedback or afraid or too polite but someone who can effectively communicate if something needs to change.”</p>
sa4 Praise	Example Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give credit where credit is due</li> <li>• Celebrate success/team accomplishments of the followers/team</li> </ul>	<p>“She definitely gives credit where credit is due. She is really good about that, but only for good things, if it is an error she takes the fault for it. I have not yet seen her throw somebody under the bus even if it is their legitimate problem. If it is something that happened she’ll take the blame for the department. There was one specific thing I did when I first started, an accident of course not knowing and being too hasty and not asking questions and she could have said Mandy is new and she just doesn’t know but instead she said well my staff, we’re overloaded and things like this happen and she never outed me.</p>

	[Q: How did that make you feel?] It wants to make me work harder for her, because I know it is not just my butt on the line it is both of our butts on the line."
<b>sa5 Forgive</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's OK to fail and make mistakes so that we don't hinder innovation</li> <li>Encourage risk taking</li> </ul>	<p>"...I know if I do things wrong its not like he is going to come down with a hammer, he's gonna say, hey, maybe you should have done this. So there is less fear of taking risk"</p> <p>"He doesn't hold a grudge but he does address it. When somebody does something they weren't supposed to do he addresses that but he doesn't hold a grudge."</p> <p>"I'm not afraid to go to her when I screw up. You know, if I make a mistake, I go to her. I'll tell her, I goofed up, and she usually knows it is not as bad as I think it is but she'll say how bad is it, but I'm not afraid to go to her because I know she'll help me fix it and she'll help me learn to prevent it from happening again before I walk out of that office. So she really helps me to learn a lot too. I consider myself incredibly lucky to have her for a supervisor I've got a really good relationship with my boss"</p>

**Table A-3.3 Servant Leader Behaviors – Example Data**

<b>sb1 Understanding</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caring</li> <li>Empathy</li> <li>Compassion</li> <li>Appreciate/value employees</li> <li>Listening</li> <li>Open minded</li> <li>Actions are validation</li> <li>Flexibility</li> </ul>	<p>"She valued me as an employee and not just as an employee but as a person."</p> <p>"I know my boss is not here to be looking out for himself he is all about looking out for his or people that work for him first and foremost."</p> <p>"I had an issue come up recently with some health issues and she was willing to work outside of the box – normally for getting time off you need at least 24hours notice to ask for it and get it approved. In my situation she was willing to circumvent that and do a much shorter time frame."</p>
<b>sb2 Respectful</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be Nice</li> <li>Be Polite</li> <li>When you must criticize, do it in private</li> <li>Never berate, demean, or say derogatory things to someone in public OR private</li> <li>No yelling!</li> <li>Treat everyone with the same respect regardless of position or title</li> <li>Collaborate</li> </ul>	<p>"As I look back over my career and all the people I've worked with I think the thing that comes back to making the best boss is the word 'respect'."</p> <p>"She would never embarrass you in front of your peers."</p> <p>"She valued my input, my opinions, my suggestions"</p> <p>"I've never seen her not treat anybody with respect."</p> <p>"You can't lead by degradation."</p> <p>"My boss treats very well and he respects me, he trust me a lot and he doesn't micromanage."</p>
<b>sb3 Courageous</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stands up for people</li> <li>Fights for the advancement of their people.</li> <li>Doesn't enjoy but doesn't avoid conflict</li> </ul>	<p>"He is very direct if there is conflict within the group of people he manages he will sit down with everyone and address things, and actually more than him address them he will make sure they address them, with conflict with our department and his higher ups he fights for what he thinks is necessary for our department."</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative</li> </ul>	<p>“He has been amazing to me for a number of years. When he was not my boss he fought for me to be in the position I am in and has fought for me to have a better position continually. Because maybe he sees something in me that he appreciates. He has gone to bat for me for years continually even when he wasn’t my boss,”</p>
<b>sb4 Fair</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equitable, treat followers equally – no favorites</li> <li>Equitable, treat yourself and people the same.</li> <li>Consistent</li> </ul>	<p>“You just can’t go out there, even if you think this fella here is the cats meow you know he is the perfect employee and you play golf together and he is special you can’t let other people see that he is special even though he is special, you must treat everybody equally.”</p> <p>“I think she does her best to be a very fair boss, she also tries to accommodate not just me but all of the employees trying to take things into account like our personal lives will sometimes come up in that way she is fairly flexible with us.”</p> <p>“She is very consistent, things that she’s done for me like birthdays and special events she’s done the same thing for other people.”</p>
<b>sb5 Authentic</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparency</li> <li>Honesty</li> <li>Integrity</li> </ul>	<p>“The manager I have now who is in charge of the whole plant is very honest and caring and helps people to do better, he backs people up to his bosses and he’s like a guy off the street, he knows how people live off the street, as a matter of fact he came up through the ranks himself from the street.”</p> <p>“Trust, loyalty, all comes from that honesty.”</p> <p>“There is nothing wrong with saying ‘I can’t tell you this’ but don’t lie to them.”</p>

**Table A-3.4 Servant Leader Results – Example Data**

<b>sr1 Trust</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision</li> <li>Skilled</li> <li>Knowledgeable</li> <li>Subject matter expert</li> <li>Experienced</li> </ul>	<p>“He knows where he is going and he knows how to direct others how to follow him. He lays out a pattern, he sets aside time to meet each of his direct reports, and he is attentive when he has those meetings.”</p> <p>“She has a thorough knowledge of the job I work for a financial institution and she has been with the company for 30 years and she has worked in every area but one so she has a thorough knowledge of all aspects of our company. That is very helpful.”</p> <p>“I would have the expectation that they knew how to do their job, they are knowledgeable, they continue to build their skills for being a manager they continue to help our team grow, help us all grow together not me as an individual, I’m expecting them to have the knowledge on how to work with all the other individuals and how to make us a better team.”</p>
<b>sr2 Teamwork</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support each other</li> <li>Care for each other</li> <li>Watch out for each other</li> </ul>	<p>“Yeah, it is still work, you still gotta work. Where we work we put in the long hours and we work hard but I do enjoy the people I work with. And if you don’t enjoy the people you work with it is a lot harder.”</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go above and beyond because you care deeply for your teammates' success</li> </ul>	<p>"We are a like a family. My company is a family. If it's a party, everybody parties, if it is work, everybody works, if it is an emergency everybody works on that emergency. So it's just a complete family. If somebody has a problem we try to help 'em, even if it is outside of the workforce. Say someone has an alcohol problem, we back people up, we know where to send them to, we encourage them, we will send them to the right people even if someone has a problem with children we know the right people or the right group to send them for help or get educated. Our company is very good at that, at helping its employees, not just with a paycheck but the overall environment of living with a family."</p>
<b>sr3 Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work is part of life</li> <li>Fulfilled</li> <li>Work provides meaning</li> <li>Self-actualization</li> </ul>	<p>"I do not hate to go to work anymore. Work doesn't feel like work now. I go to work and I'm happy to go to work. I don't feel stressed when I go to work."</p> <p>"Overall it is just a great place to work. He is a part of that culture. So, he is a good boss and I enjoy working for him. Obviously that adds to my job satisfaction."</p> <p>"The older lady could be retired but she chooses to work because she enjoys her work. Like I said we have a great group and she enjoys being part of the group. Some of the ladies refer to her as Grandma. It is a really good culture. She's healthy. I hope I'm in as good a shape as she is."</p>
<b>sr4 Loyalty</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low turn-over intent</li> </ul>	<p>"But now that I'm here, I would not risk, it would take a lot for me to risk leaving this employer I have a great relationship with everybody there except for one person and I would not risk that to go somewhere else where I might end up not liking my boss or my boss not liking me. It does mean a lot to me that I have a good relationship with my supervisor. I've never experienced a workplace like this before and I don't think there is much worth risking it. They would probably have to double my salary or something to make me risk it."</p>
<b>sr5 Engagement</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go above and beyond</li> <li>When at work really putting your heart into it</li> <li>Not doing just the bare bones minimum</li> </ul>	<p>"... having him, everybody is relaxed, everybody knows he's got their backs, and I think they work harder because of him, I think they do just out of respect, he doesn't have to ask for extra effort they are just willing to give it, that is kinda where I am. It definitely inspires me to be a better person. I go out of my way to do extra things that aren't required but work very well for my career. I'm doing a mentoring program that I applied for that I would not have if I didn't feel that I felt valued I probably wouldn't really care to hone my skills, so I do do extra stuff because I really do feel valued it makes me more inclined to do something extraordinary."</p>
<b>sr6 Commitment</b>	<b>Example Data</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affective commitment. Going to work because you believe in the whole ball of wax.</li> </ul>	<p>"So when I ended up at this next job, I'm lovin' it. People complain about this company I say you haven't been where I've been and you work for a great company."</p> <p>"... so when you treat people good even when the job isn't that glamorous, when you treat people good they are happy, they wanna work for you and people will follow you to the end of the earth if you treat them right."</p>

**Table A-4, Interview Guide**

Interview Questions	Objectives and Remarks
1. How long have you been with your current company? How long have you been working as an adult? How long have you been working for your current boss?	Ice breaker, develop context of leadership remarks to length of exposure to the leader
2. Imagine you are at work and are thinking about your boss. Can you describe your boss? What kind of person is he or she? Describe how he or she treats you? To help you further describe your boss, think of a 'bad' boss in your past, how is your current boss different?	Pilot study showed participants struggling to explain their boss beyond 'nice'. Giving participants scenarios to describe helped them articulate what it was that was 'nice'.
3. Imagine a recent situation when you and your boss interacted. How would you describe what you really appreciate about your boss' behaviors	What are the outcomes of servant leadership?
4. How would you describe the leadership behavior you believe is most important in a person you work for? Why is it important to you? What impact has this behavior had on your work? If you could list the top 5 behaviors or attributes of a 'good' boss?	Understand if there are any differences between observed leader behavior and attributes and desired leader behavior and attributes. Have the participants contemplate what is most important to them.
5. How would you describe what you find frustrating about your boss?	Nobody is perfect – what could potential weaknesses be that come with strong servant leaders.
6. How satisfied are you working for your boss?	Evaluate any engagement, commitment, and job satisfaction aspects of working for a servant leader
7. How would you describe your feelings about wanting to stay with your company or leave your company as a result of working for your boss?	Evaluate turn-over intent feelings. Pilot showed turn-over intent contemplations were very complex.