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Outsiders’ Perceptions of an Organization’s Leadership
Through Exposure to its Nonverbal Ecology

By
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Senior Project
Jepson School of Leadership Studies
University of Richmond
Richmond, Virginia
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INTRODUCTION

Organizations are finding themselves under ever-increasing scrutiny by leadership scholars and practitioners. They offer an excellent opportunity to observe and study the many factors that are part of the leadership equation. One leadership aspect that has lately been of special interest is the concept of culture. An organization's culture is a result of many different factors, including norms, values, leadership style, and climate to name a few. Most research to this point has focused on identifying and developing "appropriate" cultures to facilitate organizational effectiveness.

Not many people have thought about whether an organization's ecology can facilitate in the understanding of the organization's leadership style. It is said that making a good first impression with others is important, and making the right impressions about one's organization is no less important. Even though individuals' impressions may change after further exposure to organizational members and activities, their first impressions will influence the way they initially interact with an organization. The purpose of this study is to attempt to recognize whether the nonverbal ecology found in an organization's lobby or reception area conveys an accurate perception of the organization's leadership style. Lobbies and reception areas are interesting parts of organizations to study since they are where individuals are going to first encounter the physical attributes of the organization and subsequently where they are going to begin forming impressions about it.

I use the phrase nonverbal ecology due to the ambiguity and subsequent overuse of the concept of culture. For the purpose of this paper, I shall define nonverbal ecology
as organizational symbols and visual displays, which represent an intentional or unintentional association with some wider, usually more cryptic or connotative, meaning or interpretation (Dandridge, 1980; Furnham & Gunter, 1993; Hatch, 1993). Within organizations, symbols include "the objects that can be seen and noticed and that describe various aspects of the culture" (Hughes, 1993, 332). Examples would include furniture arrangements, pictures or artwork, presence of magazines or organizational material, plants, and clothing. Visual displays are constructed by design aspects such as the type and intensity of lighting, the use of colors, or the amount of sunlight allowed in the room. Lighting and colors set the mood within specific areas by focusing people's attention on the surroundings or regulating the possibilities for an area's use.

Examination of these attributes and activities can offer an outsider information about what an organization considers important in its relationship with both internal and external constituents. The ecology communicates different messages to the various constituents involved. As Becker and Steele (1995) state, "the members have a clear sense of the organization's mission, values, style, and culture. People outside the system see a clear image of what it does and what it stands for. In terms of membership, it is clear who is in and who is not" (22). The work setting is a powerful medium for expressing identity, and should communicate that identity to others. As Becker (1981) proposes, "if we spend as much effort trying to understand how our physical surroundings are created, and how they influence social relations, as we have with similar aspects of norms, we might begin to develop a deeper understanding of the role of physical settings in social and organizational life" (14).
The present study's importance rests on its focus to discover whether individuals accurately perceive the leadership style of an organization through exposure to its nonverbal ecology, in this case the lobby/reception area. Leadership style is reflected in "the social dimensions of organizations, such as patterns of communication (frequency and occurrence of various kinds of inter- and intradepartmental, formal and informal, interactions), perceptions of participation in decision making, and job autonomy" (Wineman, 1986, xv). More simply stated, leadership style reflects the manner in which work is completed throughout the organization due to the relationships that exist between leaders and followers.

The leadership style of organizational members is going to be influenced by either one or a combination of groups. The first group consists of the founders of the organization. When an organization is first created, the founders have considerable control over developing the type of leadership that will be utilized. Organizations are created by "entrepreneurs who have a vision of how the concerted effort of the right group of people can create a new good or service in the marketplace" (Schein, 1992, 212). These entrepreneurs will select colleagues and personnel who share in their thinking. This is evident in the interviewing process that anyone must go through before securing a job. Organizations look for candidates who share their ideas about the business and have the same work ethic. The longevity of that original leadership style is dependent on how well the organization defines and responds to external challenges and internal cohesion problems.

If the organization begins to operate poorly, a second influential group will adapt or change the old leadership style. This second group consists of upper level executives
and managers. These leaders communicate their message through "conscious, deliberate actions; others are unconscious and may even be unintended" (Schein, 1992, 229). The organizational ecology, as previously defined, is one way to better understand the culture of an organization. The factors involved are highly visible and as an old adage states, "a picture is worth a thousand words." The dilemma in studying the nonverbal ecology is deciphering exactly which "words" the organization's ecology is trying to communicate to the observer.

To follow this line of thinking, this research study is founded upon two assumptions. The first assumption is that people notice the environment around them and subsequently make judgements about what they observe. This is to say that when visitors or clients enter a building, they take notice of their surroundings and make inferences from those observations. "Although no research specifically addresses the meanings connoted by various organizational symbols, some studies have provided indirect support upon which inferences about the meanings of symbols can be made" (Ornstein, 1986, 208). According to Becker and Steele (1995), "the way in which the office environment is planned, designed, and managed communicates . . . a wide range of messages" (28). These messages should accurately portray the leader's values about relationships, important organizational goals, and expectations about what should and should not happen within the organization. "In the performing art of leadership, symbols and artifacts are a leader's props . . . they're a means of keeping the vision and values present even when the leader is absent" (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, 229). Therefore, the ecology of an organization should be filled with symbols and artifacts that offer observers a view into the intentions of the organization's leadership.
Secondly, it is assumed that the leaders and members of an organization have some influence over the design of the organizational environment. The alternative would be that the architect or facility designer makes assumptions about how the environment will be utilized and will attempt to produce the appropriate layout. This is likely not the case in most firms, since an organization's ecology can be considered a powerful medium for expressing its identity (Becker and Steele, 1995). Furthermore, Wren (1995) states that, "leaders must be able to take the inputs they receive from linking with others and the environment and convert them into an agenda or vision for the future. In many cases, these visions are creative in nature; that is, they combine previously existing needs, wants and demands into new images or realities" (429). The significance of this statement is that leaders need to construct the nonverbal cues of the organization to effectively communicate its leadership style. If the environment is not being explicitly managed, it may reflect assumptions of architects, the planning and facilities managers, or other subgroups within the organization. Their assumptions may not be consistent with the leader's goals. The leaders may desire one thing, yet members may receive different impressions about what is required and expected of them. As a result of this variance, visitors and clients may form wrong impressions about the organization they are encountering, and members will be left uncertain about how to conduct themselves while working.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Every time an individual enters a new environment, he or she will form impressions based on the surroundings. "Human beings, perhaps more than other animals, have a great propensity toward, dependency on, and responsiveness to symbols and symbolizing" (Jones, 1996, 2). Therefore, it is odd to discover that there have been few attempts to understand the correlation between the organizational ecology and how it may create impressions about the leadership of organizations. Most extant research on organizational ecology has focused on how the environment impacts employee satisfaction and productivity. It has only been within the last decade and a half that attention has focused on the impressions of organizations that people develop from their observations of it's ecology (Bayne, 1996; Becker, 1981; Hatch, 1993). This new viewpoint accounts for the fact that work in organizations is always carried out in a physical setting, and that people develop relationships through their interactions within those physical settings.

This review of literature starts with discussing studies that have explored organizational ecology and its influence on individuals' perceptions about those organizations. Additionally, the review includes research completed on the more specific impressions that individuals tend to develop about an organization's ecology after being exposed to it. Further literature has been compiled about corporate ecology and image. This research is mostly anecdotal in nature and consists of expert opinion. Finally, the review ends with an overview of leadership theory and the variations that can occur with leadership style in organizations.
Organizational Perception

The meaning and perception that an individual gains from an experience is established in retrospect, or through interpretation (Hatch, 1993). The majority of research in this area has been based on a view called the "ecological perceptions approach," which finds that perceptions of an organization vary as a function of the types of environment displayed. This view suggests that "certain physical objects and events, through the nature of their physical being, afford people an opportunity to form impressions that contribute to their perceptions of psychological climate" (Ornstein, 1986, 210). Studies by Campbell (1979), Ornstein (1986), and Bayne (1996), have attempted to understand the significance of organizational ecology by having individuals analyze pictures or drawings of organizational environments so as to assess their impressions about the settings in each instance. The studies by Campbell and Ornstein are particularly of interest because they venture to focus more on the impact of specific types of objects on the impressions that people form due to exposure to them.

Campbell's (1979) study was a simulation that had 250 undergraduate students rate photographic slides of a faculty office which varied in furniture arrangement, the presence of living things and aesthetic objects, and neatness. The scale measured six environmental variables: comfort of visitor, invitingness of office, how welcome visitor feels, similarity of professor-visitor interests, how much professor welcomes visitors, and whether the professor is busy and rushed. Even though this study is not directly related to the purpose of this paper, the results yielded some relevant findings. The presence of particular items was found to evoke certain feelings or emotions about the room and its
occupant. Plants were shown to increase feelings of pleasurability, the presence of aesthetic items such as pictures made individuals more comfortable, and neatness tended to elicit responses about whether the occupant was free of or engaged in work (Campbell 1979). This study demonstrates that certain items found within organizational environments elicit specific responses from individuals, which they then use to develop perceptions about the individual. It should be safe to assume that an organization's ecology, as opposed to an individual's own office, will elicit responses from individuals, which they will use to develop perceptions about the organization.

Ornstein's (1986) study also involved the presentation to individuals of drawings of organizational environments, this time focusing on the reception area. Subjects completed semantic differential scales on which they evaluated each of the symbols included in the drawing with respect to the meanings connoted by those symbols. She explored the influence of three sets of symbols, which were referred to as 1) authority symbols (flags, seals, and photographs of leaders; 2) empathic symbols (plants, artwork, and the presence of magazines); and 3) reward symbols (pins, badges, certificates, and plaques) on individuals' perceptions. The reasons for defining symbols as authority and reward are rather explicit. The reasoning behind defining plants and artwork as empathic symbols was that Campbell (1979) found that these aspects were shown to be a familiar part of the observer's own life, and therefore helped them relate to the new environment they were in. Results indicated that 1) authority symbols imply meanings of legitimacy, authority, and control; 2) empathic symbols imply meanings of warmth and comfort; and 3) reward symbols imply meanings of recognition and what the organization desires from its members (Ornstein 1986).
Finally, Bayne's (1996) work on perceived organizational image, based on viewing reception and lobby areas, is especially significant in the move towards further understanding relationships between organizational ecology and overall perceptions of organizations. Her study included a pilot test that prompted students for open-ended answers regarding six pictures that they viewed of reception or lobby areas. The first question asked them to describe the reception/lobby area that was represented in the slide. The second question asked them to describe the image or culture of the company represented in the slide. The most common given descriptors of the reception/lobby areas were recorded along with respondents' impressions about organizational identity.

The most frequently given answers were categorized and used to create bipolar descriptors for semantic differential questionnaires. The overall results showed a significant correlation between the first impression of the reception/lobby area and impressions about the overall organizational image. Correlations showed associations between comfortable and casual areas and perceptions of a friendly and employee-oriented organization, while dreary and uncomfortable areas were associated with perceptions of a strict and conservative organization (Bayne 1996).

The results show that the environment is a factor in communicating what an organization stands for and expects from people when they are in the building. Bayne (1996) states, "the most important implication of this study is that the perception of the corporate culture/image can be communicated through the reception/lobby areas" (63). In sum, as a group, these studies provide support for pursuing research exploring the effects of organizational ecology on individuals' perceptions about organizational leadership, since leadership is a component of organizational culture. They demonstrate that the
organizational ecology indeed does communicate messages to observers and that those messages are usually translated into impressions about the organization as a whole.

These studies, however, do possess limitations that should be identified before accepting their conclusions. The main critique is that the results of these studies are never verified with actual organizational members specifically. The responses were the perceptions and impressions that individuals had of offices and lobby areas and may not reflect the "actual" culture of an organization. The current study seeks to supplement the information provided by these studies by attempting to understand whether an "outsider's" perceptions of an organizations are in fact associated with perceptions of actual organizational members.

Organizational Ecology/Image

There has been a great deal of interest in organizational climate and its impact on the work setting. Hence, many authors have taken up the subject in books about symbolism, corporate assessment, workplace design, corporate culture, and other related topics. The focus of these anecdotal works has mostly been on the environment's impact on employee effectiveness and productivity. Yet, the authors do offer a great deal of insight into the significance of creating the "appropriate" environment for an organization because its ecology is something that touches everyone who enters its walls.

The major work has been written by Edgar Schein, who is considered to be one of the foremost experts in the field of organizational psychology. His book, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (1992), provides a great deal of information about the origination of organizational culture, what aspects of the environment are useful in understanding the
organization, and how to decipher the information once it is encountered. Schein (1992) attempts to "present an academically sound, balanced set of arguments based on empirical research and clinical experience" (xiv). The most important area that Schein provides insight into is how to decipher and report about the culture as an outsider. Since the present study involves observing organizations without actual membership in them, the methodology he used for studying culture, joint data-gathering, is adaptable to this situation. The assumption behind this method is that "only a joint effort between an insider and an outsider can decipher the essential assumptions and their patterns of interrelationships . . . But the final determination of the cultural 'essence' must be a joint effort, for two basic reasons: to avoid the subjectivity bias and to overcome the insider's lack of awareness" (Schein, 1992, 169). The interaction with organizational members in this study did not follow the depth of Schein's interview process due to limited time and organizational reluctance to allow members to participate in interviews. However, participation was accomplished by having organizational members complete questionnaires, (see methodology section).

Franklin Becker and Fritz Steele wrote a book entitled Workplace by Design (1995), that focuses on the individual and organizational consequences of different approaches to office space planning and design. Even though the goal of the authors is to increase organizational effectiveness, they write in great length about organizational ecology and its impact on the individuals within those organizations. A main theme of the book is that "organizational leaders need to understand facility issues in business terms and in terms of their impact on the social system of the organization" (xi). The belief is that employees are constantly reading the environment for cues about
management's real intentions. The ecology is read for messages about intentions, values, directions, and concerns. They propose that these messages are compared to more explicit written statements such as those in annual reports and executive memos. If discrepancies are found, the organization's design is believed before its rhetoric as a more genuine indicator of what leaders really believe and desire (Becker & Steele, 1995, 40).

The authors did not offer any primary research for this claim, yet they do present many examples of how leaders say one thing while the environmental messages convey another. This belief supports the need to be conscious about the design of an organization's ecology so that the leadership ideology of the organization will be "properly" communicated to all stakeholders.

Becker and Steele have also written books independently. They are *Workspace: Creating Environments in Organizations* (1981) and *Making and Managing High-Quality Workplaces* (1986) respectively. These sources were the precursors to their collaborative efforts on the 1995 endeavor described previously. Both authors identify aspects of organizational environments that convey messages to the observer. Steele (1986) believes that the proper use of graphics, decorations, lighting, and plants is a means to achieve more conscious environmental management. "The 'look' of a system may be rigged to be what its top leaders think it *should* look like, rather than reflecting what it actually is" (Steele, 1986, 84). He goes on to say that leaders need to be self-analytical at the start of the design process and should identify an overall theme that describes the organization. Leaders who fail to do this, but instead try to design the environment for how they think it should look, tend to create a surface image that is inconsistent with the many more subtle indicators of organizational identity (Steele, 1986). Therefore, the
principal design choices should be considered only as recommendations made by the leadership of the organization until compared with the more detailed descriptions given by the organization's members. If these two views conflict with each other, the symbols and other environmental cues need to be changed to properly convey the leadership style.

Becker's (1981) book describes many of the same aspects as Steele's about organizational environments. He states the "physical elements help us form a selected visual image of the setting that stands for the whole" (24). When speaking of the physical context of organizations, Becker writes that we often pay more attention to what is implicit, or unsaid, than to more formal channels. Individuals try to understand the motivations and intentions of those who designed the physical environment, as well as the ways in which it affects their behavior, influences their emotional reactions, and its symbolic meaning within its particular context (Becker, 1981, 99). A large number of behaviors and attitudes that are of major concern to organizations may be significantly influenced by aspects of the physical setting. Some of these include: expectations about how one should work, group cohesion, leadership, decision making and supervisory patterns (Becker 1981).

In reviewing the literature, ideas expressed by Dandridge (1980), Wineman (1986), Hatch (1993), and Furnham and Gunter (1993) were also helpful in understanding the character and effects of organizational ecology. Each has looked at "the impact of physical setting features on the dynamic events and behaviors taking place in an organization" (Wineman, 1986, 52). Their work was the basis for the development of the definition of organizational ecology used in this study. In addition, the work of Furnham and Gunter (1993) was especially useful in that it discussed Roger Harrison's
organizational ideology questionnaire as a means to provide "orientations on a number of aspects of organizational structure and functioning and on some attitudes and beliefs about human nature" (97). Questions from this questionnaire were subsequently adapted for the purpose of this study and Harrison's work will be examined further in the following review of leadership theory and research.

Leadership Ideology in Organizations

An organization's ideology affects the behavior of its people, its ability to effectively meet their needs and demands, and the way it copes with the external environment. George Harrison (1972) postulates that there are four separate organizational climates that allow organizations to fulfill those three roles. He believes that these climates portray the type of leadership that an organization possesses, which are categorized into four leadership ideologies. These four leadership ideologies perform six functions: 1) "specifies the goals and values toward which the organization should be directed and by which its successes and worth should be measured," 2) "prescribes the appropriate relationships between individuals and the organization (i.e., the "social contract" that legislates what the organization should be able to expect from its people, and vice versa)," 3) "indicates how behavior should be controlled in the organization and what kinds of control are legitimate and illegitimate," 4) "depicts which qualities and characteristics of organization members should be valued or vilified, as well as how these should be rewarded or punished," 5) "shows members how they should treat one another-competitively or collaboratively, honestly or dishonestly, closely or distantly," and 6) "establishes appropriate methods of dealing with the external environment-aggressive
exploitation, responsible negotiation, proactive exploration" (Harrison, 1972, 120). The failure to understand an organization's ideology may eventually cause conflict between organizations as well as within them.

Harrison's assumption about the leadership ideologies of organizations is used for this study because it deals with issues that are important aspects of leadership, including patterns of communication, degree of job autonomy, and participation in decision making. The four orientations that Harrison introduces are; power, role, task, and person. The power-orientated ideology could also be called a willful autocracy and may even be compared to a dictatorship. These organizations have a reliance on rewards and punishment, with control being associated with position. "Those who are powerful strive to maintain absolute control over subordinates" (Harrison, 1972, 121). In this sense, decisions are made at the top so the information must be transferred through many people, which makes its transference very slow. Members of these organizations will find that job autonomy is limited due to the strict control that those in authority desire to maintain over subordinates (Harrison, 1972).

The second leadership style is the role-oriented ideology. Organizations with this framework aspire to be as rational and orderly as possible. There is a preoccupation with legality, legitimacy, and responsibility. This preoccupation creates a strong emphasis on hierarchy and status, which is moderated by a commitment to legitimacy and legality. This type of orientation is much like a constitutional monarchy (Harrison, 1972). These organizations value the ideal of security, so they perpetuate rather rigid roles and reporting relationships. Control within these organizations is equated with position instead of competence or knowledge. Larger, more complex organizations will tend to
utilize this ideology since it allows for a high degree of internal cohesion with little active intervention from the top of the hierarchy.

The third leadership style is called the task-oriented ideology. Within this environment, the achievement of a superordinate goal is the highest value. Harrison (1972) states that, "the important thing is that the organization's structure, functions, and activities are all evaluated in terms of their contribution to the superordinate goal" (122). Authority is legitimate only if it is based on appropriate knowledge and competence, and not on power or position. These organizations tend to have decentralized control, which opens up communication channels and reduces the system of control over individuals. In essence, the organization is an egalitarian entity that offers a high degree of autonomy and participation in decision making. The reasoning behind this ideology is that human capital is important, and the organization expresses that importance to its members.

The final leadership style that Harrison develops is the person-oriented ideology. "Unlike the other three types, the person-oriented organization exists primarily to serve the needs of its members" (Harrison, 1972, 123). Authority may be assigned based on competence and knowledge, but this practice is limited. Instead, members are encouraged to influence each other through example, helpfulness, and caring. The roles that members have are determined based on personal preference and need for learning growth. This structure is created to fit the work situation of the independent, self-directed individual (Harrison, 1972). The conception behind this leadership style is that members desire interesting work and self expression and can be trusted to work independently with their own ideas.
Summary

The review of literature provided evidence that the physical ecology of an organization does influence individuals' perceptions about that organization. The symbols or symbolization within an organization's ecology are utilized by individuals to interpret what is expected of them and what type of culture they can expect to find. The ecology is transmitting these messages about the organization's culture, but they may end up being inconsistent with the actual leadership ideology of the organization. If this is so, the leaders of the organization need to recognize this contradiction so that members and visitors alike will have an accurate image of the organization. A study based on whether perceptions of observers, through exposure to an organization's ecology, are congruent with the leadership style perceived by organizational members. This will allow leaders and followers to further understand the association that exists between the environmental ecology that surrounds them and the relationships that they have with one another within that ecology.
METHODOLOGY

In order to understand whether leadership style can be perceived from the organizational ecology, several methods of study were utilized. First, it was necessary to find a sample of organizations to study. I wanted to obtain some variability in the organizational cultures to be studied in order to show the different influences that variances in ecology will have on individuals. Therefore, after some difficulty, three organizations were selected based on the availability of employees to participate in the study and the relationship with a contact who acted as a liaison to this researcher. The following paragraphs contain a brief summary about each organization. The information was obtained from organizational literature as well as newspaper articles.

Organization A

This organization was the admissions office of an educational institution in Richmond, Virginia, which was established in 1830. The purpose of the organization is similar to that of the human resources department in a business, selection and recruitment more particularly. It is composed of two main groups, the admissions officers and the administrative staff. Students who visit the school must first go through the admissions office. Information sessions are held in the office, which cover what the institution has to offer potential students in an attempt to persuade them that this particular institution is better than others. Potential students fill out applications which are then submitted to the office. Members of the admissions committee act as "readers" of the applications and
will make decisions to accept, reject, or wait list applicants based on their qualifications and the guidelines of the institution.

Organization B

The second organization was a consulting firm, founded in 1981, which specializes in management consulting, business needs analysis, and custom development of computer software. In 1988 it was named one of the 500 fastest growing privately held companies in the United States by INC Magazine. It operates on a regional level, with offices in Richmond, Virginia and Raleigh, North Carolina. Consultants from this organization spend most of their time at client sites, interacting with individuals or working with computer programs. This organization requires that its members have high technical aptitude, good interpersonal skills, good problem solving capabilities, professionalism, and a willingness to accept new challenges. The organization highly values the human capital that it possesses and the partnerships it has with its clients.

Organization C

The third organization that participated in this study was a distributor of branded medical/surgical supplies, which was founded in 1882. This particular site, located in Richmond, Virginia, acts as the corporate headquarters of the organization. Therefore, it is occupied by the organization's many upper level executives and their support staff. With visitors and employees required to wear identification tags, and having touch-key pads on the doors into the main building, security is a major issue for the organization. This is where decisions are made that will impact the organization on a national level.
The corporate headquarters acts primarily as the transmitter of information to its
distribution centers throughout the country.

Michael Jones' *Studying Organizational Symbolism* (1996) offers insight into how
to understand an organization's culture. Jones looks specifically at how to go about
locating, examining, and interpreting the symbolism found across organizations. The
literature suggests that the use of qualitative methods to gain an insider's view of an
organization appears better suited than using quantitative methods. These methods
include observation, participant observation, and in depth interviews. "Although
techniques might need modification, the overall methods of qualitative research fit well
with the current focus on the expressive, sensuous, aesthetic, emotional, stylistic, and
performative aspects of organizations" (Jones, 1996, 16).

Jones stresses the importance of observation as a cornerstone of triangulation,
which combines several techniques of data gathering to corroborate information. The
techniques used to triangulate the information for this study were observing the
lobby/reception area, asking organizational members to complete a questionnaire about
the existing leadership ideology of the organization, and soliciting outsiders' perceptions
about the lobby/reception area of the organizations. The problem with presenting
questionnaires to individuals is that it sensitizes or draws their attention to particular issue
that they may not ordinarily be cognizant of. Therefore, the questions must be discreet
and not reveal the purpose of the study.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) explicitly identified that "a company's investment in
bricks and mortar-its building-inevitably says something about its culture" (129).
Additionally, "a company that is proud of itself and its culture will reflect this pride
through its environment" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, 130). The environment becomes a statement about the organization. In regards to the lobby or reception area, it is believed that is where the majority of individuals are first exposed to the organization. They go on to say that one should ask, "is it formal or informal? Relaxed or busy? Elegant or nondescript? Whatever the case, you must assume it reflects the values of the culture" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, 131). Answers to these questions were determined through various methods of study, which were used to determine whether perceptions matched the "actual" organizational leadership styles.

Understanding Perceptions

The first, and easiest, method of gathering data was to observe and record the ecology of the lobby or reception area. A checklist to guide observation was developed, see Appendix A, in order to record aspects of the organizational ecology, as defined for this study, present in the lobby/reception area. There were two main observations made about each factor on the list. The first observation was simply the presence or absence of the item. The second observation was to record the details of each item. For example, if photographs were evident, were they of past leaders or other members of the organization; if magazines were displayed, were they about the organization's industry or merely recreational reading; and if furniture was located in the lobby, was it comfortable and fancy or just functional. It was sufficient to observe a target organization once in order to discover the symbols and visual displays that were present.

Additionally, three to four pictures of the lobby or reception area were taken for each organization, see Appendices B, C and D. The number of pictures taken was based
on the size of the area and how many pictures it would take to give observers an idea of what it would be like to be there. These pictures were used in the second step of the study, and allowed me to look back at the areas without having to return to the organization.

As noted above, observation was used to identify components of the organizational ecology and determine their attributes in the environment. The second step was to determine which of these components individuals notice, and to determine the perceptions that they form due to exposure to them. To complete this task, the pictures taken of each organization's lobby/reception area were shown to undergraduate students at the University of Richmond. Students were selected randomly by taking every tenth student from the student directory, for a total of thirty students. The first ten students were assigned to organization A, the next ten to organization B, and the final ten to organization C. Each student was given five minutes to look at the pictures of his/her designated organization's lobby. The pictures were then removed and the student was asked to complete an adapted version of Susan Bayne's semantic differential questionnaire (see Appendix E). Answers for each pair ranged from 1, agreeing most with the descriptor on the left, and 10, agreeing most with the descriptor on the right. Each answer was recorded and the mean, median, and standard deviation for each pair of adjectives was calculated. For example, the ten responses to the first pair of adjectives (Formal v. Not Formal) about Organization A were recorded together. The mean was calculated to obtain a general sense of students' perceptions about the organization's leadership.
Students were also given a list of additional questions to answer (Appendix F) which included; what did you notice about the lobby/reception area?; why did these factors catch your attention?; and what image does the lobby area communicate about the leadership of the organization? These questions provided additional information about the specific aspects that the participants noticed in regards to the nonverbal ecology and why. The responses to the first question were analyzed and the most frequent answers were recorded; for a response to be considered noteworthy fifty percent or more of the respondents needed to identify it as a component of the ecology. The responses to the second question were content analyzed in order to see why the components of the ecology were noticed. Finally, the answers to the third question were also content analyzed in terms of the bi-polar descriptors from the first questionnaire. Answers usually contained more than one view about the type of leadership in the organization. For example, students conveyed perceptions of a structured organization as well as one which was employee-oriented. This acted to confirm the results of the bi-polar questionnaire, so as to understand the participants' perceptions of the organization's leadership.

The results of these methods allowed conclusions to be drawn about what individuals noticed with regard to the organization's ecology, as well as the types of perceptions of the organization's leadership that they formed from being exposed to it. By using pictures of the organization, the problem of repeated exposure was avoided, both to the lobby/reception area and to the leadership style of the organization itself. By getting an idea of what students remembered about the lobby/reception area it was possible to determine if that their answers were an "accurate" description of the
employees from each organization was decided upon. After all of the answers from the leadership ideology questionnaire were returned, the descriptions designated for each ideology were added together to see which orientation had the lowest total. By combining the items from the questionnaire that represented a single leadership ideology, scores could range from 6, meaning that ideology best represented the leadership of the organization, to 24, which meant that particular ideology was not likely used in the organization. The orientation with the lowest total represented the leadership style that best described the one found within the organization. The mean score was calculated from all of the answers for each organization in order to identify the ideology most commonly identified as the organization's leadership style. Harrison (1972) proposes that the four leadership ideologies are not found in their pure form in any organization, rather there is a mixture of two or more of the orientations. Although, he does state that "most organizations tend to center on one or another of them" (121). Therefore, the ideology that ended up being selected as the best description of the organization was considered its dominant leadership style.

After all of the data that described individuals' perceptions of the organization and the actual leadership style of the organization were gathered, comparisons were made to find out whether students' initial perceptions about the organization's leadership matched the style of leadership reported by persons working within the organization. This analysis allowed me to determine the associations between an organization's ecology and subsequent perceptions about organization's leadership style. Comparisons were made between the reasons for an individual's perception of the organization and the actual leadership style of the organization to see if the lobby/reception area conveyed a
congruent image of the organization's leadership. Any inconsistent messages were also taken as evidence that individuals do form perceptions from the nonverbal ecology, even though they were not consistent with the organization's dominant leadership ideology. The impact of these differences in perceptions on the formation of working relationships within the organization was not determined.
RESULTS

In order to determine if perceptions between "outsiders" and "insiders" were congruent after exposure to lobby/reception areas, it was necessary to organize the results by organization. This way, it is safe to analyze the responses for each organization and then to compare the results across organizations.

Organization A

There were six components of organization A that fifty-percent or more of the students identified from the pictures. These components were: flags/banners hanging from the wall, portraits of men whom students identified as past leaders, large wooden desks used by the receptionists, shelves with academic information on them, the dim lighting of the area, and the use of brick. The reasons given for identifying these components were very similar. Answers included that the flags and portraits were large and caught their attention, the dim lighting made it difficult to see, and that the atmosphere was not that of a typical lobby/reception area.

Students did not respond with answers that identified everything in the pictures. Items that were not mentioned included the coffee station which anyone can use, the water cooler, the use of colors, both on the walls and of the furniture and carpet, and the type of lighting fixtures that were used. The color and lighting factors may have been included in the students' perceptions of a traditional organization, and therefore were not included specifically. One would think that the presence of the coffee station and a water
cooler near the receptionists would portray the organization as employee-oriented, yet they were not mentioned.

Answers to the third open-ended question were found to contain four main themes about the leadership of the organization. Students answered that they thought the leadership was traditional, task-oriented, formal, and structured. The perception of traditional leadership was reported by seventy percent of the respondents, sixty percent perceived the leadership as job focused or task-oriented, and fifty percent perceived both formal and structured leadership styles.

The results from the semantic differential questionnaire for Organization A were compiled (scale range = 1-10), and are listed in Table 1-1. The results show that students perceived the organization's leadership as being traditional, task-oriented, structured, and formal. The mean scores for these perceptions were 2.1, 3.3, 3.3, and 3.8 respectively. In addition, the leadership style tends to lean towards being viewed as not employee-oriented, with a mean score of 6.2.

Table 1-1: Semantic Differential Questionnaire Results for Organization A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal v. Not Formal</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open v. Not Open</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee-Oriented v. Not Employee-Oriented</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical v. Not Hierarchical</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured v. Not Structured</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive v. Not Cohesive</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling v. Not Controlling</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional v. Not Traditional</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-Oriented v. Not Task-Oriented</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict v. Not Strict</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The final group of results for organization A comes from the responses of employees to the leadership ideology questionnaire. The results from this questionnaire are listed in Table 1-2. Members responded that organization A has a dominant task-oriented leadership ideology. On the range from 6 to 24, the task-oriented ideology received a mean score of 11.9. The role-oriented ideology also received a relatively low score, with a mean result of 13.9. Both the power-oriented and person-oriented ideologies received very high responses, resulting in mean scores of 17 and 17.6 respectively.

Table 1-2: Leadership Ideology Results for Organization A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organization B

The most frequently identified aspects in the pictures of organization B included the high counter around the edge of the receptionist's desk, two computers on the receptionist's desk, the plants by the chairs, the amount of sunlight allowed into the area, and the lack of any wall ornaments. The reasons for noticing these aspects were categorized into four main rationales. They were that the receptionist's desk is the first thing you look for and this one is unusual, the area was very bright due to the number of
windows, everything was close together and allows you to see everything, and there was not much else in the area.

As with organization B, students did not list all of the factors that were present in the pictures of the lobby. My observation included the presence of a phone and telephone books, which suggests that people can make calls while waiting, the Wall Street Journal and other magazines, or the color of the furniture or carpet. The presence of the phone and phone books was an unusual aspect, which was predicted to be noticed consistently during my original observations. Additionally, there were ecological aspects that could not be captured in the pictures, which may have further influenced students' perceptions. Examples included the presence of photo albums with pictures of employees and books about the Richmond community.

There were only two categories that the answers to the third open-ended question could be placed into. The first perception of the organization's leadership was that of task-oriented, which was conveyed by seventy percent of the students. The other perception, which was identified by fifty percent of the students, was that of an open style of leadership. However, seventy percent of the students also noted that there was very little displayed from which a perception could be formed.

The results from the semantic differential questionnaire for Organization B are listed in Table 2-1. The results show that students held perceptions that were in the middle with regards to each pair of descriptors. On the range of one to ten, the strongest perception of the leadership was task-oriented, with a mean score of 3.1. Additionally, respondents perceived the leadership style as somewhat non-traditional, as is ascertained by the mean score of 6.1.
Table 2-1: Semantic Differential Questionnaire Results for Organization B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal v. Not Formal</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open v. Not Open</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee-Oriented v. Not Employee-Oriented</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical v. Not Hierarchical</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured v. Not Structured</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive v. Not Cohesive</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling v. Not Controlling</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional v. Not Traditional</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-Oriented v. Not Task-Oriented</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict v. Not Strict</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the results from the employee's leadership ideology questionnaire are listed in Table 2-2. Members responded that organization B has a dominant task-oriented ideology, as represented by its mean score of 12 on the range from 6 to 24. The person-oriented ideology was also seen as a dominant leadership style, yet received a somewhat higher result with a mean score of 13.4. The role-oriented and power-oriented ideologies received higher mean scores of 15.9 and 19.2 respectively.

Table 2-2: Leadership Ideology Results for Organization B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organization C

There were six aspects from the pictures of organization C that were identified by fifty percent or more of the students. These components included: the mission statement, the portrait of the man, plants, plush furniture, artwork, and code access to the door. The analysis of the second question revealed that the identified factors were noticed for three main rationales. They were that the abundance of plants made them stand out, the mission statement and portrait were large and seemed to be accentuated, and the room as a whole was very homey or familiar.

Students once again did not mention everything that was included in the pictures, as was the case for organizations A and B. Factors that were overlooked included the vaulted ceiling, the color of the carpet, the high counter around the edge of the receptionist's desk, the presence of two receptionists, and the lack of reading material. The presence of more than one receptionist was a major factor in my original observation, as was the scarce amount of reading material.

Answers to the third open-ended question were found to subscribe to four main themes about the leadership of the organization. Students responded that they thought the leadership was hierarchical, structured, formal, and strict. The perception of a formal leadership style was conveyed by seventy percent of the students, fifty percent conveyed the perception of a hierarchical system of leadership, and thirty percent of the responses conveyed perceptions about both strict yet open styles of leadership.

The results from the semantic differential questionnaire for Organization C are listed in Table 3-1. On the range of one to ten, the students seemed to identify the leadership as being hierarchical, formal, strict, and structured. The mean scores for these
perceptions were 3, 3.2, 3.6, and 3.8 respectively. Additionally, the leadership was perceived as not especially traditional, as is communicated through the mean score of 6.5 for that area.

Table 3-1: Semantic Differential Questionnaire Results for Organization C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic Differential</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal v. Not Formal</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open v. Not Open</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee-Oriented v. Not Employee-Oriented</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical v. Not Hierarchical</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured v. Not Structured</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive v. Not Cohesive</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling v. Not Controlling</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional v. Not Traditional</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task-Oriented v. Not Task-Oriented</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict v. Not Strict</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final group of results for organization C was compiled from the responses of employees to the leadership ideology questionnaire. The results from this questionnaire are listed in Table 3-2. Members responded that organization C has a power-oriented leadership ideology. On the range from 6 to 24, the power-oriented ideology received a mean score of 12.3. The role-oriented ideology also received a relatively low score, with a mean result of 14.3. Both the task-oriented and person-oriented ideologies received higher responses, resulting in mean scores of 16 and 17.6 respectively.

Table 3-2: Leadership Ideology Results for Organization C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine whether individuals form accurate perceptions about the leadership of organizations through exposure to the nonverbal ecology of its lobby/reception area. As competition between organizations increases, the necessity of accurately communicating an organization's culture has become more important. With the movement into the twenty-first century comes the knowledge that change is the buzz word. Organizations are changing more often as well as faster. The development of the "proper" nonverbal ecology can be the tool to keep members and clients up to pace with the changing leadership of an organization. This study examined the influence of the nonverbal ecology on observer's perceptions about organizational leadership.

Perceptions were examined through a combination of a semantic differential instrument and open-ended questions. The pairs of descriptors were developed to be comparable to the leadership ideologies that were identified by the leadership ideology questionnaire. The perceptions between organizations varied, which means that there are factors that influence the formation of those perceptions. Organization A was perceived as possessing a very tradition-based leadership style that is extremely focused on task completion and utilizing a structured approach. Only a few salient perceptions of organization B were reported, with the most prominent being that the leadership was task-oriented, but not especially traditional. The rest of the perceptions of leadership ideology were grouped in the middle of the range. Organization C was different in that it was not perceived as possessing a task-oriented approach to leadership at all. Instead,
perceptions were of a hierarchical leadership approach that relied on formality and austerity.

The third open-ended question posed to the students, consistently received responses that supported the results of the semantic differential questionnaire for each organization. Responses about organization A primarily addressed issues such as tradition, hierarchy, and formality. Organization B was often described as focused on the job due to the simple lobby/reception area that it has. A strong perception was that of task-oriented, which many students associated with the high counter around the edge of the desk. Nine out of the ten students who were sampled for organization B made that observation. Organization C's leadership was perceived as hierarchical and formal, yet still open enough so that communication could flow both upwards and downwards in the organization. The cause of this perception is most likely the presence of both the portrait and a mission statement. The original picture of the mission statement was readable and contained phrases like, "to provide efficient and cost effective distribution," "to manage the business with the highest ethical standards," and using the word "teammates" in place of employees.

Responses from members of each of these organizations made it possible to compare the perceptions that students formed from the pictures with the "actual" leadership style of the organization. The questions on the leadership ideology questionnaire focused on components of leadership that, when taken together paint a picture of the existing leadership style that dominates the organization's way of doing things. Organization A's leadership was identified as a task-oriented style, followed by role, power, and person. This view was perceived by the students, yet it was not their
dominant perception. They identified with the perception of a traditional style of leadership, which can be classified under the role-oriented ideology.

Role-oriented leadership was identified by organizational respondents as the secondary style of leadership in the organization. The reason that leadership was perceived by the students as role-oriented before task-oriented was due to the presence of flags, portraits of men who were considered to be past leaders, and old architecture style of the lobby and building. Students believed these features of the ecology were associated with leadership that is controlling, rule-oriented, and procedurally focused. Students also perceived the leadership style as task-oriented style due to the amount of work that appeared to be on the receptionist's desk as well as the arrangement of information that was labeled "academic information sheets". In general, the students were able to perceive the major styles of leadership present in the organization, but not in the same order of dominance as the members of the organization.

Organization B's leadership style was similar to organization A's in that it too was identified by its members as first task-oriented. However, the order of prominence for the other three ideologies was different in organization B than in organization A. A person-oriented style was identified as the next best description of the organization's leadership, followed by role and then power. It makes sense that the power orientation would be ranked relatively low because of the organization's use of a person-oriented leadership style as well as a task orientation. In other words, the person-oriented ideology assumes that individuals are suppose to influence each other through helpfulness and example instead of through positional power. It would be unlikely to find both ideologies as dominant in an organization.
Students had a difficult time forming perceptions about organization B, which is evident in the consistency in which they responded with mid-range answers on the semantic differential questionnaire. For most items, the mean scores were between 4.8 and 5.4. A score of five was given in the example in the directions to completing the questionnaire if a person's perception was in the middle with respect to the pair of adjectives. An additional reason that many of the respondent's perceptions may have been mid-range was because they were not given any answer option allowing them to indicate that they were unable to form an impression from pictures of the ecology. This was expressed by a number of the students assigned to respond to the photos of organization B, and may well have been a factor affecting the responses of students from the other two groups as well.

Finally, the members of organization C identified the power-oriented ideology as being dominant in their organization, followed by role, task, and person ideologies. The power ideology is associated with emphasis on position and the desire of those in positions of authority to maintain absolute control over subordinates. Students responded that they perceived the hierarchy and formality of the organization. These feelings were most likely influenced by the large portrait on the wall and security pad at the entrance into the door. One interesting aspect about the ecology that students did not mention to was the high counter around the edge receptionist's desk. Almost all of the students grouped with organization B noticed this aspect in their pictures, yet it was not identified as a factor affecting perceptions of organization C. This may be a consequence of the many other nonverbal stimuli present in the area, such as an abundance of plants and other artwork.
Even though students perceived the area as familiar and cozy, they did not consider the leadership style to be person-oriented. One would think that the identification of the sorts of nonverbal aspects noted above would lead an individual to believe that the organization wanted to make visitors feel comfortable, and thus was also concerned about the comfort and needs of its members. However, this was not the case and apparently other characteristics must have weighed more heavily in the formation of students' perceptions about the organization's leadership. The impact of empathic symbols that Ornstein (1986) identified may be diminished by the more notable symbols of authority, which were also present in the ecology.

Overall, the students' perceptions of organizational leadership were similar to the leadership ideologies of the organizations identified by their members. From this comparison, one could say that organizations are accurately transmitting their leadership ideology through their nonverbal ecology. The students identified most of the items that I myself recorded during the observation of the lobby/reception areas. There are many aspects of the nonverbal ecology that could not be transmitted to the student through pictures. Factors such as sound, interpersonal behavior, or the process that one goes through to meet with a member are additional aspects that could influence the perceptions of observers. A suggestion to overcome this problem would be to videotape the lobby/reception area so that individuals can gain a better understanding of the ecology. This process would also avoid leading the students' responses to the open-ended questions because the lobby would be recorded as one enters the area. This way, participants would be exposed to the lobby in the same way as if they were actually entering the area. Videotaping would also allow the participant to be exposed to a full
picture of the lobby instead of just "frames". The slight differences that occurred between students' perceptions and the organizational members' reports of the leadership style may be decreased if a more complete exposure to the ecology was experienced. An improved study may show that outsiders' perceptions are actually more congruent to members' views of leadership within the organization.

An additional limitation of the study has to do with how the questionnaires were distributed to the students. The semantic differential questionnaire was always given to the student first. By doing this, the student was exposed to descriptors that might have influence the written perceptions about the organization's leadership. The reason that this process was used was because I did not want to reveal the purpose of the study to the students until they had almost completed with the questionnaire. The third open ended question would have identified the purpose of the study to the students and could have caused them to respond to the semantic differential questionnaire with answers that they thought the study was looking for. This problem can be balanced by giving half of the participants the questionnaires in one order, and then give them in the other order to the other half of the participants. This way, it can be detected whether the order of the questionnaires has any influence on the responses. Further research should be conducted with larger sample sizes in order to determine whether the results of this study are indeed accurate. Despite these limitations, the findings of this study suggest that careful consideration should be given to the design of the reception/lobby area, as it is a representation of the leadership ideology of the organization.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: Ecological Checklist

Organizational Symbols
   Furniture

Photographs

Artwork

Seals/Flags/Banners

Plants

Magazines

Organizational Material

Employee Clothing

Plaques/Certificates/Awards

Visual Display
   Lighting (Intensity, Focus, Source etc.)

   Color (Bright v. Dark, Variety)
PENDIX B: Pictures of Organization A

Continued...
APPENDIX C: Pictures of Organization B

Continued...
APPENDIX D: Pictures of Organization C

Mission Statement

Continued...
APPENDIX E: Semantic Differential Questionnaire

For each bipolar pair of descriptors, circle the number which best expresses your perceptions of this organization. For example, if you think the organization is very formal you might circle 1 or 2, if you think it is in the middle with respect to formality you might circle 5, and if you think it is not very formal you might circle 9 or 10. There are no right answers, all that counts is your perception. Please respond to all items.

Formal

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Formal

Open

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Open

Employee-Oriented

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Employee-Oriented

Hierarchical

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Hierarchical

Structured

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Structured

Cohesive

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Cohesive

Controlling

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Controlling

Traditional

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Traditional

Task-Oriented

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Task-Oriented

Strict

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Strict

Please list any other descriptors that you believe have been left out
APPENDIX F: Open-ended Observation Questions

What did you notice about the lobby/reception area?

Why did these factors catch your attention?

What image does the lobby area communicate about the leadership of the organization?
APPENDIX G: Leadership Ideology Questionnaire

For each item below, rank order each of the responses with 1 representing what is the best description of the organization, 2 is the next best, and so on. Please rank all choices (1-4) for each item. Please do not respond with ties, i.e. ranking two or more statements with the same number. All results will remain anonymous.

1. A good boss is:

   Impersonal and correct, avoiding the exercise of his/her authority for personal advantage. He/she demands from subordinates only that which is required by the formal system.

   Egalitarian and capable of being influenced in matters concerning the task. He/she uses authority to obtain the resources needed to complete the job.

   Strong, decisive and firm, but fair. He/she is protective, generous, and indulgent to loyal subordinates.

   Concerned with, and responsive to, the personal needs and values of others. He/she uses the position to provide satisfying and growth-stimulating work opportunities for subordinates.

2. A good subordinate is:

   Self-motivated to contribute his/her best to the task and is open with ideas and suggestions. He/she is, nevertheless, willing to give the lead to others when they show great expertise or ability.

   Responsible and reliable, meeting the duties and responsibilities of his/her job, and avoiding actions that surprise or embarrass superiors.

   Vitally interested in the development of his own potentialities, and is open to learning and to receiving help. He/she also respects the needs and values of others, and is willing to help and contribute to their development.

   Compliant, hard working, and loyal to the interest of his superior.

3. A good member of the organization gives first priority to the:

   Requirements of the task for skill, ability, energy, and material resources.

   Duties, responsibilities, and requirements of his/her own role, and to the customary standards of personal behavior.

   Personal needs of the individuals involved

   Personal demands of the boss.
4. Decisions are made by the:

- Person whose job description carries the responsibility
- Persons most personally involved and affected by the outcome
- Person with the higher power and authority.
- Persons with the most knowledge and expertise about the problem

5. In an appropriate control and communication structure:

- Information and influence flow from person to person, based on voluntary relationships initiated for purposes of work, learning, moral support, enjoyment, and shared values. These tasks are assigned by mutual agreement.

- Information about task requirements and problems flows from the center of the task activity upwards and outwards, with those closest to the task determining the resources and support needed from the rest of the organization.

- Directives flow from the top down and information flows upwards within functional pyramids which meet at the top. The authority and responsibility of a role is limited to the roles beneath it in its own pyramid. Cross-functional exchange is constructed.

- Command flows from the top down in a simple pyramid, so that anyone who is higher in the pyramid has authority over anyone who is lower. Information flows up through the chain of command.

6. The basis of task assignment is the:

- Personal needs and judgement of those in authority.
- Formal divisions of functions and responsibilities in the system.
- Resource and expertise requirements of the job to be done.
- Personal wishes and needs for learning and growth of individual organization members.