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INTERACTIVE PAPER

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP – CONSTRUCT REFINEMENT AND SCALE DEVELOPMENT

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Principal Topic

We refine the construct of entrepreneurial leadership and develop a scale for its measurement. We define entrepreneurial leadership as influencing and directing the performance of group members towards the achievement of those organizational goals that involve recognizing and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities.

We distinguish the focal construct from corporate entrepreneurship and other related, but separate constructs. Entrepreneurial leaders operate on two fronts: On one hand, they participate themselves in activities that lead to recognizing and exploiting new business opportunities (“Entrepreneurial Doer”). On the other hand, they influence and direct the performance of employees towards recognizing and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities by providing employees with the required resources and encouragement (“Entrepreneurial Accelerator”).

Method

We asked survey respondents to rate their immediate supervisor along entrepreneurial leadership items. Our data come from two samples: 317 working students at three US research universities, and 64 working adults. We developed a pool of items that were screened for inclusion in the entrepreneurial leadership scale. Job satisfaction and one’s perception of the organization were assessed in the same survey using established scales.

Results and Implications

The entrepreneurial leadership scale was refined through various steps of analysis (PCA, reliability analysis, CFA). The final scale yielded very promising indices of fit in the two validation samples: χ^2 -to-degrees-of-freedom ratio of 1.12, CFI = .99, TLI = .98, and an RMSEA = .04. An eight-item scale best measures employees’ perceptions of their supervisor’s entrepreneurial leadership: [Supervisor] (1) Often comes up with radical improvement ideas for the products / services we are selling, (2) Often comes up with ideas of completely new products / services that we could sell, (3) Is a risk taker, (4) Is creative, (5) Is passionate about his / her work, (6) Is a visionary, (7) Challenges and pushes me to act in a more innovative way, and (8) Wants me to challenge the current ways we do business. This scale is reliable and composed of items that measure both the “Entrepreneurial Doer” and “Entrepreneurial Accelerator” sides of entrepreneurial leadership. Finally, the entrepreneurial leadership scale was significantly correlated with job satisfaction and one’s positive perception of the organization.

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