



TITLE A Comparison of Leadership Practices of Collegiate Student-Athletes and Non-Athlete Peers: Seeking Solutions to the Leadership Succession Crisis in Corporate America

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study is to measure whether collegiate student-athletes are better leaders than their collegiate non-athlete peers based on their perception of their leadership practices.

METHODOLOGY

Participants recruited for this study consisted of 1,454 college students from NCAA Division I, II, and III member institutions from around the country -- including 660 collegiate student-athletes and 794 collegiate non-athlete peers. They completed the Student version of the Leadership Practices Inventory.

KEY FINDINGS

The most frequently engaged in leadership practice was Enable, followed by Encourage, then Model, Inspire and Challenge for both student athletes and their non-athlete peers. The scores of student-athletes were significantly higher than non-athlete students on Model, Inspire, Challenge, and Encourage. Two-way ANOVA was performed to measure the relationship of college athlete status (student-athletes and non-athlete peers) and NCAA division level (Division I, II, and III) for the five leadership practices using the Student LPI:

Model the Way: The interaction (athlete status by division level) was significant. Division I student-athletes reported engaging significantly more frequently in Model the Way than their Division I non-athlete peers. No significant difference was reported between Division II or Division III student-athletes and their non-athlete peers. No significant difference was found for collegiate student-athletes by division level. NCAA Division II non-athletes reported engaging significantly more frequently in Model the Way than Division I non-athletes. No significant difference was found when comparing Division I collegiate non-athletes with Division III collegiate non-athletes and no significant

difference was found when comparing Division II collegiate non-athletes with Division III non-athletes.

Inspire a Shared Vision: The interaction effect (athlete status by division level) was not significant. Collegiate student-athletes reported engaging significantly more frequently in Inspire a Shared Vision than their collegiate non-athlete peers. Additionally, Division II students reported engaging significantly more frequently in Inspire a Shared Vision than Division I and Division III students. No significant difference was found when comparing Division I students and Division III students.

Challenge the Process: The interaction effect (athlete status by division level) was not significant. Collegiate student-athletes reported engaging significantly more frequently in Challenge the Process than their collegiate non-athlete peers. No significant difference was found by NCAA division level.

Enable Others to Act: The interaction effect (athlete status by division level) was significant. Results indicated no significant difference between NCAA Division I, II, or III student-athletes as compared with NCAA Division I, II, or III non-athlete peers. No significant difference was found for collegiate student-athletes by division level. NCAA Division III non-athletes reported engaging more frequently in Enable Others to Act than Division I non-athletes. No significant difference was found when comparing Division I collegiate non-athletes with Division II collegiate non-athletes. No significant difference was found when comparing Division II collegiate non-athletes with Division III non-athletes.

Encourage the Heart: The interaction effect (athlete status by division level) was not significant. Collegiate student-athletes reported engaging significantly more frequently in Encourage the Heart than their collegiate non-athlete peers.

The author concludes: "The study provides empirical evidence that athletic participation can be understood as a leader development experience at the collegiate level. Results of this study indicated that athletic involvement has a positive effect on leadership practices and that Human Resources departments are justified in seeking out college graduates with athletic backgrounds during the recruitment and hiring process to the extent that they are looking for employees who possess specific character and leadership skills" (p. 78).