

How followers regulate their leaders

The use of regulatory strategies of followers
when leaders fail

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how preferences of followers for Regulatory Strategies towards leaders are influenced by differences in Competency (competent/Incompetent), Integrity (integer/non integer) and formal power (high/low) of a leader. A leader can fail in Competency or Integrity after which a follower can regulate their leader in order to help achieve collective goals. Formal power is researched as a moderator. There are four Regulatory Strategies of followers, varying in focus (process/person) and openness (overt/covert): Constructive Resistance (process/overt), Dysfunctional Resistance (person/overt), Evaluative Gossip (process/covert) and Malicious Gossip (person/covert). 601 participants took part in the 2x2x2 vignette study, whereby Competency, Integrity, and formal power were manipulated. Results show that when leaders fail, preference for Covert Regulatory Strategies increases the most. For Competency failure, preferences for Evaluative Gossip increased the most. Integrity failure has a more broad and deep influence because both gossip types increased, showing that Integrity failure lowers trust in Integrity as well as in general. As a consequence, people also start to gossip about the Competency of the leader. When leaders fail in both types, Covert Regulatory Strategies increase even more. Formal power had no moderating effect but high formal power lowered the preference for Dysfunctional Resistance. Theoretical and practical implications are elaborated at the end.

Keywords: followership, regulatory strategies, leadership failure, leader Competency, leader Integrity, formal power of a leader.

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REGULATORY STRATEGIES OF FOLLOWERS TOWARDS LEADERS

Leadership is found to be fundamental for organizational success (Murphy, 2010). But leadership failure rate is found to be 60 -75% (Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994; Van Vugt Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008) and climate surveys repeatedly reveal that 60-70% of employees find their immediate leader the most stressful job aspect (Hogan, 2006). Poor leader-follower relationships decreases followers wellbeing and heightens their stress level (Hogan, 2007; House, 1981; Tepper, 2000) resulting in more strikes, turnover and resistance (Hamblin Miller, & Wiggins, 1961). Furthermore leaders might lose follower endorsement, decreasing the leaders basis to mobilize and influence followers (Giessner & Van Knippenberg, 2008).

While leadership is often researched, followers are not (e.g., Spisak, Nicholson, & Van Vugt, 2011; Brown, 1995; Dixon & Westbrook, 2003; Herold, 1977; Nolan & Harty 2001; Van Vugt & Kurzban, 2007). However, followers are crucial for leaders because without followers no leadership (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). According to evolutionary view, leadership arises in order to enhance cooperation processes for achieving collective goals and adaptive problem solving. Thus followership can be seen as coordinated commitment and investment of resources (time, energy and others) in a leader in order to achieve collective goals (Spisak et al., 2011). Hence followership is active, if necessary followers can regulate their leader in order to enhance group performance (Van Vugt et al., 2008). Follet (1959) is one of the first to point out this essential tasks of followers.

The purpose of this study was therefore to research how followers regulate their leaders, what strategies they preferred in various situations. The study consisted of an experiment, with various situations randomly assigned to participants. In this way difference in preferences for four Regulatory Strategies could be researched for two types of leadership failure, Competency and Integrity. The main question of the research is stated as follows:

How do followers preferences for Regulatory Strategies differ for leadership failure in Integrity and/or Competency, and how does Formal Power of a leader influence this?

According to evolutionary psychology the human mind is the evolved product of natural selection processes, and therefore how humans perceive leadership nowadays is based on our evolutionary history (Van Vugt & Ronay, 2014). Leadership arises automatically (Hogg, 2001) because cooperation was more efficient with one individual acting as a leader and others as followers (Spisak et al., 2011), and it can enhance group performance (Hogan & Craig, 2008; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Van Vugt et al., 2008). Nevertheless it leads to many problems as well when leaders fail (Van Vugt et al., 2008), for example by abusing power or losing the ability of empathising with participants.

Types of failure. Failures can be categorized in either Integrity or Competency Failure (Giessner & Van Knippenberg, 2008; Tepper et al., 2006). *Integrity* can be defined as the fairness, trustworthiness and reliability of a leader (Butler, 1991; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Mishra, 1995; Van Vugt et al., 2008). Integrity is important for followers because it defines the amount of risk for exploitation of the group by the leader and to what extent a follower can rely on a leader (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Spisak et al., 2011; Tepper, Duffy, & Shaw, 2001; Van Vugt et al., 2008). *Competence* is a combination of skills, knowledge, and attitude (Buford & Lindner, 2002; Hartle, 1995). From an evolutionary view, competence can be described as the expertise and ability to achieve collective goals and the contribution of a person to solve particular tasks (Darioly & Schmid Mast, 2011; Hogan & Craig, 2008; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Van Vugt et al., 2008). It is important to followers because only a competent leader can contribute to achieving collective goals (Giessner & Van Knippenberg, 2008).

Formal Power. In the ancestral environment the group had the power, if the group did not agree with the leader they could take various actions, varying between correcting and degrading the leader (Van Vugt et al., 2008). Nowadays, power is formally divided (Krausz, 1986), and selection of leaders is a top-down instead of an organic process (Van Vugt &

Ronay, 2014). Therefore, opposite to ancestral times, now leaders have more saying than followers, which makes it interesting to look at the effect of power differences on how followers regulate their leader. Formal Power holds the executive saying a leader has over the employee about the work schedule, tasks, rewards et cetera (Schmid Mast, Jonas, & Hall, 2009). Leaders can enforce this executive saying with coercive power (French & Raven, 1959).

Regulatory strategies of followers. Already in the hunter and gatherer times subordinates cooperated to regulate a leader and to ensure followership was beneficial and leaders would not exploit them (Boehm, 1993). Regulatory Strategies could vary between only accepting leadership in areas wherein that leader had expertise, ignoring a leader or gossiping to ostracizing a leader (Boehm, 1993; 1999). Followers are in the position to regulate their leader because followership is crucial for the leadership process (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). According to evolutionary leadership theory there is now a mismatch between current organizations and the human evolved psychology. As mentioned, followers do not have as much power as they had in ancestral times, therefore Regulation Strategies used in ancestral times might be less effective. But because the human mind evolves slowly, followers will still use old mechanisms. This mechanism are programmed in our brains, that evolved according to needs humans had in the past (Van Vugt & Ronay, 2014).

As mentioned before, in this study is looked at four types of Regulatory Strategies. There are two dimensions on which these Regulatory Strategies differ: focus and openness. Focus can either be on Process of leadership or on the Person of the leader. Process focused Regulatory Strategies implies that followers intervene in group processes in order to achieve collective goals (Buss, 1995; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), for example by discussing or convincing the leader. Person focused Regulatory Strategies implies that followers try to lessen the influence of the leader, for example by undermining the status of the leader, reject the leader

or gossiping about the personality of the leader (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010; Tepper et al., 2001; Tepper et al., 2006).

The second dimension on which Regulatory Strategies can be divided is openness: overt or covert. *Overt Regulatory Strategies* involve an open and direct reaction to the leader and is similar to voice strategies (Hirschman, 1970), consisting of followers proactively challenging the status quo (Liu, Zhu, & Yang, 2010). Overt Regulatory Strategies can be either Process focused, well intentioned and helpful, or Person focused, destructive and harmful for a leader (Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014). *Covert Regulatory Strategies* are hidden, indirect actions towards the leader (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Covert Regulatory Strategies can generally be categorized as gossip, because by not acting directly to a leader followers start talking behind the leaders back which is gossiping (Decoster, Camps, Stouten, Vandevyvere, & Tripp 2013; Ellwardt, Labianca, & Wittek, 2012; Kniffin & Wilson, 2010). Gossip can for example be a tool to warn others in a group for norm violation of one of the group members (Beersma & Van Kleef, 2012; Dunbar, 2004; Enquist & Leimar, 1993), it can harm the reputation of a person (Archer & Coyne, 2005) or it can ensure that members are forced to group norms (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010).

Deriving from the 2 (Process or Person) x2 (Overt or Covert) matrix four types of Regulatory Strategies can be distinguished. The Overt Regulatory Strategies focused on process is *Constructive Resistance*, an effort of a follower to open a dialogue with the leader, for example by requesting negotiation or clarification of a leader (Tepper et al., 2001; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). This type of resistance is constructive because it is likely to correct mistakes, help a leader and improve relationships and/or the wellbeing of the organization (Bies & Tripp, 1998; Hirschman, 1970). The Overt Regulatory Strategies focused on process is *Dysfunctional Resistance*, passive-aggressive responses towards a leader, for example ignoring a leader or pretending to have forgotten to do something the leader asked for (Tepper

et al., 2001). This kind of resistance is dysfunctional because it is likely to disrupt the work flow, is motivated behaviour of followers to have a negative influence on leaders and it increases interpersonal hostile behaviour (Griffin, O'Leary-Kelly, & Collins, 1998; Tepper et al., 2001). The Covert Regulatory Strategies focused on process is *Evaluative Gossip*, which focuses on gossiping about the actions of a leader and can help achieve collective goals by warning others about aspects where actions must be taken (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010). Lastly, the Covert Regulatory Strategies focused on a person is *Malicious Gossip*, which can intentionally harm that person by damaging or manipulating his relations and reputation and thereby his decreasing influence (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Richardson & Green, 1997), or serve as protection against behavior that is in violation with group norms (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Combining the four group or organizational goals creates a two by two matrix as shown in table 1.

Table 1.
Regulatory Strategies Matrix

| | <i>Process</i> | <i>Person</i> |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Overt</i> | Constructive Resistance | Dysfunctional Resistance |
| <i>Covert</i> | Evaluative Gossip | Malicious Gossip |

Note. The matrix holds the four Regulatory Strategies derives from the factors openness and focus.

HYPOTHESIS

Influence of Competency and Integrity Failure on preferences for focus

Competency Failure leads to Process focused Regulatory Strategies. While Competency can be defined as the combination of skills, knowledge, and attitude (Buford & Lindner, 2002; Hartle, 1995) there are many differing theories about what these terms imply. For example according to research of Spisak, Dekker, Krüger, & Van Vugt (2012) the fitness-relevant intergroup challenges determine what kind of Competency followers are

looking for in a leader. During cooperation time followers want a peacekeeper, but in conflict situations there is a need for warriors (Spisak et al., 2012). No leader can have all competencies and there are numerous types of leaders with diverse strengths (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kotter, 1988; Hollenbeck, McCall Jr, & Silzer, 2006). Besides that, competence is also seen as something that can be developed and learned (Alexander, 2003; Billet, 2001; Goleman, 1998; Hofstra, Hobus, Boshuizen, & Schmidt, 1988; Kim, Ferrin, Cooper, & Dirks, 2004; Leeuwen, 1995) and is therefore not seen as structural (Kim et al., 2004). Furthermore positive information about competence of leaders is better remembered by followers than negative information (Kim et al., 2004) In addition, a leader can get the competence or expertise on certain aspects from other resources, as for example the amount of hiring consultants shows (Fincham, 1999; Wood, 1996).

Even if a leader is Incompetent overall, from an evolutionary perspective a group is oriented to achieve collective goals together, which means the group will cooperate in order to achieve these goals (Buss, 1995). If a leader fails, an effective follower will not be prone to the bystander effect but will try to achieve the collective goal by intervening (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) and focusing on tasks because the followers will use more rational strategies (Cable & Judge, 2003). In addition, Competency Failure does not mean a leader is not trying to act in the best interest of the group (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Lord, Foti, & De Vader, 1984). Followers might therefore still like the person of the leader but not the processes the leader follows.

Following from these arguments, it is expected that Regulatory Strategies will focus on the process of leadership rather than on the person if the leader is perceived as Incompetent. By pointing out shortcomings, a follower can motivate a leader to adapt. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: Failure in competence will lead to the use of Process focused Regulatory Strategies.

Integrity Failure leads to Person focused Regulatory Strategies. As mentioned in the introduction, Integrity can be defined as the fairness, trustworthiness and reliability of a leader (Butler, 1991; Mayer et al., 1995; Mishra, 1995). As found in research one of the aspects that people attribute to personality is Integrity (De Vries, Ashton, & Lee, 2009). This results in the fact that if leaders act in a non-integer way, this is linked to the personality of leaders by observers (De Vries et al., 2009; Kelly, 1955; Kim et al., 2004; Schneider, 1973). People perceive Integrity Failure as stable over contexts and time (Madon, Jussim, & Eccles, 1997; Martijn, Spears, Van der Plight, & Jakobs, 1992) and therefore expect repeating failures, lowering trust in that person (Kim et al., 2004). According to the construct theory, people cluster certain traits and make a dichotomy of it (Kelly, 1955; Schneider, 1973). Integrity is found to be dichotomized by people as integer versus non-integer (De Vries et al., 2009). Because perceivers do not easily change slots, from one side to the other of the dichotomy (Hinkle, 1965), and the negative information about Integrity is remembered better than positive information (Madon et al., 1997; Martijn et al., 1992), followers perceive a leader as non-integer for a long time if he acts in a non-integer way.

The relationship of leaders and followers is interdependent. In order to develop loyalty and trust in this relationship, ethical concerns must be evaluated positive (Hollander, 1995). This results in the fact that by Integrity Failure trust of followers in leaders is decreased and it is known that followers do not want to follow a leader which they do not trust (Cozijnsen & Vrakking, 2013). Followers then tend to make use of more non-rational tactics focused on the whole person of the leader (Cable & Judge, 2013).

Following from the previous stated literature, it is expected that Regulatory Strategies will revolve around the person of the leader if a leader fails in Integrity, leading to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1b: Integrity Failure will lead to the use of Person focused Regulatory Strategies.

Integrity and Competency Failure influences the openness of Regulatory Strategies

Competency Failure leads to more Overt Regulatory Strategies. As predicted in hypotheses 1a, followers strive to achieve collective goals (Buss, 1995; Van Vugt, 2006; Van Vugt et al., 2008). Their actions are seen as a critical factor in achieving collective goals and organizational effectiveness (Detert & Burris, 2007), because followers can try to control and steer leadership processes (Follet, 1951; Van Vugt et al., 2008). With Competency Failure it is often quite clear to the follower what and how something will fail and what the follower can do to prevent or recover the failure and therefore more Overt Regulatory Strategies arise towards the leadership processes (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Furthermore in Competency of leaders is perceived by followers as a lack of leader power, the extent to which a leader can exert control over a follower. This results in compensation by the follower by taking more power (Darioly & Schmid Mast, 2011). This power is taken by acting in an open and direct way towards the leader (Darioly & Schmid Mast, 2011; Tepper et al., 2001).

Even though competence is, besides Integrity, an antecedent of trust (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Mayer et al., 1995), a follower still can experience psychological safety if a leader acts integer (Kim et al., 2004). If a leader for example honestly admits his lack of competence and apologizes, trust in the person might be restored (Kim et al., 2004). If a follower feels psychological safe he is more inclined to act openly towards the leader (Detert & Burris, 2007).

From this arguments it is expected that when a leader fails in competence, a follower will act in an overt way towards leadership processes. This is the Regulatory Strategy Constructive Resistance (Tepper et al., 2001). This leads to the prediction of the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2a Failure in competence will lead to Overt Regulatory Strategies with a focus on Constructive Resistance.

Integrity Failure leads to more Covert Regulatory Strategies. If trust is violated because of Integrity Failure (Kim et al., 2004; Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Yammarino, 2009; Simons, 1999), the leader-member relation is more contract based and exchange of information between them is of low quality (Tepper et al., 2006). The quality of the interaction is especially decreased in risky situations (Giffin, 1967) because followers are less willing to take risks (Mayer et al., 1995). This derives from the fact that the psychological safety a follower experiences is decreased by Integrity Failure (Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011). Because Overt Regulatory Strategies can be stated as a risk, deriving from the fact that a leader can influence the career of a follower (Ferris & Judge, 1991), followers will be more inclined to the lower risk Regulatory Strategies, namely Covert Regulatory Strategies (Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011).

Persons who start gossiping might increase their expert power by giving credible information about another person to other team members and the team members will see the gossip as a useful source of information. In this way, the influence of a gossip increases over time (Kurland & Pelled, 2000). Furthermore, if the subject of the gossip notices the harm that can be done by gossiping, the coercive power of gossipers increases and the subject will comply in order to prevent negative gossiping (Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980). Therefore gossip is an effective means to influence a leader, because a follower can achieve his goal without the need to risk his own position by directly confronting the leader.

As predicted in hypothesis 1b, Integrity Failure will lead to Person focused Regulatory Strategies. Gossip is then focused of the person of the leader, and can be harmful for the objects reputation and is related to indirect aggression (Richardson & Green, 1997). A follower is then trying to manipulate others and the goal is to damage the leader's relationships with others. This kind of gossiping can be seen as a form of relational aggression, which is covert aggressive behavior (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). In this way gossiping is used in a maliciously. While this kind of gossip is mostly seen as non-integer (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010), followers are found to respond in a non-integer when their leader fails in Integrity (Polanski & Yammarino, 2009). Therefore the following hypothesis is predicted:

Hypothesis 2a: Integrity Failure will lead to Covert Regulatory Strategies with an focus on Malicious Gossip.

Integrity and Competency Failure together leads to more Covert Regulatory Strategies. If a leader fails both in competence and Integrity, trust of followers is lowered because both are antecedents of trust (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Cook & Wall, 1980; Deutsch, 1960; Mayer et al., 1995; McKnight et al., 1998). In that case followers believe the leader does not act in the group interest and is not capable of achieving collective goals (Darioly & Schmid Mast, 2011; Den Hartog et al., 1999; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Hogan & Craig, 2008; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Kaiser, Vugt, Hogan & Kaiser, 2008; Lord et al., 1984).

Following the reasoning of hypothesis 2b, revolving around the prediction that with less trust Covert Regulatory Strategies is preferred, it is expected that with failure in both aspects followers will lean even more towards Covert Regulatory Strategies. Gossiping can revolve around the person as stated at the hypothesis 2b, which can harm a person (Richardson &

Green, 1997). But gossip can also revolve around processes and in that case it can serve as a means to achieve organizational development without taking an individual risk (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010). Loughry and Tosi (2008) acknowledge that gossiping can be an important dimension of the work performance of team members. This fits with the evolutionary view, because for example in the hunter and gatherer times members of groups were interdependent and individual and organizational interests were aligned and therefore gossiping could be used in order to achieve collective goals (Boehm, 1996; Kniffin & Wilson, 2010).

Because without trust, psychological safety is lowered followers will be more inclined to Covert Regulatory Strategies in order to take less risks (Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011), either malicious or evaluative gossiping. Therefore the following hypothesis is predicted:

Hypothesis 2c: Integrity and Competence Failure combined will increase the use of Covert Regulatory Strategies

Formal Power influences Regulatory Strategies

Followers use Covert Regulatory Strategies towards leaders with high Formal Power. If a leader has High Formal Power over a follower, the follower is dependent on the leader (Kotter, 2010), because the leader is key to the career success of the follower (Zin et al., 2010). Nurturing a better working relationship with their leader assures a followers of perquisites, such as raises, recommendations and promotions (Zin et al., 2010). It is advised to followers to focus on satisfying their leaders in order to enhance career development (Orpen, 1996; Thacker & Wayne, 1995) and assertiveness is dissuaded (Thacker & Wayne, 1995), because actions of followers that are disliked by a leader with high Formal Power, can have a negative backward effect on the follower. This results in increasing likeliness of Covert Regulatory Strategies because the perception of safety to act openly decreases (Mannix, 1993; Stevenson, Pearce, & Porter, 1985).

As mentioned before, gossiping can be effective because expert power of gossipers might increase resulting in more influence overtime (Kurland & Pelled, 2000) and coercive power can enforce leaders to comply with the wishes of the gossiper (Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980) which helps ensure that leaders are forced to group norms (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010). Furthermore, gossiping strengthens the intimacy of social bonds (Dunbar, 2004), and opens an entrance to the structure and social relations of the community (Fine, 1986). Therefore coalitions can be formed, which is a need for followers that feel powerless in order to strengthen their position and decrease their vulnerability (Mannix, 1993; Stevenson et al., 1985). Coalition forming can already be seen in hunter and gatherer times (Van Vugt et al., 2008), but is also visible in the recent history. For example in the successful coalition forming during the Industrial Revolution, in which people united and freed themselves from tyrannical warlords (Van Vugt et al., 2008). More recently coalition forming is seen in the Arabic spring, in which nations revolt against their dictators and in Egypt, for example, the dictator was successfully deposed (Van Leeuwen, 2011). Coalition forming can benefit people in a coalition also in smaller ways, for example in an organization (Ketchpel, 1994). Effectiveness of gossip is for instance shown in the research on the consequences of gossiping on loafers, in which loafers absented themselves from the group (Merry, 1984; Kniffin & Wilson, 2004).

From the previous literature the following hypothesis follows:

Hypothesis 3a: High Formal Power will lead to the use of Covert Regulatory Strategies

Followers use Evaluative Gossip towards leaders with high Formal Power failing in competence. With Competency Failure, gossiping will revolve more around leadership processes, because as predicted in hypothesis 1b, followers will be more directed towards process in that case. As predicted in hypothesis 2b, normally Competency Failure will lead to Overt Regulatory Strategies in order to achieve collective goals. But a leader with high

Formal Power increases the dependability of a follower which increases the use of Covert Regulatory Strategies. Furthermore a follower can still enhance goal achievement by gossiping, without taking individual risk (Boehm, 1996; Kniffin & Wilson, 2010). Therefore the following hypothesis is predicted:

Hypothesis 3a.1: High Formal Power combined with Competency Failure will lead to Evaluative Gossiping

Followers use Malicious Gossip towards leaders with high Formal Power failing in Integrity. If a leader fails in Integrity gossiping will be more about the person as predicted in hypothesis 1a, deriving from the fact that Integrity is perceived as part of the person. As stated in hypothesis 2a, Integrity Failure will lead to more Covert Regulatory Strategies because the follower does not trust the leader. This effect is even stronger if the leader has high Formal Power, because then the follower does not trust the leader and is afraid that actions will affect his career in a negative way. Only when a leader is perceived as integer, a follower believes relational feedback is useful (Polanski & Yammarino, 2009). Therefore, if a leader is perceived as non-integer, a follower will be less inclined to give relational feedback in order to better the behavior of a leader. Gossiping about non-Integrity can serve as enforcement of powerful individuals to conform to social norms (Wilson, Wilczynski, Wells, & Weiser, 2000). Gossiping can be used to harm someone, as mentioned at hypothesis 2a, by using it in a malicious way in order to get power over the subject. Therefore the following hypothesis is predicted:

Hypothesis 3a.2: High Formal Power combined with Integrity Failure will lead to Malicious Gossip

Followers use Overt Regulatory Strategies towards leaders with low Formal Power.

Opposed to high Formal Power, a follower is less dependent on a leader with low Formal Power (Kotter, 2010). If the leader is not key to career success than followers can take more risks when taking action. Therefore, a follower can act in a more direct and open way towards the leader. From an evolutionary view, if a leader does not have (physical) power over a follower, the follower can act against the leader by correcting him or by degrading him (Van Vugt et al., 2008). This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3b: Low Formal Power will lead to overt regulatory strategies

Followers use Constructive Resistance towards leaders with low Formal Power failing in competence. By combining hypotheses 1b, 2b and 3b, it can be predicted that followers will react in a constructive and overt way towards the leader. In hypothesis 1b it is predicted that followers reactions will revolve around processes. Second, in hypothesis 2b it is predicted that Competency Failure will lead to more Overt Regulatory Strategies because followers want to achieve collective goals. And in 3b, it is predicted that if followers are less dependent on a leader they are more willing to act in an overt way. A follower then uses Regulatory Strategies in order to achieve collective goals and will steer the leader in the right direction (Buss, 1995; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3b.1: Low Formal Power combined with Competency Failure will lead to Constructive Resistance

Followers use Dysfunctional Resistance towards leaders with low Formal Power failing in Integrity. By combining hypotheses 1a and 3b it can be assumed that Integrity Failure will lead to Overt Regulatory Strategies. On the other hand in hypothesis 2a, it is predicted that Integrity Failure will mostly lead to Covert Regulatory Strategies because a follower does not

trust the leader and therefore is afraid for the consequences. But if Formal Power is low, a follower does not need to worry about the consequences, hence a follower can act in an overt way. If the follower perceives the leader as non-integer he is more inclined to react in an non-integer way (Polanski & Yammarino, 2009). By rejecting a leader, or openly making fun of the leaders character, a follower can react in an overt non-integer way towards the leader. This behavior is dysfunctional, because it will not help improve the leader or achieve collective goals. Therefore the following hypothesis is predicted:

Hypothesis 3b.2: Low Formal Power combined with IF will lead to dysfunctional resistance

Overview of hypothesis

Below an overview of the hypothesis is given.

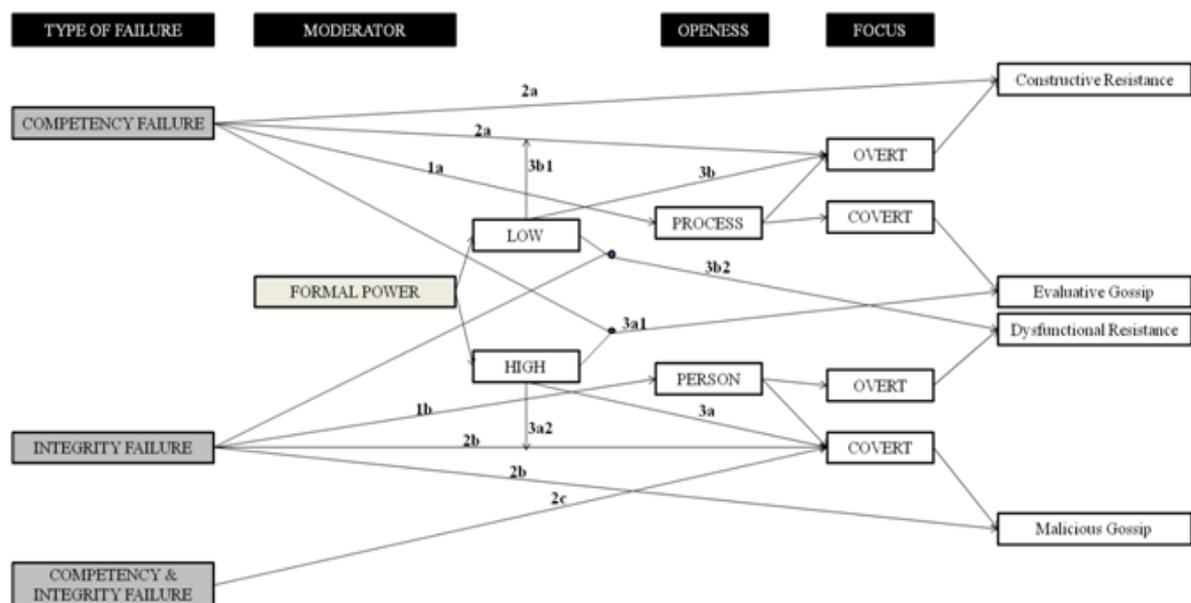


Figure 1. Overview of hypothesis.

METHOD

Participants

601 people (383 women, 218 men, $M_{age} = 34.25$, age range 17 - 77, $M_{education} = HBO$, education range MAVO – WO) participated in this study (see table 2, for demographics and test scores). They were recruited via the internet; e-mail, facebook, linked-in and twitter. Participants did not only exist of my own network, but went farther, this is visible at the demographics, because of the broad range of age and education. The questionnaire was spread throughout other participants. 64% of the participants were women, so sexes are not evenly distributed but both sexes are represented with a considering amount of participants. Only in education level, participants do not represent the population. Most participants were HBO or WO (mean education = 6,29; HBO = 6, WO = 7), which is not conform how the population is composed. Currently 57,9% of the participants is employee, 14,6% leader, 11,5% unemployed, 8,8% freelancer, 3,5% looking for a job, 2,8% retired and 0,8 % disabled. Participants were selected on the requirement that they have (had) a boss in order to ensure they could empathize with the situation given in the questionnaire.

Table 2.
Demographics participants

| | N | Min | Max | Mean |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Age | 594 | 17 | 77 | 34.25 |
| Gender (1 women, 2 man) | 601 | 1 | 2 | 1.36 |
| Education (1 Primary School, 2 MAVO, 3 HAVO, 4 VWO, 5 MBO, 6 HBO, 7 WO) | 601 | 2 | 7 | 6.29 |

Note. Age is a continuous factor. Gender and education are discrete factors.

Participants were randomly assigned to the situations; situation 1 = 78, situation 2 = 68, situation 3 =83, situation 4 = 74, situation 5 = 78, situation 6 = 78, situation 7 = 68, situation 8 =75. Gender means range is 1.26 (situation 4) - 1.47 (situation 7) and therefore both genders were represented in all situations.

Design

The questionnaire is developed by the author of this thesis and external PhD student from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam drs. Max Wildschut, with guidance of associate professor Reinout de Vries, Social and Organizational Sciences.

The study is done via a vignette study, which is a type of experiment. People are primed with the vignette in order to get more realistic answers (Scheufele & Scheufele, 2012). In this experiment three independent variables were manipulated in a story at the start of the questionnaire; Formal Power, Competency and Integrity. This lead to a 2 (High versus Low Formal Power) x 2 (Competent versus Incompetent) x 2 (Integer versus Non-integer) factorial condition, resulting in eight different situations. The design is between-subjects, because the goal of the study is to research the difference in Regulatory Strategies of followers depending on the three characteristics of the leader. This is a general causal relationship (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Every participant was only exposed to one of the eight situations, which were randomly assigned. By assigning participants randomly the bias is lowered for a between-subject questionnaire (Stone-Romero & Rosopa, 2002). After the situation, four events were presented to the participant. Two events revolved around the individual and two around the individual and his/her colleagues.

For every event the four Regulatory Strategies were tested twice. This results in the fact that all Regulatory Strategies were tested eight times (four events in which the Regulatory Strategies were tested twice). The scoring was done by letting participants score the statements on the likeliness that he/she or he/she and colleagues would react in that way on a 5 point likert scale from 1 (absolutely not likely) to 5 (absolutely likely). After the events a manipulation check was done: for all three components two items were scored on a 5-point likert scale (completely disagree – completely agree), in order to test whether the participant

answered the four questions with the situation, stated at the beginning, in mind. At the end general demographic questions were asked.

Variables

Independent variables. The independent variables consist of Formal Power and Competency and Integrity Failure. This variables were operationalized in this research as follows.

Formal Power. Formal Power operationalization is based on Raven & French (1958) coercive power: the perception of followers that their leader has the ability to manipulate punishments for the followers.

Competency. Competency operationalization was based on Podsakoff, Todor and Schuler (1983) research on the influence of Competency or expertise on leadership processes. In this research was found that the expertise, or in other words Competency, of a leader influenced instrumental and supportive leadership behaviors.

Integrity. Integrity was operationalized as the Honesty-Humility (Integrity) dimension of the personality model HEXACO. This dimension relates to the amount of honesty, righteousness modesty and avoidance of greed of a person (De Vries et al., 2009).

Dependent variables.

Operationalization of *Overt Regulatory Strategies* was based on Teppers (2000) scales of Constructive Resistance and Dysfunctional Resistance. These scales were personally requested from Tepper. Constructive Resistance is seen as an effort of a follower to open a dialogue with the leader, and Dysfunctional Resistance as passive aggressive responses to the leader (Tepper et al., 2001).

Operationalization of *Covert Regulatory Strategies* was based on Ellwardts (2011) scales of workplace gossip. These scales are somewhat adapted in order to enlarge the difference between Evaluative Gossip – about leadership processes – and Malicious Gossip – about the person of the leader.

Materials

Standard materials. The questionnaire could be taken via the internet, on computers or smart phones. Therefore participants could take the questionnaire from where they wanted without a researcher being there.

Independent variables. The vignette consisted of a story about a department of a callcenter where Ron Jansen is the leader. Although it was needed to give some information about the company and the leader to make the story plausible, the information was minimized as much as possible. All materials presented to the participants was in Dutch. The English translation of the basic vignette story (without the manipulations) read as follows:

You are an employee at ConectAll, an organization that provides telephone services to other companies. You work at one of the departments with twelve colleagues where the atmosphere is nice. There is a cafeteria where you and your colleagues have lunch together every day, and after the lunch most of you walk in the park in the neighborhood. ConectAll is going to reorganize because costs need to be cut. One of the ways to cut costs is making the complaint handling more efficient. This results in the fact that in your department all functions and tasks will be investigated and revised. Ron Jansen is your leader at the department.

After the story the three independent variables were manipulated with a few sentences, first Power, then Competency and at last Integrity. Below the manipulations are stated per independent variable, translated from Dutch in English.

Formal Power. Formal Power was manipulated with the following sentences:

High Formal Power: He has a lot of influence in the reorganization. He decides by his own how the functions will be structured and which employee will do what. Ron takes all the decisions on rewards and promotions. His opinion can either make or break your career.

Low Formal Power: He has a no influence in the reorganization. An external advisor decides how the functions will be structured and which employee will do what. Ron takes no decisions on rewards and promotions. His opinion does not influence your career.

Competency. Competency was manipulated with the following sentences:

High Competency: Ron is professionally strong, the most important reason for this is that he keeps up with all developments in the industry. He has a good impression of what you and your colleagues are doing and gives useful tips. Thereby, Ron has a clear view of the department and of the different tasks.

Low Competency: Ron is professionally weak, the most important reason for this is that he cannot keep up with all developments in the industry. He has a poor impression of what you and your colleagues are doing and gives no useful tips. Thereby, Ron has an unclear view of the department and of the different tasks.

Integrity. Integrity was manipulated with the following sentences:

High Integrity: Ron is trustworthy, he would never lie and would not use others to achieve his goals. He is honest, reliable and treats people in a fair way.

Low Integrity: Ron is untrustworthy, he lies and uses others to achieve his goals. He is dishonest, unreliable and treats people in a unfair way.

Dependent variables. The four events following the vignette translated in English can be found in appendix (1). For every Regulatory Strategy two items were tested with statements.

Constructive Resistance was tested by statements that involved convincing Ron to do things differently or giving clear arguments why something would not work. The eight statements of Constructive Resistance were averaged to form one scale (overall $\alpha = 0.81$, range : $\alpha = .75$ (situation 1) – $\alpha = .84$ (situation 2)).

Dysfunctional Resistance was tested by statements that involved ignoring or rejecting Ron or by starting a conflict with Ron. The eight statements of Dysfunctional Resistance were averaged to form one scale (overall $\alpha = 0.77$, range : $\alpha = .69$ (situation 6) – $\alpha = .80$ (situation 2)). ($\alpha .77$)

Malicious Gossip was tested by statements that involved gossiping, criticizing or making negative comments about the person or characteristics of Ron. The eight statements of Malicious Gossip were averaged to form one scale (overall $\alpha = 0.93$, range : $\alpha = .84$ (situation 5) – $\alpha = .92$ (situation 6)).

Evaluative Gossip was tested by statements that involved gossiping or questioning Rons performance, achievement or capabilities of leading. The eight statements of Evaluative Gossip were averaged to form one scale (overall $\alpha = 0.93$, range : $\alpha = .87$ (situation 4, 5) – $\alpha = .93$ (situation 3)).

The statements per event are given in the appendix (2).

Manipulation check. At the end of the questionnaire six items were included as a manipulation check of the three independent variables. Formal Power was checked by the items: ‘*Ron has influence*’ and ‘*Ron has a lot of (formal) power*’. The items were averaged to form one scale ($\alpha = .68$) Competency was checked by the items ‘*Ron is professionally strong*’ and ‘*Ron is competent*’. The items were averaged to form one scale ($\alpha = .80$) Integrity was checked by the items ‘*Ron is honest and reliable*’ and ‘*Ron can be described as integer*’. The items were averaged to form one scale ($\alpha = .89$)

Procedure

Participants could click on a link, in an email, on facebook, twitter, linkedin or whatsapp, that lead them to the questionnaire. Then the participants were automatically randomly assigned to one situation. The main body of the questionnaire consisted of a vignette (first page), the four events with the Regulatory Strategies statements (each one page), manipulation check (one page) and general questions about age, gender, education and employment situation (last page). The instruction of the front page told participants that they had to carefully read the vignette and that they needed to answer the questions with the vignette in mind. After the events the participants were asked to fill in the manipulation check and the general background questions.

Method of analysis

To analyze the data, first the influence of background variables was checked with an ANOVA and a Pearson Correlation test. After that it was checked if the manipulation worked with an ANOVA test. Then the Regulatory Strategies could be tested by first converting all situations into the three variables: Competency (Competent/Incompetent), Integrity (Integer/Non-integer) and Formal Power (High/Low). Then a RM-ANOVA (repeated measurements) was done in order to look which interactions were significantly causing differences in preferences for the Regulatory Strategies. This test measures two things, on the one hand differences between participants in order study the effect of the manipulation of Competency, Integrity and Formal Power on the preferences for Regulatory Strategies. And on the other hand, the differences within a participant for the preferences of the four types of Regulatory Strategies. For two way interactions this was followed up with a independent T-test, in order to see which Regulatory Strategy significantly was influenced by the significant interaction effects. For three way interactions an ANOVA test was done followed up with a t-test. For all hypothesis first a RM- ANOVA is stated followed by a t-test or ANOVA and t-

test. For analysis of the results there was looked at how the preferences for the Regulatory Strategies changed because of the varying manipulations. The means of the different strategies were not compared with each other but the effect of the manipulations per Regulatory Strategies was studied. In this way it could be researched how preferences for Regulatory Strategies were affected by the manipulations. In this way general preferences for the Regulatory Strategies, despite of the manipulation, do not play a role and the effect of the manipulations on preferences can be viewed.

RESULTS

Analysis focuses on differences in preferences for Regulatory Strategies of participants originating from the different manipulations. For all significances an alpha level of 0.05 is used.

Background Variables

There is examined for differences in manipulation checks as a function of gender and education level with a separate ANOVA (one way). No significant differences were found for education levels. For gender, significant differences were found for Evaluative Gossip ($F(1,599)=5,85, p=.016$) and Malicious Gossip ($F(1,599)=6.22, p=.013$). Second, effects of relationships between on the one hand employment situation and age, and on the other hand manipulation checks and dependent variables are checked with an Pearson's correlation test. For employment situation no significant correlations were found. For age significant correlations were found with Constructive Resistance ($r(592)=.095, p=.020$) and Dysfunctional Resistance ($r(592)=.097, p=.018$). Because significant differences were found for gender and age, these variables are taken respectively as a factor and a covariance in the analysis.

Manipulation checks

The power manipulation check was done with a 2 (High versus Low Formal Power) x2 (Competent versus Incompetent) x2 (Integer versus Non-integer) ANOVA (one way). A small effect of Formal Power manipulation was found $F(7,593) = 21.29, p=.000$. Participants that read the vignette in which Ron had high Formal Power gave an higher score on Formal Power ($M=3.45, SD=0.83$) than those who read the vignette in which Ron had no Formal Power ($M=2.72, SD=.81$). For Competency a strong effect was found $F(7,593) = 53.39, p=.000$. Participants who had read the Competent manipulation scored the leader as more Competent ($M=3.21, SD=0.09$) than those who read the Incompetent manipulation ($M=2.12, SD=0.08$). For Integrity a very strong effect was found $F(7,593) = 121.52, p=.000$. Participants manipulated with a story of an Integer leader scored the leader higher on Integrity ($M=3.81, SD=0.68$) than those manipulated with a Non-integer leader ($M=2.16, SD=0.72$).

Analysis of hypothesis

A RM- ANOVA (repeated measures) is performed with Competency, Integrity and Formal Power as independent variables and the Regulatory Strategies as dependent variables. Because gender and age were found to cause significant differences gender was added as factor and age as covariance. Before the results of the three way ANOVA (repeated measurements) are stated, first an overview of the mean and standard errors are given in table 3 (this means are without corrections for gender and age).

Table 3.*Means of scores on Regulatory Strategies for manipulations*

| | | <i>Regulatory Strategy</i> | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | | CR | | DR | | EG | | MG | |
| <i>Manipulation</i> | | Mean | SE | Mean | SE | Mean | SE | Mean | SE |
| Power | High | 4.08 | .028 | 2.57 | .035 | 3.15 | .051 | 2.50 | .047 |
| | Low | 4.11 | .026 | 2.68 | .034 | 3.12 | .053 | 2.45 | .052 |
| Competency | High | 4.04 | .028 | 2.56 | .034 | 2.87 | .053 | 2.36 | .050 |
| | Low | 4.15 | .025 | 2.69 | .035 | 3.39 | .046 | 2.60 | .049 |
| Integrity | High | 4.13 | .024 | 2.55 | .033 | 2.80 | .051 | 2.09 | .039 |
| | Low | 4.06 | .030 | 2.70 | .036 | 3.48 | .045 | 2.88 | .049 |
| Situation 1 | High power - high Competency - high Integrity | 4.08 | .051 | 2.43 | .064 | 2.60 | .099 | 2.07 | .075 |
| Situation 2 | High power - high Competency - low Integrity | 3.99 | .070 | 2.59 | .079 | 3.30 | .095 | 2.81 | .101 |
| Situation 3 | High power - low Competency - high Integrity | 4.13 | .043 | 2.66 | .064 | 3.09 | .093 | 2.27 | .070 |
| Situation 4 | High power - low Competency - low Integrity | 4.13 | .061 | 2.63 | .073 | 3.65 | .077 | 2.92 | .098 |
| Situation 5 | Low power - high Competency - high Integrity | 4.11 | .050 | 2.47 | .059 | 2.31 | .087 | 1.78 | .064 |
| Situation 6 | Low power - high Competency - low Integrity | 3.96 | .054 | 2.78 | .068 | 3.34 | .093 | 2.82 | .099 |
| Situation 7 | Low power - low Competency - high Integrity | 4.21 | .049 | 2.66 | .076 | 3.24 | .091 | 2.25 | .095 |
| Situation 8 | Low power - low Competency - low Integrity | 4.16 | .051 | 2.81 | .064 | 3.62 | .086 | 2.97 | .097 |

Note. CR = Constructive Resistance, DR = Dysfunctional Resistance, EG = Evaluative Gossip, MG = Malicious Gossip.

Below the results of the RM-ANOVA are given in table 4. After that all results are elaborated.

Table 4.
Overview significances RM MANOVA

| | F | <i>p</i> | η^2 |
|------------------------------------|---------|----------|----------|
| Focus – Competency | 8.665 | .003 | .015 |
| Focus – Integrity | 14.563 | .000 | .025 |
| Openess – Competency | 17.594 | .000 | .030 |
| Openess – Integrity | 122.701 | .000 | .175 |
| Openess – Competency & Integrity | 14.395 | .000 | .006 |
| Regulatory Strategies - Competency | 13.209 | .000 | .025 |
| Power – Regulatory Strategies | 5.233 | .023 | .009 |
| Power – Competency | .085 | .771 | .000 |
| Power - Integrity | 1.974 | .161 | .003 |

Note. Per hypothesis the significances are given with a *F* and *p* value, the hypothesis are stated in order from hypothesis 1 to 3. Furthermore the effect size is given in column η^2 .

Focus of Regulatory Strategies. Both Competency ($p=.003$) and Integrity ($p=.000$) were found to cause significant differences in the focus of the Regulatory Strategies on Process or Person. Participants who were manipulated with an Competent leader scored lower on Process focused Regulatory Strategies ($M=3.45$, $SD=0.029$) than those who were manipulated with a Incompetent leader ($M=3.79$, $SD=.029$), conditions $t(599) = -7.89$, $p = .000$. There was also a significant difference for Person focused Regulatory Strategies in Competent ($M=2.45$, $SD=.034$) compared to the Incompetent manipulations ($M=2.65$, $SD=.034$), conditions $t(599) = 3.724$, $p = .000$. Therefore H1a can be accepted, people indeed focus more on Process Regulatory Strategies when confronted with a Incompetent leader than with a Competent one. Also the likeliness in Person focused Regulatory Strategies increased, but less steep.

For Integrity manipulations both types of Regulatory Strategies increased significantly in Non-integer manipulations. There was a significant difference in the score of likeliness of

Person focused Regulatory Strategies between Integer ($M=2.31$, $SD=.032$) compared with non Integer manipulations ($M=2.79$, $SD=.035$), conditions $t(599) = -10.335$, $p = .000$. Process focused Regulatory Strategies likeliness also significantly differs between Integer ($M=3.47$, $SD=.028$) and non Integer manipulations ($M=3.77$, $SD=.030$), $t(598.999) = -7.527$, $p = .000$, but this effect is smaller. Therefore H1b is accepted, peoples preference for Person focused Regulatory Strategies is indeed more influenced when they are confronted with an Non-integer leader. Below in figure 2 and 3 the effects of the manipulations of Competency and Integrity on focus of Regulatory Strategies are shown.

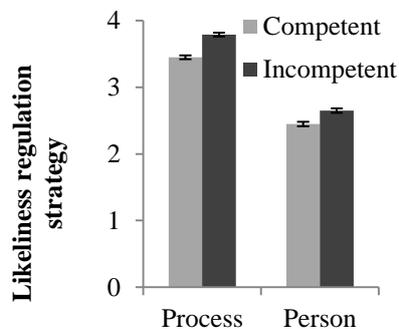


Figure 2. **Differences in likeliness of focus of Regulatory Strategies for Competent manipulations.** Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

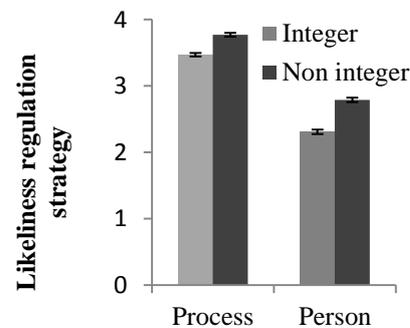


Figure 3. **Differences in likeliness of focus of Regulatory Strategies for Integrity manipulations.** Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

Openness of Regulatory Strategies. Competency ($p = .000$), Integrity ($p = .000$) and Competency * Integrity ($p = .053$) were found to cause significant differences in the openness of the Regulatory Strategies, overt or covert. Competency was found to cause significant differences in the Overt Regulatory Strategies for Competent ($M=3.3$, $SD=.025$) and Incompetent ($M= 3.43$, $SD=.026$) manipulations, conditions $t(599) = -3,510$, $p = .000$, whereby Overt Regulatory Strategies increased in Incompetent situations. Covert Regulatory Strategies also increased when Competent ($M=2.61$, $SD=.043$) manipulations are compared to Incompetent ($M= 3.01$, $SD=.044$), conditions $t(591.909) = -5.895$, $p = .000$. Competency also causes significant differences when all four Regulatory Strategies are taken apart ($p = .000$),

for Dysfunctional Resistance, Evaluative Gossip and Malicious Gossip as shown in figure 6. For Dysfunctional Resistance significant differences were found between Competent ($M=2.55$, $SD=.036$) and Incompetent ($M=2.68$, $SD=.037$) manipulations, conditions $t(599) = -3.171$, $p = .020$. For Evaluative Gossip significant differences were found between Competent ($M=2.86$, $SD=.048$) and Incompetent ($M= 3.4$, $SD=.049$) manipulations, conditions $t(592.197) = -9.993$, $p = .000$. For Malicious Gossip significant differences were found between Competent ($M=2.34$, $SD=.046$) and Incompetent ($M= 2.61$, $SD=.047$) manipulations, conditions $t(565.020) = -12.607$, $p = .000$. This shows that Dysfunctional Resistance, Evaluative Gossip and Malicious Gossip all increase if a leader is Inompetent. For Constructive Resistance this increase is not significant as was expected in hypothesis 2a. Therefore the Process focused part of hypothesis 2a can be accepted, because this increase was steeper. But that Competency Failure leads to more Constructive Resistance can be rejected. Therefore hypothesis 2a is only partly accepted.

For Integrity there were significant differences found for Covert Regulatory Strategies when Integer ($M=2.43$, $SD=.041$) and Non-integer manipulations were compared ($M=3.18$, $SD=.045$), conditions $t(599) = -12.362$, $p = .000$. Therefore hypothesis 2b can be accepted, because for Non-integer manipulations Covert Regulatory Strategies increased when compared to Integer manipulations. The effects are visible in figure 4, 5 and 6.

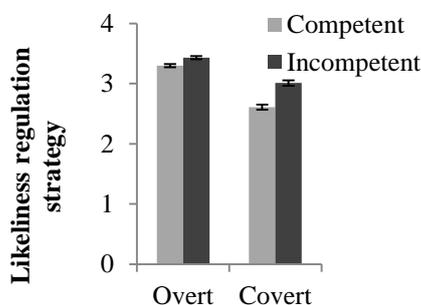


Figure 4. Differences in likeliness of openness of Regulatory Strategies for Competency manipulations. Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

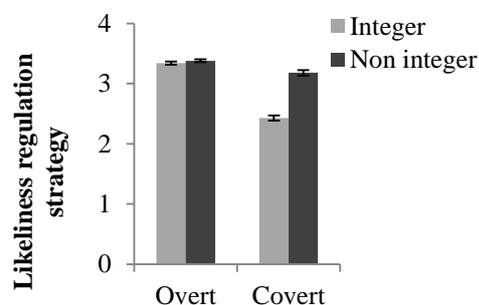


Figure 5. Differences in likeliness of openness of Regulatory Strategies for Integrity manipulations. Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

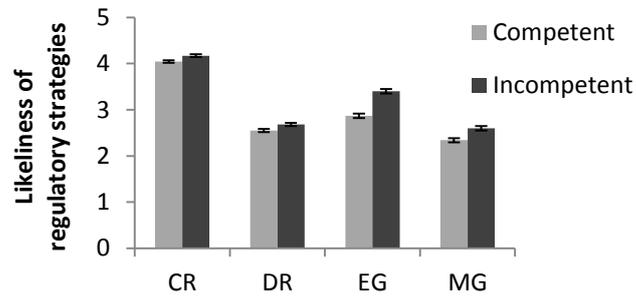


Figure 6. Differences in likeliness of Regulatory Strategies for Competency manipulations. Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

The interaction between Competency * Integrity * Regulatory Strategies is significant as well ($p = .000$). It can be concluded that there are only significant differences caused by the interaction effect of Competency * Integrity on Regulatory Strategies when there is a difference in Integrity of the leader between the two compared situations. In the comparison between integer and integer as well as in non-integer and non-integer, no significant effect on Regulatory Strategies was found. For all significant differences in preferences between situations, there was an increase of preference for the Regulatory Strategies for Non-Integer compared to Integer situations. This is shown in table 5.

Table 5.*Regulatory Strategies means for interaction effects of Competency * Integrity*

| Regulatory Strategies | M | M | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|------|---------------------------|-----------|
| | Competent - Integer | | Competent – Non-integer | |
| Constructive Resistance | 4.05 | 4.13 | -1.483 | 300 |
| Dysfunctional Resistance | 2.50 | 2.66 | -2.229* | 300 |
| Evaluative Gossip | 2.41 | 2.60 | -4.532*** | 300 |
| Malicious Gossip | 2.93 | 3.38 | -2.026* | 300 |
| | Competent - Integer | | Incompetent – Integer | |
| Constructive Resistance | 4.05 | 4.03 | .293 | 305 |
| Dysfunctional Resistance | 2.50 | 2.61 | -1.535 | 305 |
| Evaluative Gossip | 2.41 | 2.30 | .869 | 305 |
| Malicious Gossip | 2.93 | 2.84 | 1.082 | 305 |
| | Competent - Integer | | Incompetent – Non-integer | |
| Constructive Resistance | 4.05 | 4.18 | -2.496* | 302 |
| Dysfunctional Resistance | 2.50 | 2.75 | -3.604*** | 302 |
| Evaluative Gossip | 2.41 | 2.61 | -4.941*** | 299.522 |
| Malicious Gossip | 2.93 | 3.40 | -2.136* | 302 |
| | Competent – Non-integer | | Incompetent – Integer | |
| Constructive Resistance | 4.13 | 4.03 | 1.881 | 295 |
| Dysfunctional Resistance | 2.66 | 2.61 | .737 | 295 |
| Evaluative Gossip | 2.60 | 2.30 | 5.237*** | 290.567 |
| Malicious Gossip | 3.38 | 2.84 | 2.958*** | 295 |
| | Competent – Non-integer | | Incompetent – Non-integer | |
| Constructive Resistance | 4.13 | 4.18 | -1.063 | 292 |
| Dysfunctional Resistance | 2.66 | 2.75 | -1.324 | 292 |
| Evaluative Gossip | 2.60 | 2.61 | -.157 | 292 |
| Malicious Gossip | 3.38 | 3.40 | -.282 | 292 |
| | Incompetent – Integer | | Incompetent – Non-integer | |
| Constructive Resistance | 4.03 | 4.18 | -2.968*** | 297 |
| Dysfunctional Resistance | 2.61 | 2.75 | -2.105* | 297 |
| Evaluative Gossip | 2.30 | 2.61 | -5.626*** | 286.951 |
| Malicious Gossip | 2.84 | 3.40 | -3.043*** | 297 |

Note. For every combination of Competency and Integrity manipulations the means and significances are stated for all four Regulatory Strategies .

* = $p < .05$, *** = $p < .001$.

The interaction effect of InCompetency and Non-Integrity caused the highest likeliness of Covert Regulatory Strategies ($M= 2.85$, $SD=.051$), compared to only InCompetency ($M= 2.45$, $SD=.046$), Non-Integrity ($M= 2.72$, $SD=.050$) or Competent * Integer ($M= 2.17$, $SD=.046$).

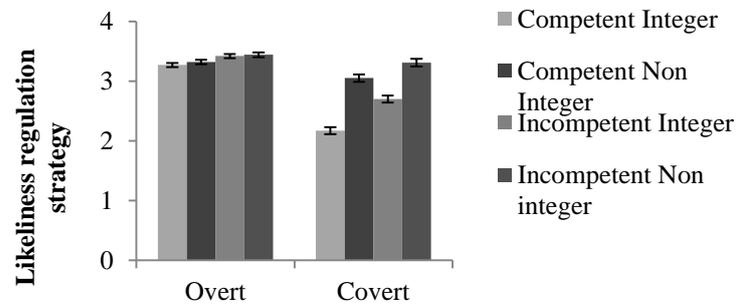


Figure 7. Differences in likeliness of openness of RS between Competent * Integrity manipulations.

Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

Influence of power. Formal Power only causes significant differences for Dysfunctional Resistance in high Formal Power ($M=2.57$, $SD=.608$) and low Formal Power ($M=2.68$, $SD=.588$) manipulations, conditions $t(599) = -2.132$, $p = .033$. This is conform hypothesis 3a and 3b, Overt Regulatory Strategies decreases when Formal Power is high and increases when Formal Power is low. This is shown in figure 8.

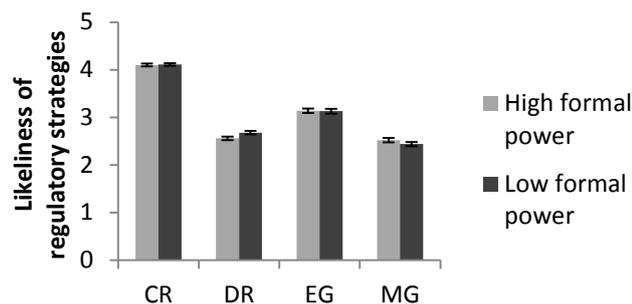


Figure 8. Differences in likeliness of Regulatory Strategies between power manipulations. Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

Formal was not found to moderate the effects of Competency ($p = .771$) and Integrity ($p = .161$) Failure on Regulatory Strategies, leading to not accepting hypothesis 3a2, 3a3, 3b2 and 3b3.

Overview. An overview of the hypothesis is given in figure 9. This figure shows which hypothesis are accepted and which are rejected. As visible, hypothesis 1a, 1b, 2b, 2c, 3a and 3b are accepted. Hypothesis 2a, 3a1, 3a2, 3b1 and 3b2 are rejected.

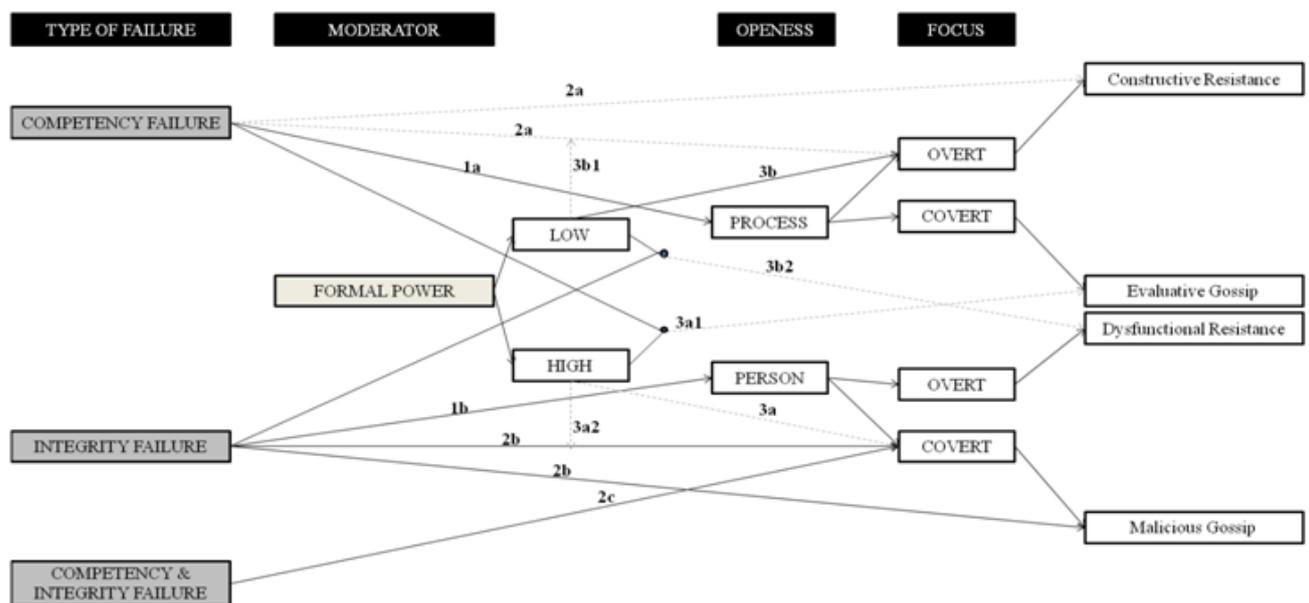


Figure 9. Overview of hypothesis, accepted and rejected.

— = accepted hypothesis
 ---- = rejected hypothesis

Supplementary analysis

An extra finding, apart from the hypothesis but worthy to state, is found for interaction of Power * Gender * Integrity * Openness * Focus, which influences Covert Regulatory Strategies ($p = .038$). Evaluative Gossip scores are higher for females ($M = 3.09$, $SD = .083$) compared to males ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .108$) (conditions $t(145) = -4.057$, $p = .000$), except for low Formal Power and Non-integer leaders were males score higher ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .115$) than females ($M = 3.47$, $SD = .077$). Females are also more inclined to score Malicious Gossip higher ($M = 2.39$, $SD = .079$) in likeliness than males ($M = 2.29$, $SD = .079$) (conditions $t(71.797) = -$

4.252, $p = .000$), except for high Formal Power and non Integrity were males score higher ($M=2.9$, $SD=.119$) than females ($M=2.86$, $SD=.076$) on likeliness of Malicious Gossip. This shows that man score higher on gossip in Non-integer manipulations than in Integer situations, with Evaluative Gossip preferred in low Formal Power and Malicious Gossip in high Formal Power. Figure 10 below shows the differences.

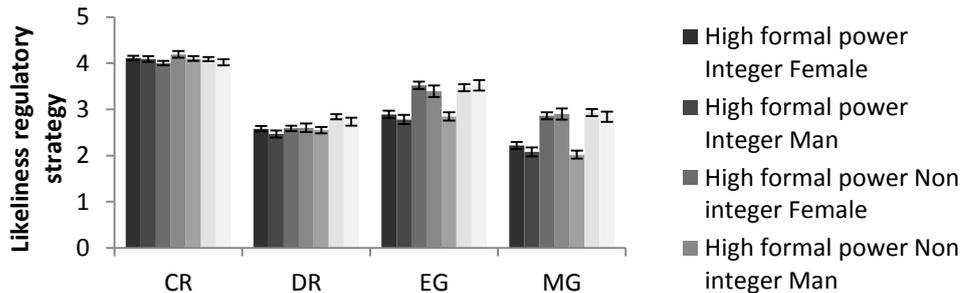


Figure 10. Differences in likeliness of openness of Regulatory Strategies between Competent * Integrity manipulations. Error bars denote standard errors around the mean.

DISCUSSION

Findings

The aim of this study was to assess the differences in preference for four Regulatory Strategies of followers towards leaders, originating from failure of a leader in Integrity and/or competence and the moderating effect of Formal Power. From this research it can be concluded that variations in Competency (Competent versus Incompetent), Integrity (Integer versus Non-Integer) and Formal Power (Low versus High) indeed influence preferences for Regulatory Strategies.

It can be concluded that failure of leaders in either Integrity or Competency, leads to an increase in preference for Covert Regulatory Strategies. When leaders fail, followers start to gossip. When a leader fails in both Integrity and competence, Covert Regulatory Strategies increase even more. These findings lend to support for the theory of Mayer et al. (1995) that Competency and Integrity both are antecedents of trust. Because when trust is violated (Kim

et al., 2004), followers take less risk (Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011). Covert Regulatory Strategies imply less risk than Overt Regulatory Strategies because followers can influence the leader and leadership processes without direct confrontation. By gossiping, the coercive power over the subject increases over time as does the expert power that leads to others relying more on information of the gossip. Therefore, the influence of the gossip over leaders and leadership processes increases over time (Kipnis et al., 1980; Kurland & Pelled, 2000; Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011). A second reason for the increasing preference for Covert Regulatory Strategies is that leader-member exchange of information is lowered when trust is violated (Tepper et al., 2006) and therefore less information is given to a leader when trust of followers in leaders is lowered.

While both types of Covert Regulatory Strategies increase if a leader fails, there is a difference in preferences for Covert Regulatory Strategies for Competency and Integrity Failure. When leaders are failing in Integrity, Person focused Regulatory Strategies have a significant steeper increase than Process focussed Regulatory Strategies. This lends support for the assumption that Integrity is part of someone's personality (De Vries et al., 2009; Kelly, 1955; Kim et al., 2004; Schneider, 1973) and thus is seen as structural (Hinkle, 1965; Kim et al., 2004). For Covert Regulatory Strategies specifically, there is no significant difference between the increase of preferences in Process or Person focused Regulatory Strategies, when a leader fails in Integrity. Malicious Gossip only increases slightly more than Evaluative Gossip. When both types of Covert Regulatory Strategies increase it shows that if a leader fails in Integrity, trust in general is lowered, and followers start to also gossip about the competence of the leader. Therefore if trust is lowered because of Integrity Failure, expectations of competence of the leader are also lowered. Preference for Covert Regulatory Strategies lend support for Tepper et al. (2006) theory that when a leader fails in Integrity the quality of information exchange between a leader and a follower is lowered.

For Competency Failure, as was expected, follower's preference for Process focused Regulatory Strategies increased more than Person focused. This supports the evolutionary view that followers are motivated to try to achieve collective goals (Buss, 1995; Van Vugt, 2006; Van Vugt et al., 2008) because Process focused Regulation Strategies can help to achieve collective goals (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010; Loughry & Tosi, 2008; Tepper et al., 2006). Although it was expected that followers would be more inclined to Overt Regulatory Strategies, because in this way they could take direct actions in order to help achieve collective goals (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), Covert Regulatory Strategies increased the steepest. This is in line with theories around Competency being an antecedent of trust, since trust violation reduces risk taking in communication (Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011) and thus more Covert Regulatory Strategies are preferred. Nevertheless, the preference for the Covert Regulatory Strategy Evaluative Gossip increased considerably more, lending support for the evolutionary perspective that followers try to help achieve collective goals (Buss, 1995; Van Vugt, 2006; Van Vugt et al., 2008), because Evaluative Gossip is a Covert Regulatory Strategy focused on Processes that can help to achieve collective goals (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010; Loughry & Tosi, 2008) and can enhance work performance (Loughry & Tosi, 2008).

Formal Power did not have as much influence as expected, which might be explained by three different explanations. First, even though the power manipulation was significant, it showed the least perceived difference between low and high Formal Power manipulation and therefore preferences might be less influenced. It might be that Formal Power is not truly experienced in this experiment. Second, according to French and Raven (1959) there are five sources of leadership power. Therefore even if the leader has no coercive or reward power (as power was operationalized in this research) a follower still might feel the leader has power because of the three other power types: referent (extent to which a follower can identify with

a leader), expert (knowledge and expertise of a leader) and legitimate (followers image of leaders rights). Therefore leader power might still be perceived as high when Formal Power is low, leading to preference for Covert Regulatory Strategies. The third explanation is that trust in general is lowered when leaders fail (Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011), resulting in followers taking less risks (Mayer et al., 1995), and increasing preference for Covert Regulatory Strategies, no matter the power of the leader.

While Formal Power did not have a moderating effect, it significantly influenced Dysfunctional Resistance. Preference for Dysfunctional Resistance decreased when a leader had high Formal Power. This effect was expected for Overt Regulatory Strategies in general, because when a leader has high Formal Power, he is key to the career of a follower (Kotter, 2010; Zin et al., 2010) and therefore a follower is less inclined to take risks (Mannix, 1993; Stevenson et al., 1985). No effect found of Formal Power on Constructive Resistance can be explained in two ways. The first explanation might be that for Constructive Resistance in general no effect was found, possibly deriving from unconscious social desirable responses by the participants, defined by Paulhus (1971) as Self Deceptive Enhancement in which people overestimate their Competency. Because Constructive Resistance is the most effective direct Regulatory Strategy (Tepper et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), participants might have seen the Constructive Resistance statements as desirable and therefore overestimated their preference and competence for that Regulatory Strategy. The second explanation might be that Constructive Resistance does not have to be negatively interpreted by a leader. When a leader-member relation is of high quality, resistance by followers is seen by leader as multifunctional. Some manifestations of resistance, like negotiation or suggesting, are perceived by leaders as constructive. Others, like refusing or ignoring, are perceived as dysfunctional. When a leader perceives the resistance as constructive, the resistance implies no risk for the follower because the leader in that case appreciates the resistance. On the other

hand, Dysfunctional Resistance is not appreciated by leaders and is therefore a risk for the follower (Tepper et al., 2006). Because followers take less risk when Formal Power of a leader is high, preference for Dysfunctional Resistance decreases when Formal Power increases.

An extra finding of the study is that women overall are more inclined to gossip than man, except for some situations. This lends support for the evolutionary explanation of varying use of Regulatory Strategies by sexes deriving from differences in parental investment (Andersson, 1994; Symons, 1979; Trivers, 1972). Males had to compete with other males for mates, which often resulted in physical aggression. Women on the other hand could not afford to use physical aggression because maternal care is important for them, and therefore Covert Regulatory Strategies, like negative gossip, are more likely to occur (Hess & Hagen, 2006).

Limitations

This research had several limitations. First of all it was an experiment and therefore artificial. The psychological realism to participants of experiments can therefore form a weakness in two ways: experimental and mundane realism. Experimental realism holds the strength and the credibility of the research (Colquitt, 2008). All three manipulations were found to be significant in this research. Nevertheless, the effect of Formal Power was small. Mundane realism holds the likability of the event occurring in the real world (Colquitt, 2008). Second, participants were mostly highly educated; including a higher amount of lower educated people in the sample could have benefited the research because the representativeness of the sample would increase. And lastly, Constructive Resistance was scored highest in almost every situation, and as mentioned this might derive from Self Deceptive Enhancement, in which people overestimate their Competency (Paulhus, 1971),

because Constructive Resistance can be seen as the most desirable Regulatory Strategy since it involves direct action taking to enhance organization processes (Tepper et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Future research

To follow up this experimental study, a field study can be done in which psychological realism cannot be a weakness and Regulatory Strategies can be observed in real life. A field study could research if followers indeed prefer Constructive Resistance in varying situations or that the high scores in the experiment originate from Self Deceptive Enhancement. Furthermore a field study could research the influence of Formal Power, without the experimental realism playing a role.

For future experimental research, greater depth of information could be obtained by incorporating more respondents with a lower education level. Another improvement could be to enlarge the power manipulation effect, for example by making the experiment more striking to participants with a video. Video based experiments are proved to better estimate measures of interpersonal skills and job performance (Christian et al., 2010) and therefore may increase the quality of the study. Another way to enlarge the power manipulation is by manipulating power in a different way, for example by focusing on the powerlessness of followers instead of the power of the leader, because followers obedience towards authority is high if followers experience an inferior position as Milgrams (1974) research showed.

Future research could also study the gender differences in Covert Regulatory Strategies, in order to look how preferences are affected by gender.

Theoretical implications

From the evolutionary perspective it was expected that followers would take direct actions if leaders failed in Competency in order to achieve collective goals (Buss, 1995; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014; Van Vugt, 2006; Van Vugt et al., 2008). As stated, follower's preferences for Evaluative Gossip increased more. This is the covert way to help to achieve collective goals (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010; Loughry & Tosi, 2008). These findings contribute to the evolutionary theories because it shows not only that but also how followers try to ensure achieving collective goals.

Furthermore, it contributes to gossip theories of Ellwardt et al. (2012), by making a clear distinction between two types of gossip. This is important because they have different influences on the relationships between followers and leaders and the achievement of groups, whereby Malicious Gossip can be harmful (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995) and Evaluative Gossip helpful (Kniffin & Wilson, 2010; Loughry & Tosi, 2008) to leaders.

This research also contributes to the theories about trust, in which is stated that Competency and Integrity are both antecedents of trust (Mayer et al., 1995). Failure leads to trust violations, which lead to more Covert Regulatory Strategies (Kim et al., 2004; Mayer et al., 1995; Palanski & Vogelgesang, 2011), but the type of failure, influences which Covert Regulatory Strategies are preferred. For Competency Failure, trust is mostly violated in leadership processes, which is visible in the high increase in the use of Evaluative Gossip. For Integrity Failure, both types of Covert Regulatory Strategies increase. This adds to the existing theory because it is visible that Integrity influences trust in general, leading to followers also mistrusting the competence of the leader. Competency has only a small influence on trust in Integrity, but mostly in Competency trust. Therefore indeed both failures lead to decreasing trust, but in different ways and on different aspects.

Practical Implications

Because leadership failure rate is found to be 60 to 75% (Hogan et al., 1994; Van Vugt et al., 2008) and climate surveys repeatedly reveal that 60 to 70% of employees find their leader the most stressful aspect of their job (Hogan, 2006), it is important for organization to change forms and pay more attention to leaders and leadership processes.

As revealed by this research, follower's preference for the use of Covert Regulatory Strategies increases the most when leaders fail. These Regulatory Strategies are not visible for the leader and therefore it is harder for them to know if they failed and where they need to improve according to their followers. In order to become acquainted with the opinions of the employees an employee satisfaction survey is often used. Employee satisfaction relates to business outcomes (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002) and are therefore important for organizations. The use of the survey and its outcome need to be optimized in order to get better leaders and leadership processes. In the survey, specific questions must be asked with regard to Integrity and Competency of the leader because as revealed in this research, failure in both leads to a decrease in trust. Furthermore, organizations must ensure that the survey outcomes have consequences, since without consequences nothing will be changed and trust will not be regained. By appointing a coach who guides the processes after the survey results, an organization can make sure employee's feedback is applied. A coach can help a leader to make an improvement plan and fulfill this plan.

For Competency, there is a good possibility to regain trust of followers because Competency is seen as something that can be developed and learned (Alexander, 2003; Billet, 2001; Goleman, 1998; Hofstra et al., 1988; Kim et al., 2004; Leeuwen, 1995), and if leaders acknowledge their shortcomings to followers and make a plan to improve, trust can be regained (Kim et al., 2004). But for Integrity this might be different because as shown, Integrity Failure influenced Regulatory Strategies more deeply and broadly than Competency

Failure. Deeply, because people see Integrity Failure as structural and they remember it for a longer time than Competency Failure (Kim et al., 2004). Broadly, because preference for both Covert Regulatory Strategies increased, indicating that follower's faith in the competence of the leader also decreases. Moreover as the research of Sutton (2007) revealed, in the end Non-integer people create economic problems for organizations. Furthermore, bad leaders have influence on commitment of followers, as Darioly and Schmid Mast (2011) state: "people don't leave companies, they leave bosses," and Integrity is found to be essential for leadership performance (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). This arguments give reason for organizations to over think how to act when employees view a leader as non-integer, because integrity is seen as structural (Kim et al., 2004) and not as something that can be developed. In order to improve the Integrity of the leaders beforehand, organizations need to improve their hiring processes and Integrity must be an important value of the organizational culture.

By making Integrity an important selection criterion, organizations can enhance the possibility of hiring integer leaders, because the more integer applicants will be selected. Integrity was already a selection criterion in ancestral times and is valued by followers, therefore integrity as a hiring criterion will result in a higher likeliness of success of leaders (Van Vugt & Ronay, 2014). This can be done in an assessment by giving Integrity questions extra weight. The HEXACO model (De Vries et al., 2009) can be used in order to test Integrity of candidates. During the interview, multiple questions can be asked revolving around Integrity. A more complete view of the Integrity of the candidate can be made this way. Even though research revealed that social desirability does not influence Integrity test outcomes (Ones & Viswesvaran, 1998), candidates must give real life examples with open questions and the validity of Integrity measurement is increased (Van Iddekinge, McFarland, & Raymark, 2005).

Research shows that in higher levels of organizations the percentage of antisocial personality characteristics, which includes a lack of empathy and manipulative behaviour (DSM V, 2012), is higher than in lower levels (Babiak & Hare, 2010). Non-integer behaviour of leaders is therefore an actual risk, which implies that the organizations should anticipate on this by making Integrity part of the culture. Embedding Integrity in the organization culture can be done by making Integer behaviour a value, and setting norms for Integrity. It is important to set clear rules and expectations in order to form the right organizational culture. In this way the whole culture will be impregnated with norms revolving around integer behavior, resulting in people who are more inclined to act integer, since organization culture plays a significant role in the how people feel, think and act (Hofstede, 1980).

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1

| <i>Event</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Work method</i> <i>(Individual)</i> | Ron talks to you about your work methods. He comes with some suggestions how you can do this differently. You doubt his methods. How do you expect that you will respond? |
| 2. <i>Re-organization</i> <i>(Individual)</i> | Ron takes you aside to talk about the reorganization. He asks if you want to help him to convince your colleagues on an idea he has. You doubt his proposal. How do you expect that you will respond? |
| 3. <i>Teammeeting re-organization</i> <i>(Individual and colleagues)</i> | Ron asks you and your colleagues to support his idea he wants to propose to the higher management during the team meeting. You and your colleagues like the proposal but doubt his approach. How do you expect that you and your colleagues will respond? |
| 4. <i>Teammeeting, specific function</i> <i>(Individual and colleagues)</i> | During the team meeting Ron proposes a few changes for the work methods of the team. He wants to immediately apply the changes. You and your colleagues have a different viewpoint. How do you expect that you and your colleagues will respond? |

Appendix 2

| <i>Event</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Regulatory strategy statement</i> |
|--------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | CR | You tell Ron that it can better be done differently. |
| | | You convince Ron to rethink if this is really necessary. |
| | DR | You clearly show Ron that you dislike his ideas. |
| | | You openly resist Rons ideas. |
| | MG | Afterwards you complain about Ron to your colleagues. |
| | | Afterwards you criticise the character of Ron. |
| | EG | Afterwards you question Rons performance with your colleagues. |
| | | Afterwards you talk about the achievements of Ron as leader. |
| 2 | CR | You explain to Ron why his proposal will not deliver the wanted results. |
| | | You explain clearly why this has to be done in a different way or at a different time. |
| | DR | You do not pay attention to Ron. |
| | | You start to argue with Ron. |
| | MG | When Ron leaves you make negative comments about him. |
| | | Afterwards you make negative comments about Rons character to colleagues. |
| | EG | Afterwards you talk about how Ron is performing as a leader. |
| | | Afterwards you talk about the capabilities of Ron to lead the team. |
| 3 | CR | During the team meeting you and your colleagues explain that this better can be done differently. |
| | | During the team meeting you and your colleagues convince Ron to rethink if this is really necessary. |
| | DR | During the team meeting you and your colleagues clearly show you do not like his idea. |

| | | |
|---|----|--|
| | | During the team meeting you and your colleagues openly resist Ron. |
| | MG | After the team meeting you and your colleagues complain about Ron. |
| | | After the team meeting you and your colleagues criticize Rons character. |
| | EG | After the team meeting you and your colleagues complain about Rons performances. |
| | | After the team meeting you and your colleagues talk about the achievements of Ron as a leader. |
| 4 | CR | During the team meeting you and your colleagues explain that this would not deliver the wanted results. |
| | | During the team meeting you and your colleagues give clear arguments why this should be done differently or at a different time. |
| | DR | During the team meeting you and your colleagues do not pay attention to Ron. |
| | | During the team meeting you and your colleagues openly argue with Ron. |
| | MG | After the team meeting you and your colleagues make negative comment on Ron. |
| | | After the team meeting you and your colleagues talk negatively about Rons character. |
| | EG | After the team meeting you and your colleagues talk about how Ron is performing as a leader. |
| | | After the team meeting you and your colleagues talk about the capabilities of Ron to lead the team. |