

CLOSING THE GAP:

**The Women of the
Asian Pacific
American Women's
Leadership Institute**

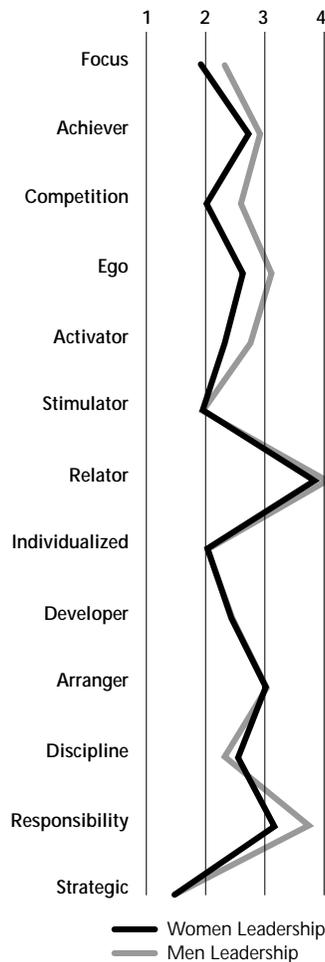
(1996-2000)



**Report by Connie Rath
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MEN/WOMEN DIFFERENCES IN LEADERSHIP THEMES



Author Connie Rath made comments about her findings (in the large type within the report text) in an interview with Diane Yen Mei Wong on 19 February 2000.

INTRODUCTION

From 1996 to 2000, The Gallup Leadership Institute worked with 75 women affiliated with the Asian Pacific American Women's Leadership Institute (APAWLI). They included members of the board of trustees, women selected as fellows of the APAWLI Leadership Fellowship Program and instructors of the group's various programs.

Mission, that sense of what needs to be done and why, is a defining characteristic of the women of APAWLI. The women also exhibit higher evidence of other themes that Gallup has identified with effective leaders: courage, relator, responsibility, arranger and team. These are characteristics that point to leaders who are decisive; committed to their communities, organizations and friends; and who are rated higher by their co-workers and followers.

"If we look at representation of men in leadership to the representation of women in leadership, the percentage slips. And it slips even more when Asian Pacific American women are compared on leadership representation. The capabilities for leadership are equal among these groups. The Gallup study shows that many Asian Pacific American women in the population have leadership abilities, but the women have not moved into those positions yet. That's the gap."

Themes are spontaneous, recurring patterns of thought, feeling and behavior. The key to these patterns is the consistency with which they operate. A theme within a person will regularly occur under a given set of circumstances. Consistency and expectation of recurrence then establishes a predictable behavior pattern, which Gallup can use to determine dominant themes in that person. Having strength or little strength in a particular theme is neither "good" nor "bad." Rather, the degree of strength indicates areas on which to build, where there are opportunities for personal development and how best to work with them.

Leadership themes relate to, and describe, an individual's ability to set goals and motivate people to work together toward the accomplishment of these goals.

The 75 APAWLI women who participated in The Gallup Leadership Institute began the program like other leaders and were assessed on twenty themes - divided into four areas - which have been identified in the leadership success profile. The four areas of leadership are (a) direction, (b) drive to execute, (c) relationships and (d) management style. As a group, the talent profile of APAWLI is stronger than the composite of the over 600 women who have been involved The Gallup Leadership Institute.

DIRECTION

Direction, which is how a leader determines where she is going, is defined by three themes: (1) vision, (2) concept and (3) focus.

APAWLI vs. ALL WOMEN
DIRECTION

Vision



Concept



Focus



APAWLI

All Women Participants

Vision. In the area of direction, vision is a strength that reflects a capacity to create and project beneficial images to be achieved into the future and to which leaders can be dedicated. Leaders with vision have beliefs that have been clarified and that are enduring. Further, leaders who have value-based visions for the future can develop a strong sense of mission because they can help others find purpose in their work.

APAWLI women manifest this theme as mission, and it appears at a higher strength level than among the general women leaders group. Their expressions of caring and altruism are more pronounced than the futurism dimension. The belief and behaviors associated with this theme include a sense of purpose for work and how it is communicated and felt by others. If workers are inspired by the purpose and vision of the future painted by the leader, they gain direction toward the business or organization.

“Leaders in whom futurism is strong think about what a community should be like, how people should be treated in the workplace, and what they want to happen in the next years instead of what is right in front of them. With many visionary leaders, they can think about what their organization and services will look like five years down the

road. The APAWLI women in this study express altruism more than seeing the future and taking people there. It’s a different motivation.”

Concept. Women in the APAWLI program have a higher evidence of concept than women overall. Concept is a theme that contributes to the direction a leader provides. It begins with the leader having a sharp understanding of her style and the management principles with which she leads. Leaders strong on concept have a need to explain what happens in their lives and can explain why they do what they do. They like and collect ideas from many different sources, tucking them into their everyday lives, retaining the ones that work. They ask “why?” and look at the “big picture.” Leaders with this concept are able to define where an organization is going, how it will get there and why. They incorporate outside factors into the internal knowledge they have of the organization.

“Vision is more about ideas for the future and architecting for the future. Leaders with strong concept ask why they are doing something and they attach purpose to it. They are concerned with values, what something means to people, and who is the best person to do something.”

APAWLI vs. ALL WOMEN
DRIVE TO EXECUTE

Courage



Achiever



Ego



Activator



Competition



APAWLI

All Women Participants

People who experience a leader with this theme often feel more stability and objectivity in their environment. There is an element of intelligence seeded in this theme. Women leaders, such as the ones in APAWLI, gain confidence from others when the others voice values and follow practices with meaning, order, and common sense.

"The element of intelligence evident here is from the ability of the APAWLI women to ask the right questions. There is quite a bit of depth in APAWLI leaders, and it comes out in concept. The intelligence shows."

Focus. Focus, that is, being goal-oriented, is a theme that is less dominant for APAWLI leaders. Though the group studied does have more evidence of this theme than other women who have gone through the Gallup institute, men overall rated higher in the way they describe their goal-directedness and tendency to concentrate and keep on task. Focus predicts concentration on activities and career attainment. Persons with high focus can take a direction, maintain that direction and make corrections when necessary; they have something they want to accomplish and they concentrate on getting it done.

Strong focus leaders can help others set goals and keep working toward them. Female leaders with focus appear likely to give more recognition and enable people to feel supported in their development.

"[The APAWLI trustees] are highly talented and have chosen to do a lot of things with their lives.

Collectively, they have moderate focus, so they look at all the different ways they can contribute. Their mission goes into different directions. It's multi-interest, not single interest, and it comes out of the heart and seeing lots of ways they like to help. This can be a bit of a distraction, because the most productive leaders are pretty targeted by what they want to achieve, and they do not get sidetracked by other interests."

DRIVE TO EXECUTE

In determining the drive to execute, that is, how a leader takes charge, Gallup looks at five themes: (1) courage, (2) achievement, (3) ego drive, (4) competition, and (5) activator. This theme grouping includes those that exhibit the highest discrepancies between men and women.

Courage. Courage is a defining theme of APAWLI participants: it is higher in this group than in the general women group. Courage is the ability to move past resistance in difficult situations and to relish challenges in work, and it is present in both men and women who are in positions of leadership and responsibility. Making decisions quickly, rather than procrastinating about important issues and decisions because of possible controversy, is also an ability associated with courage. Women of color who have participated in Gallup studies provide strong illustrations of winning because they had to overcome barriers to their achievement in school and work.

"Courage means that the sense of mission [in the APAWLI women] fires faster and harder. Mission means multiplying your impact. High courage means that you push harder and fire faster, to do what you feel is right and what you want to do about it."

Achievement. APAWLI participants also have an edge over other women leader participants in the achievement drive measure, which looks at the internal drive to be up and doing, to be working, to be getting things done. People with strong achievement have fire in their belly and are often viewed by others as ambitious people; they think a lot about their work and believe that work is good.

"It's a stereotype that Asian and Pacific American women are more passive, because that's not what I've been finding in term of achievement and courage. Those are themes that are there in pretty good doses. There may be some cultural things that hold Asian Pacific American women back, but it's not because of some genetic or psychological quality or [lack of] potential for leadership."

Achievement drive is spotted early in school experiences and is seen as a primary factor in grade attainment. Leaders with strong achiever seem to set expectations that are clear to those they lead. Women with evidence of this theme also influence quality and recognition in the workplace. This characteristic is important to leadership because of the level of sustained energy and follow-through with people and goals.

Ego Drive. APAWLI participants are more ego-driven than the other women studied, because they are a more select group. While women have strong pictures of themselves when they are in leadership roles, men seem to claim their stakes in a way that is more dominant. Men are more likely to describe themselves as risk takers with big pictures of what they can achieve

and control. The "first to market" concept may help explain why men fill leadership positions in a disproportionate ratio. From historical expectations of men to a higher rate of individual tendencies to take command, there are reasons for this occurrence.

Leaders for whom ego drive is strong define themselves by the recognition they receive, the status they are perceived to have, and by their credibility in the eyes of their associates. They strive to excel, to be the best.

Competition. Competitive persons sort out situations where they not only can test themselves against others but also where they have a reasonable opportunity for winning. For them, success is winning. They push themselves to do more and to do better than others - even when other people may not even know there is a contest. In several Gallup talent measures, there are indications that competitive behavior is more probable in the male than the female population. It is the biggest theme difference between men and women in the leader study. APAWLI women mirror this observation.

"Competition always has a loser; [but] winning can mean achieving more against self or a having productivity gain. There does not always have to be a loser. Courage [in APAWLI women] sticks out compared to women in general. Women of color in leadership have learned to push and move barriers, and that's a good thing."

Associates perceive the women who have achieved leadership positions, as slightly more competitive than the males to whom they are compared. This may be because people expect women in leading jobs to have attained them by competing. Competition is a force that relates to achievement in sales, an area long dominated by men, and many business and political leaders have started with some type of sales success. Few women in the APAWLI program have sales backgrounds.

Activation. If courage is the theme that measures the individual's proclivity to react to resistance and speak more loudly (often around his or her needs), activation is the theme which the leader uses to move groups to action for the sake of the groups and their goals. Leaders high on the activator theme "get things done." They have a bias for action and take satisfaction in being able to "make things happen." They appear motivated by roadblocks and have a high desire to push teams of people where they might not ordinarily go. APAWLI participants are not quite as high as the general women leader group on this measure.

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships center around six leadership themes: (1) relator, (2) team, (3) multi-relator, (4) developer, (5) individualized perception, and (6) stimulator. These themes look at how a leader influences individuals and groups through interpersonal contact.

Relator. Relators have a capacity to build trust and to be caring leaders. The theme characterizes the leader's tendency to initiate and develop positive, mutually supportive relation-

ships with associates and staff members. It captures the leader's ability to know, and show regard for, people in the organization. People who rate the leader high on this theme acknowledge that she has a concern that goes beyond work expectations and to the issues they face in the rest of their lives. When staff members have a positive relationship with their leader, they are more likely to have positive relationships with each other.

APAWLI participants have a positive relating style in common. It is the most dominant theme in the APAWLI group. These themes are more evident with APAWLI than with other women leaders. Women with strong relator themes influence positive attitudes toward learning, development, and fostering friends at work.

"High relators make the people they lead feel cared about, which affects retention in the work setting or volunteer setting. A relator helps people stick with it longer. They place an emphasis on reaching out beyond the work group, out to the people that they serve. It's tied closely to mission."

Team. The next most dominant themes for APAWLI in this area are multi-relator and team. When the team theme is high, leaders have a coach-like attitude: they have the ability to bring

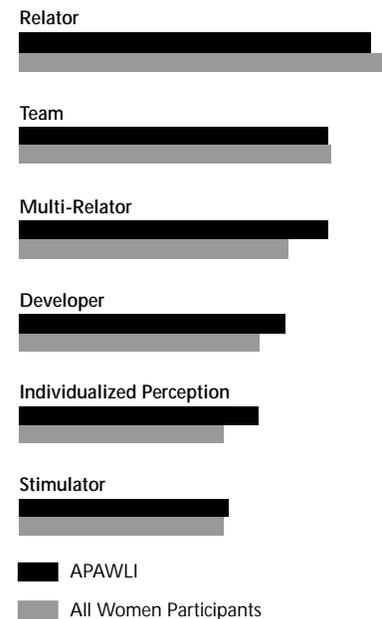
people together in a productive way to achieve a goal. A strong team-oriented leader knows that getting things done means getting good people to help, and that her ability to get their help depends largely on the quality of the relation she has with them. For them, getting results is based on knowing what each team member can do and then moving them into those positions where they can best use their strengths. Women in APAWLI and the overall population of women leaders have about the same level of strength in this theme.

Multi-Relators. Leaders who are strong multi-relators continually extend their relationships, both inside and outside their organization. They are usually very positive and outgoing and offer generous praise to those with whom they work. At the base of this ability is an extroversion and friendliness. The women of APAWLI have a stronger multi-relator theme than the general group of women leaders.

Developer. APAWLI women are significantly higher than other women on the developer theme. They are able mentors and provide successful experiences for the people for whom they are accountable. Leaders with this theme receive high scores for giving recognition and valuing opinions. They know the importance of talent and will recruit individuals who have the potential for excellence and then give them the opportunity to develop those talents.

Individualized Perception. Individualized perception is another theme that distinguishes APAWLI participants. While this theme is one of the less dominant for the group, the APAWLI women have a much stronger individualized perception theme than the group of women leaders as a whole. Leaders

APAWLI VS. ALL WOMEN RELATIONSHIP



strong in this theme have the ability to identify the talents of individuals, and thus seek out the unique life history of each person. When it is present, people feel they have been treated in accord with their personal abilities and differences. The leader who has this quality thinks individually about each of her employees and does not treat them all the same.

Stimulator. Stimulators create good feelings about their employees and about work. They bring in a contagious enthusiasm to the workplace, because they know the importance of creating an emotional environment that facilitates growth. Associates feel the stimulator theme in a leader because they receive more recognition and because they reside in a positive and exciting work environment. With a leader who is a high stimulator, work is not humdrum. In the Gallup interview, this stimulator theme is the most distinctively descriptive of female leaders in comparison to male leaders. It is of moderate strength with APAWLI participants, about the same for women in general.

MANAGEMENT

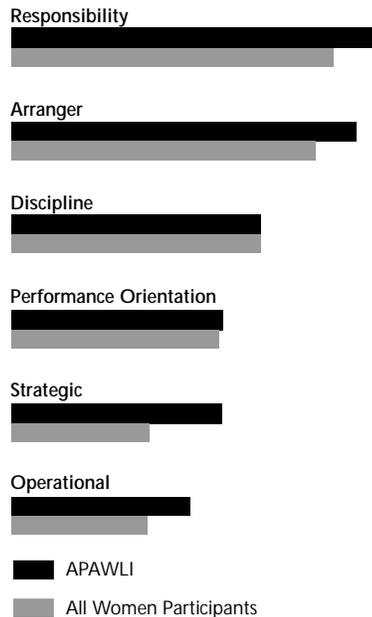
Management involves administration and problem solving. Gallup looks at six themes that delineate the management area: (1) responsibility/ethics, (2) arranger, (3) strategic thinking, (4) operational, (5) discipline, (6) performance orientation. Themes that cluster around management and operational responsibilities appear to be more naturally present in men and show up less frequently in APAWLI participants and women generally.

Responsibility/Ethics. Responsibility/ethics is a hallmark theme of APAWLI participants. It reflects the capacity for taking psychological ownership of their own behavior. With women, it drives overall workplace engagement more than any other single theme. Leaders high on this theme have a set of values that they can use to guide them in selecting what they will and will not do. They are dependable and do what they say they will do. People associated with high responsibility leaders credit them for clarity regarding right and wrong and for taking personal ownership about decisions and timelines.

“Responsibility with women – not just specifically APAWLI women – drives positive work outcomes. If women have high ownership of what they do and high personal accountability, then the people whom they lead are more productive. Responsibility influences how people feel about their workplace, and one of the highest influences comes when the leader is a woman.”

Arranger. The next most dominant theme with the APAWLI group is arranger, which appears as a moderate strength. It is higher among the APAWLI women than among other women leaders, but both women and men seem equally probable to possess this theme. The

APAWLI VS. ALL WOMEN MANAGEMENT



arranger theme looks at the ability to coordinate people and their activities so that work is done efficiently.

Effective arrangers anticipate what is going to be needed, both in terms of human and physical resources, and then have them there at the right time. The most effective arrangers plan as they go rather than developing the whole plan first and then following it. At the same time, however, they have already run several scenarios in their mind before putting a plan into action. Flexibility and communication mark the effective arranger manager. Observers see arrangers as growing their organizations and making them better places.

Strategic. There is a significantly higher level of strategic thinking with APAWLI women than the general women's group. This is a theme that brings creativity to the way a leader builds vision and reflects her ability to do "what-if" thinking as she imagines and creates paths to future goals. Strategic thinkers first seek a clear understanding of the particular character of each element of a situation and then make the fullest possible use of their brainpower to restructure the elements in the most advantageous way. The most effective strategic leaders are often willing to experiment as they move into their future.

Operational. The operational theme, which looks at the capacity for administering the systems that help people be more effective, is less present in the APAWLI group than other management themes. Nevertheless, the APAWLI women exhibit a higher strength in this than the overall women leaders group. Men, more

than women in this study, are noted for being more systems and process oriented in the way they themselves describe their own behavior and also by the people who observe them.

Leaders who are strong in this theme are people managers, and they spend time working with productive people. Because they are oriented toward making things work, they are opportunity thinkers and usually create opportunities out of problems.

Discipline. Discipline, which is defined as the need to structure time and environment, is a theme with quite a bit of universality and less assignment to gender. The APAWLI sample looks much like the general women leaders group. Women with high discipline influence expectations. This theme accounts for organization, administrative effectiveness and standards. Leaders who have a strong discipline theme are more likely to have good esprit de corps in their environment, because they behave in predictable ways and the staff can learn to relate to them.

Performance Orientation. The most divergent management theme, by gender, is performance orientation, which is an attitude of being results-oriented and needing to measure achievement. The APAWLI group and women leaders overall have about the same strength level. In some respects, this theme is more globally representative of competition, which, as noted above, is more present in men leaders. It mirrors the stronger influence of men around winning and motivation by financial targets.

"Women who work in high performance organizations find their way to survive. The APAWLI women tend to talk more about people they include in the workplace or in the community they serve. High performance-oriented companies, though, have to have women who pay attention to numbers. It's a matter of tailoring leaders to what the organization is. We're only beginning to see more women populate sales forces, whereas many men leaders have come up through sales ranks and that affects their aggressive attention to performance."

Strong performance-oriented leaders emphasize performance with a high degree of objectivity and evaluate people according to what they produce, rather than how the job is executed. They tend to promote an open, communicative environment where people can tap into available resources and obtain the information they need so they can move forward and accomplish their jobs.

CONCLUSIONS

"I was not that surprised by the findings, because I had had a chance to meet and work with many women in the APAWLI leadership program and have a strong view of their leadership capability. The surprise for the general public is that there is as much strength and as many inherent leadership themes in Asian Pacific American women and in women in general as in men who come through the Gallup Organization from the overall population."

- The APAWLI fellows program and board selection have gathered women leaders with common mission. The process is weighted toward leaders with a strong disposition to community contribution and regard for individuals. The comparison to other leaders on these measures confirms the emphasis.
- There is little difference in the talent composition from year one to year five. The prevailing emphasis on mission and relationship is the common denominator.

- It is expected that a highly selected group would stand out in a leadership comparison to a more general group.
 - There is a wide range of talent difference among the women studied. Some individual profiles are much less driven to be visible and successful.
 - The sample of board members is small. It is a composite model of leadership talents at a strong level and can serve as a model for future fellow selection.
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"The most important message is about the talents that are present, and we need to find them and not waste that talent. There are women who can be playing a bigger leadership role. There are women in the Asian Pacific American community who can be leaders and who can be pushed. APAWLI has done a good job of finding some, and they can find more."





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