

# Chapter LI

## Leadership Practices Inventory

**Sharon Berry**  
*Kadix Systems, LLC, USA*

### BACKGROUND

The leadership practices inventory (LPI) (Posner & Kouzes, 2002) was designed to measure what people did when they were at their “personal best” in leading others. Beginning their work in 1983, Posner and Kouzes approached leadership as a measurable, learnable, and teachable set of behaviors. The LPI was created by developing a set of statements describing each of the identified five leadership actions and behaviors: modeling, inspiring, challenging, enabling, and encouraging.

Each statement is based on a 10-point Likert scale, with higher values representing more frequent use of a leadership behavior. The LPI consists of 30 statements, 6 for each leadership action/behavior. Both self and observer forms are available and subject to the same psychometric analyses.

Participating individuals first complete a self (leader) form, and then request 5 to 10 individuals who interact with that person to complete the observer form. The LPI takes 10 minutes to complete, and may be scored by hand or computer.

Over a 15-year period, Kouzes and Posner examined cases of middle and senior level managers in private and public sector organizations. They have expanded their coverage to include community leaders, church leaders, government leaders and others in nonsupervisory positions. A student leadership version is also available (Posner, 2004).

### RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Research supports that the LPI is internally reliable. The statements pertaining to each leadership practice are highly correlated.

The five scales are generally independent. The five scales corresponding to the five leadership practices do not all measure the same phenomenon. Instead, each measures a different practice.

Alpha reliability coefficients range from .75-.87 in the self form and from .88-.92 in the observer form. Test-retest reliability is high (Posner & Kouzes, 2000).

## COMMENTS

The LPI has been applied in studies investigating leadership practices such as work group performance, high- and low-performing schools; the impact of an academic collegiate leadership development program; organizational identification and commitment among nonprofit employees, coaches, church leaders, and pastors involved in establishing new churches; and congregational growth.

Note: Third edition components cannot be used with second edition components of the instrument. The two editions are incompatible, and combining the materials and software will result in false data and inaccurate reports.

## LOCATION

Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2003). *The leadership practices inventory (LPI): Self instrument*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2003). *The leadership practices inventory (LPI): Observer*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

The Leadership Practices Inventory may also be completed online for a cost at <http://www.lponline.com/lpi/helpInfo/aboutLPI.jsp>

## REFERENCES

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Posner, B. Z., & Kouzes, J. M. (2002). *The leadership practices inventory: Theory and evidence behind the five practices of exemplary leaders*. Retrieved January 27, 2006, from [http://media.wiley.com/assets/463/74/lc\\_jb\\_appendix.pdf](http://media.wiley.com/assets/463/74/lc_jb_appendix.pdf)

## KEY TERMS

**Challenging:** Seeking innovative ways to change, grow, and improve by experimenting and taking risks.

**Enabling:** Fostering collaboration by sharing power and discretion.

**Encouraging:** Recognizing contributions, showing appreciation for excellence, celebrating values and victories, and creating a spirit of community.

**Inspiring:** Envisioning the future and appealing to shared aspirations.

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