Sample Review by Micro Editor

I enjoyed reading this paper, which has a number of noteworthy strengths. Understanding the boundary conditions for the psychological and behavioral effects of transformational leadership is a theoretically interesting and practically important topic. I agree with your premise that followers' individual differences have been largely neglected as critical moderators in leadership research, and I was glad to see that you included both personality and ability factors. I also appreciated your use of multiple samples, methods, and data sources—especially the combination of experimental and longitudinal field studies, which enhances the internal and external validity of your research. Finally, the paper is clearly written and well-organized.

At the same time, a number of theoretical and empirical issues give me pause about the paper's potential to make a substantial contribution to management research. In particular, my most significant concerns focus on the comprehensiveness and conceptual foundations of your theoretical approach and the viability of your studies for supporting the null hypothesis. In the following pages, I spell out these concerns and offer developmental suggestions that I hope will be useful as you continue to pursue this thought-provoking line of research.

1. Theoretical framework

One of my central concerns revolves around your choice of individual differences to study. I certainly agree that self-esteem, trust, cynicism, and cognitive ability are potentially relevant characteristics, but I have two reservations about limiting your focus to these four characteristics. The first is comprehensiveness: these characteristics represent only a small slice of the vast set of individual differences that have been studied by organizational and psychological researchers. This leaves me with the impression that the paper ultimately falls short of delivering on your promise to explore whether some followers are "immune" to transformational leadership. The second is arbitrariness: these characteristics have a bit of a "laundry list" flavor, as you justify them on the basis of speculations from other researchers rather than on a unifying theoretical framework. This leaves me questioning the conceptual rigor of your hypothesis development.

Moving forward, I feel that your paper would benefit from an overarching theoretical perspective. I would suggest drawing on a core conceptual framework that would (a) enable you to capture a more comprehensive set of individual differences and (b) provide an organizing logic for focusing on particular individual differences. After all, a good theory not only explains the relationships between constructs; it also provides a clear rationale for why focal constructs were included and others were excluded (Dubin, 1976; Whetten, 1989). For example, you may consider organizing your choice of personality traits based on the Big Five taxonomy (for reviews, see John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae & Costa, 2003). Although you include these traits in a supplementary analysis in Study 2, I feel that you could leverage this framework much more effectively by utilizing it to guide your hypothesis development and measuring these traits in all of your studies.

2. Ambiguity of null effects

I was excited to see that your study designs were complementary, in that each takes meaningful strides toward offsetting the weaknesses of the others. However, as I read through your results, I was not persuaded that your null findings are not artifacts of your sample, measures, and

analyses. I can see at least five alternative explanations for the lack of evidence in your studies that followers' individual differences moderate their reactions to transformational leadership:

(a) ***Wrong characteristics:*** Building on my previous comment, you may have simply overlooked many other follower characteristics that do moderate reactions to transformational leadership. For example, recent studies have shown that followers' reactions to transformational leadership are moderated by their conservation values (Shin & Zhou, 2003), critical-independent thinking styles (Zhu, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2008), and collectivist orientations (Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003). Although these studies are consistent with your underlying premise, they challenge your conclusions. If you truly wish to claim that "the effects of transformational leadership… broadly generalize across followers" (abstract), I would recommend (i) citing these studies and (ii) incorporating these characteristics, as well as many other individual difference variables, into your study. Indeed, the International Personality Item Pool (http://ipip.ori.org/) alone includes scales for well over 200 different personality traits.

(b) ***Statistical artifacts:*** Your null findings may also be driven by range restriction and/or low reliability and validity of measures. Range restriction prevents you from assessing whether the effects of transformational leadership vary across the full scope of follower scores on a given characteristic and outcome. In terms of reliability and validity, most of your measures have good internal consistency values, but you may still have poor reliability for your interactions, as the reliability of an interaction term is equal to the product of the reliability of its components (Evans, 1991). Moreover, your experiment included no manipulation checks, which raises concerns about the validity of your transformational leadership manipulation. In your next experiment, I would encourage you to ask followers or another group of participants to evaluate the leader's behaviors that you can determine whether the leader in the transformational conditions was actually perceived as more transformational. Note, though, that this approach is still vulnerable to validity threats and confounds (Bullock, Green, & Ha, 2010; Sigall & Mills, 1998). In summary, all three of these statistical problems can impair your ability to detect significant interactions (for a brief summary, see Mount et al., 1999: 719-720).

(c) ***Opposing signs:*** A final possibility is that for several of your individual characteristics, you have two-way interactions of opposing signs that cancel each other out. According to constructivist epistemology (McGuire, 1983; Thorngate, 1976), interactions can take different forms under different conditions. For example, theories of confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998) suggest that employees' personality traits are likely to shape how they channel their cognitive abilities. Followers high in cognitive ability may respond more favorably to transformational leadership when they are trusting (they focus on the leader's strengths and enjoy being intellectually stimulated) but less favorably when they are cynical (they look for inconsistencies in the leader's messages, values, and behaviors). This suggests that although your two-way interactions are not significant, you may have significant three-way interactions buried in your data. Moving forward, it might be worthwhile to generate hypotheses about these types of three-way interactions and test whether they bear out in your datasets.

In summary, although I feel that management journals should be open to publishing null results, I am not convinced that your data can rule out these important alternative explanations. Given the numerous statistical and philosophical difficulties associated with accepting the null hypothesis, I feel that your conclusions overstep the affordances of your data. If you decide to focus on publishing the current data, I would recommend tempering your claims about how broadly transformational leadership generalizes across followers and consulting Mount, Barrick, and Strauss's (1999) thoughtful discussion of the limitations of null findings. If you decide to explore new possibilities for data collection, I would recommend focusing on conducting a strong inference test (Platt, 1964), which would likely involve a consideration of a much more comprehensive set of individual characteristics, as well as larger and more diverse samples.

Additional comments

3. In order to set the stage for your contribution, it is important to convince the reader that your research questions have not been answered elsewhere. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, a number of studies have tested the role of individual differences in moderating followers' reactions to transformational leadership. These studies have shown that transformational leadership is more strongly related to creativity for employees with high than low conservation values (Shin & Zhou, 2003), work engagement for employees with high than low critical-independent thinking styles (Zhu et al., 2008), and organizational commitment and coworker satisfaction for employees with high than low collectivist orientations (Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003). I believe you can draw on these findings in two ways. First, in the introduction, you might refer to these studies as providing initial evidence that follower characteristics do matter as moderators. Second, in the discussion section, you might juxtapose your findings against these and attempt to explain why your characteristics did not have moderating effects in your studies.

4. In your introduction, you do an excellent job building a case for why we should care about transformational leadership. However, I feel that you stop short of explaining why it is theoretically and practically important to study how follower characteristics moderate their reactions to transformational leadership. On page 4, you identify this as a gap in the literature, but you never articulate why it is necessary to fill this gap. Theoretically, how will an understanding of the moderating role of follower characteristics advance our knowledge, change our thinking, or challenge our assumptions about leadership? Practically, how can leaders and followers use the information gained? Do you expect leaders to be able to judge followers' personalities and abilities, and either select followers to match their styles or adjust their styles to match followers' characteristics?

5. Although your variables will be familiar to many readers, in the spirit of precision and clarity, I would suggest defining cognitive ability, self-esteem, trust, and cynicism early in the paper.

6. As you develop your hypotheses, you tend to rely on citations to previous scholarship without delving more deeply into specifying the logic or rationale for why you expect your moderating effects. For instance, on page 6, you state that "those prone to trusting their leaders will respond more favorably to transformational leadership behaviors" but you never explain why this would be the case. I would suggest combing through each of your hypotheses and clearly explicating the underlying mechanisms (see Sutton & Staw, 1995). For example, do employees high in

dispositional trust engage in confirmation bias or motivated information processing, paying attention to leaders' desirable behaviors while discounting their undesirable behaviors?

7. Your hypotheses make the assumption that follower characteristics will have the same patterns of moderating effects on the relationship between transformational leadership and three dependent variables: satisfaction, motivation, and performance. These are very different constructs with distinct antecedents—satisfaction is an attitude or evaluative judgment (Weiss, 2002), motivation is a desire to act (Mitchell & Daniels, 2003), and performance is the effectiveness or value of behavior relative to organizational goals (Campbell, 1990). Accordingly, I would recommend developing distinct hypotheses for these three variables accurately capture the nuances and mechanisms that may be uniquely relevant to each of them.

8. In Study 1, how did you ensure that writing names on surveys did not introduce social desirability biases, and that participants actually gave their surveys to supervisors and direct reports, instead of responding to the surveys themselves or asking others to complete them?

9. There are a few inconsistencies between your hypotheses and your studies that might be worth resolving. For example, I was surprised that you did not measure all of your moderators across all studies, as this would have allowed you to examine whether the interactions that are significant can be replicated. Also, in your hypotheses, you appear to assume that cynicism and trust are opposite poles of the same construct, yet you measure them as distinct constructs with separate scales. If you decide to keep both scales in the paper, I would suggest explaining how they differ early in the paper. As another example, organizational commitment appears as a dependent variable in your studies but not in your hypotheses—I would recommend incorporating into your theory and hypothesis development.

10. Where you do find significant interactions, so that readers can interpret them, I would recommend plotting the simple slopes at one standard deviation above and below the means, as well as comparing the slopes to zero to assess their significance (Aiken & West, 1991).

11. I would have liked to see a much richer discussion section that explains your key theoretical contributions, openly acknowledges the major limitations of your research and directions for future research, and addresses practical implications. See recent issues of *AMJ* for examples.

I hope this feedback proves to be helpful. Good luck with your research!

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Sample Review by Micro Editor

You have conducted a series of studies that were designed to examine the notion that some followers are immune to the favorable effects of transformational leadership (on followers' attitudes, motivation, and performance) that have been observed in previous research. There are several things to like about your paper: your research question is interesting, you have employed multiple and complementary methods to test your hypotheses, and the paper is well-written. Despite the positive features of your paper, however, I have some concerns about the paper's potential to contribute to the management literature. In this review I will confine my comments to what I perceive to be the paper's major limitations and offer some recommendations for improving the work. I hope that you will find my comments helpful.

1. My most significant concerns have to do with the decision to focus on follower trust/cynicism, ability, and self-esteem as moderators of the effects of transformational leadership. You have made a good case for the general notion that all followers may not react the same (positive) way to transformational leadership, but the material leading up to the moderation hypotheses was underdeveloped and unconvincing and my sense is that other follower characteristics might be better candidates for this exercise. Of course, the fact that your moderation hypotheses were not supported means that I have the benefit of hindsight. Still, I'd like to offer some suggestions for improving the conceptual development for the predictions that you have (Comment #2) and propose some alternative approaches for examining the same basic research question that underlies your research (Comment #3).

2. Hypothesis development. To explore the idea that some followers may not be as responsive to transformational leadership you focused on "follower characteristics that have been proposed as moderators" (p. 4) in previous theoretical work. I would, however, characterize these earlier predictions as "food for thought" rather than fully articulated and theoretically informed moderation hypotheses. As a result, it leaves you with the responsibility for developing a convincing conceptual basis for each prediction. But much of the conceptual development preceding the hypotheses speaks more to the mechanisms by which transformational leadership leads to outcomes and less on the mechanisms by which the moderators that are the focus of your work influence the relationship between transformational leadership and outcomes. Understanding the mediation mechanisms can be helpful in developing the conceptual basis for moderation predictions (I return to this idea later), but it is not a substitute for that conceptual work. I found the conceptual basis for Hypothesis 2 (intellectual and cognitive ability) to be particularly unconvincing – an argument can be made that individuals who are more open to new experiences will be more likely to embrace the message of a leader who articulates a vision of the future that departs from the status quo.

3. Some alternatives to consider. You may not have the data to follow-up on the comments I'll make here, but I offer them anyway as they may be of help to you. I begin by referring back to the transformational leadership research that has identified mediating mechanisms. In a nutshell, this work suggests that transformational leadership influences

followers' attitudinal and performance outcomes indirectly, through the effects it has on such things as emotions, confidence, and trust (p. 5). Other mediators that have been identified include core job characteristics (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006), self-concordance (Bono & Judge, 2003), and leader-member exchange (Wang, Law, & Hackett, 2005). After accounting for these factors, transformational leadership may have little influence on the outcomes that you examined. It may therefore be more fruitful to examine the role that follower characteristics play in explaining the relationship between transformational leadership and these proximal outcomes. For example, if it is an "emotional wollop" (p. 5) that explains how transformational leadership influences attitudes and performance, it may be possible to identify immunities (to transformational leadership) by focusing on individual factors that make it less likely that individuals will experience favorable emotional reactions (e.g., emotional expressivity; Kring, Smith, & Neale, 1994). A model of this sort would involve integrating theories of emotional expression with transformational leadership. I could brainstorm further, but my point is that your choice of moderators should be better tied to extant theory and a potentially fruitful way of doing this would be to explore factors that influence the relationships between transformational leadership and the process factors that have been identified in previous research.

4. Little to no support for the hypotheses. Another major concern has to do with your paper's potential contribution given that the null hypothesis was supported in all three studies. When this occurs we're left to wonder whether the theory underlying the predictions is flawed, the research design is not adequate for a construct valid test of those predictions, or both. In this case you have argued that your studies support the notion that there is no dispositional immunity to transformational leadership – followers generally respond favorably. There is certainly value in the sort of work you have conducted, but the overall contribution is not as strong as studies that involve developing and empirically supporting new theoretical work.

5. The studies themselves. I again commend you for examining the predictions using multiple studies and varied research designs. It is also clear that you have made a concerted effort to address some of the thorny issues that arise when examining transformational leadership (e.g., how to deal with the ordinarily high correlations among the transformational leadership dimensions). I have just a couple of comments about the design choices in Study 3, the experimental investigation. First, it appears that the transformational leadership manipulation focuses much more on the vision dimension than the others. Perhaps this is a function of what is and is not feasible in an experimental setting. Second, I think that a more valid measure of extra-role performance is whether or not the study participant agrees to submit ideas when asked if they are willing to do so (even though it was not required). To focus on the number of ideas submitted conflates willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty with how well research subjects perform. And I think that in this context, extra-role performance is more about the willingness of participants to do more than they have to than in how well they do it. Also, for this measure and for the measure of task performance, it would be useful to develop a coding scheme (that is informed by expert ratings) that captures the quality of study participants' ideas. Simply providing more answers isn't necessarily more creative.

Coming up with one extraordinarily creative idea should count for more than producing three or four unoriginal ideas that have little chance of working.

6. Summary. I enjoyed reading your paper and I hope that you will continue exploring the kind of questions that motivated your work. Understanding the boundary conditions on transformational leadership can make valuable contributions to management theory and practice.

References in my review that do not appear in your manuscript

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Sample Review by Micro Editor

This paper addresses an interesting topic, whether or not some people are more responsive to transformational leadership behaviors than others. This is an important issue because there is a large body of research that shows small to moderately sized effects of this type of leadership on employee attitudes, motivation, and behavior. Given that effects sizes reported in the existing literature are not huge, it is possible that transformational leadership behaviors are effects for some employees but not others.

Despite my enthusiasm for its general topic, the current manuscript has a number of limitations that -- in my view -- substantially limit its potential contribution to the literature.

1. Theory. The central theoretical premise of this study is that some individuals (e.g., those with low self esteem) are more drawn to inspirational leaders and some individuals (e.g., those high in cynicism) are resistant to their effects. But, Kouzes and Posner (The Leadership Challenge), report that inspirational leadership behaviors are among those most sought by a broad variety of employees, across organizational levels, occupations, industries and across time (their studies were repeated several times over the past two decades). Their results suggest that a rather universal appeal for these types of leadership behavior. Furthermore, basic psychological theories of human motivation tend to suggest that people generally seek meaning in their lives. It follows, logically, that having leaders who inspire them by showing how their work is meaningful would be appealing to and effective for most employees. This, in my view, the fundamental weakness in this manuscript is an inadequate theoretical foundation. You note, "there is no well-developed theoretical explanation of the role of individual differences n response to behaviors of transformational leadership." This is your opportunity to develop such a theory and doing so would improve the contribution of this manuscript and increase its potential impact.

a. In developing a coherent theory about who will and will not responds to transformational leaders, it is important to clarify whether all responses are positive, but vary in magnitude (as implied by the current manuscript), or whether your believe that some individuals will react negatively to transformational leadership.

b. In developing a stronger theoretical framework for this manuscript, it might be wise to have a more systematic approach to your choice of traits. Using a broad framework, such as the Big Five, may be helpful -- though I am not advocating specifically for that particular framework as you may find others to be more appropriate to your research. In any case, further justification for why these employee traits and characteristics (and not some others) is needed.

2. Analytic Strategy. In Studies 1 and 2, your analytic strategy is not appropriate for the data, because you lose power to detect effects by running the analysis follower by follower, and because inconsistent results across follower #1 and #2 may be due to capitalization on chance in each sample. Despite my concerns about the current analytic strategy, it isn't immediately clear to me what the very best alternative is. You have a rather unusual situation in which you are proposing that a level one variable (follower personality) moderates the association between a level 2 variable (leadership) and a level one outcome (follower attitudes, motivation, behavior).

This scenario doesn't fit nicely into the typical cross level moderator analyses conducted in using multilevel analytic techniques (e.g., random coefficient modeling, HLM, etc). In making a decision about how best to test your hypotheses, I urge you to consider the appropriate level of analysis.

Is the aggregate leadership variable really the right level for the predictor? In study 1 for example, it is not clear to my how the aggregate (group) perception of leadership would influence an individual employee's behavior or attitudes. Isn't it more likely that the effects of each employee's leadership perceptions would be the best predictor of outcomes? If this is the case, I think that you would be best off using each employee's individual report of the leaders behavior (though this approach leaves you with all self-reported variables, which increases concerns about any effects you find being spurious due to some characteristic of the individual reporting). If you choose to analyze your data at the individual level using each individuals own report of the leaders behavior, you could then follow up by attempting to replicate your findings using the aggregate leadership variable, as you have in the "all data" analyses in Studies 1 and 2. But, rather than simply concluding that the dependencies in the data provide liberal tests of significance you should conduct these analyses using a regression algorithm that allows you to drop assumptions of independence in the data (e.g., STATA cluster function). Using individual reports of the leaders' behavior in a first step and then replicating the results with aggregate reports would provide a better test of your model (but see comments below about aggregation of leadership reports across sources).

3. Congruency and complementarity of the three studies. There is a surprising lack of coherence across the three studies. It is not at all clear to me why all three studies didn't test the same set of theoretically relevant individual differences. How does Study 2 build on Study 1 in a consistent, coherent, theoretically grounded way? Why didn't you use the same variables across studies? If Study 2 was meant to build on Study 1, I would expect you to replicate (and extend) the analyses in Study 1, perhaps in a different sample or situations. This is especially important given that you did find some inconsistent moderating effects in Study 1. It is not clear to me from reading this manuscript if (or how) the samples in Study 1 and 2 differ or why you chose to use different measures of individual differences in the two studies? If self-esteem is a key variable that would influence reactions to transformational leadership, why is it not measured in Study 1 (and relatedly, why are intellect, trust, and cynicism not measures in studies 2 and 3)? In Study 3, I expected to see the same individual differences as in Studies 1 and 2, though I applaud you for adding an ability based measure of intellect in the lab setting. The inconsistent measurement of individual differences across studies may be due to the absence of a strong theoretical framework, in which the relevant individual differences are carefully specified. Especially given your null results, it would have been informative to see some replication of results across studies.

More Minor Issues

4. Please provide ICC (1) and ICC (2) to justify aggregation of leadership reports across followers. There is considerable evidence in the literature that leadership ratings differ considerable across sources, leading to debate in the literature about the reliability and conceptual meaning of ratings aggregated across sources.

5. I would like to see a CFA on the leadership dimensions.

6. If intellect is meant to be a proxy for general mental ability (this seemed to be implied but was not explicitly stated in Study 1), then it would be nice to see a citation showing the association between the two variables.

Conclusion: With weak theory, null results, and measurement inconsistency across studies, it is hard to for me to appreciate the overall contribution of this manuscript. Further, in the absence of a strong, compelling theory about why some employees would not react positively (or would react negatively) to transformational leaders, what we are left with in this manuscript is really only replication of a substantial body of existing research that documents the effects of transformational leadership behaviors on employees attitudes, motivation and behavior.

Sample Review by Micro Editor

Your manuscript considers an interesting question regarding the effects of transformational leadership on followers' attitudes and behaviors: do those effects depend on individual differences among followers? Drawing from the transformational leadership literature, you identify several potential moderators of its effects and test those relationships empirically in a series of studies. Your results (largely) fail to support these hypothesized moderating relationships, leading you to claim support for the 'universal' (non-contingent) effects of transformational leadership on follower attitudes and behaviors.

Your manuscript demonstrates mastery of the literature and the key theoretical issues surrounding the mechanisms whereby transformational leadership shapes follower outcomes. Your ideas are presented clearly and economically. I am especially impressed by your multi-study approach across two field and one laboratory context. Despite these strengths, there are several areas where your manuscript doesn't fulfill its potential.

1. In my reading of your manuscript, you started out building logic in support of your alternative hypotheses whereby the effects of transformational leadership depend on the cynicism, dispositional trust, self-esteem and intellectual ability of followers. But in light of the failure of your results to provide convincing empirical support for these ideas, you switch arguing on behalf of your null hypotheses and conduct additional analyses in an effort to substantiate those ideas. This switch raises several issues:

a. Given the conventions of how we write up organizational research, this switch - apparently occasioned by failure to find support for the hypotheses - is jarring to say the least. Why? Because readers expect the narrative arc of an article to be one that lays a foundation in the explanatory logic supporting the hypotheses and concludes with reflection on what theoretical insights the results can support. A reversal midstream causes the reader to wonder whether the authors (you) were committed to your ideas in the first place.

b. Your manuscript lacks a compelling theoretical rationale for the absence of moderating effects. Failure to detect such effects across three studies might count as empirical evidence for the null hypotheses (but see the next point), yet what the reader needs to know is why - why are the outcomes of transformation leadership not dependent on individual differences? - especially in the context of the logic you offered earlier in support of the alternative hypotheses.

c. Advocating the null hypothesis is controversial, but has precedents in the organizational literature. See Cashen and Geiger (2004; Organizational Research Methods 7, 151-167), Cortina and Folger (1998; Organizational Research Methods 1, 334-350), Frick (1995; Memory and Cognition 23, 132-138) and Nickerson (2000; Psychological Methods 5, 241-301) for positive appraisals. The Cashen and Geiger (2004) article is especially helpful because it pinpoints issues surrounding the statistical power necessary to claim support for the null hypothesis with the same confidence as the alternative. Statistical power is especially problematic in the case of your

manuscript because your null hypotheses involve moderators, and tests of moderation are highly sensitive to adequate power (Aguinis, 1995; Journal of Management 21, 1141-1158 discusses categorical moderators and Shieh, 2009; Organizational Research Methods 12, 510-528 discusses continuous moderators). Should you decide to frame your study as support for the null hypothesis, you would need to show that you have adequate statistical power to detect moderating effects if they actually are there.

2. You frame the absence of support for your moderators in relation to the 'universal' effects of transformational leadership. But assuming you have sufficient statistical power, what you actually can speak to are dispositional trust, cynicism, self-esteem and intellectual ability rather than the entire gamut of individual differences. True, Study 2 does bring in the Big 5, but that probably would have been the place to begin in designing all three studies if your intent were to argue against the moderating effects of personality. Without a more compelling demonstration using the Big 5, your conclusions about the 'universal' nature of the effects of transformational leadership need to be tempered.

3. The significance of the potential contribution of your research question did not seem especially compelling to me because you rely on comments made by previous researchers in framing your topic - comments that apparently weren't important enough for them to follow up with additional research themselves. I think your research question is intrinsically interesting - not only for the practical reasons you elucidate in your Discussion Section, but also because it speaks to the broader issue of whether and/or when leadership effectiveness depends on the unique nature of individual followers. Can you frame your research question in terms of its theoretical significance for leadership research, letting the quotations and citations from Bass (1985), Conger and Kanungo (1998), and Shamir et al. (1993) recede into the background?

4. The logic you offer in support of hypothesis 1 builds from the nature of transformational leadership to the relevant individual difference variables - i.e., transformational leadership involves emotional inspiration, so cynicism is a relevant candidate as a moderating individual difference variable. But the logic you offer is brief, and combining cynicism and trust in a single hypothesis does justice to neither. Are trust and cynicism intrinsically related in the way your logic implies? Further, with respect to trust, your logic builds not on transformational leadership per se so much as on a mediator that is not measured in your data. Further elaboration of the logic undergirding these hypotheses would be helpful.

5. Hypotheses 2 and 3 rely on the idea that followers low in intellectual ability and self-esteem have more room to grow under transformational leadership than their high ability and high esteem counterparts. This 'ceiling effect' is plausible, but relies more on a purported distributional anomaly than on an explanation why such an anomaly would occur. Isn't it equally plausible that the dimensions of intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration are equally efficacious all along the continuum of intellectual ability and self-esteem? Please clarify by entertaining the merits of the null hypotheses.

6. In computing and assigning values for transformational leadership you aggregated across subordinate, supervisor, and self-ratings. I appreciate that this approach has been used in previous research (Judge & Bono, 2000), but I would like to see empirical tests of whether these sources agree in their assessments of the leader (i.e., ICC, Rwg). Lack of agreement within groups regarding the leader might explain why your hypotheses failed to find support, as all but one member of a team would have been assigned an incorrect transformational leadership score.

7. I am not clear why you ran regressions with only one of the followers in the group as a solution to the problem of non-independence of your observations. I might be missing something here, but wouldn't a two-level model (i.e., HLM) address your concerns regarding statistical independence and yet allow you to use all of your follower data? (If you are concerned that your 'main effect' is at level two, and your moderator term is at level one, there is a nice discussion of this general approach in Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken [2003] on pages 554 and following).

8. In Study 1, your performance variables are so highly correlated as to suggest that your measures are tapping a single underlying factor. You offer no theory as to why distinguishing among these indicators is relevant (i.e., differential effects). I suggest that you use only the contextual performance dimension since it is the one most closely aligned with your theory regarding the effects of transformational leadership. A similar question can be raised about Study 2, where initiative and overall performance are correlated at the .81 level, and where there is no explanation in the logic for the hypotheses as to why these distinctions are meaningful.

9. Study 2 is positioned as a replication of Study 1, but including self-esteem as a moderator. Study 3 is positioned as a different design, a lab study versus field research using studies. Yet there also are other differences among the studies, including the variables measured and the scales. If your objective is to support your alternative hypotheses, then these differences are potential liabilities. But if your goal is to sustain the null hypotheses, then these differences are potential advantages. See Cashen & Geiger's (2004) emphasis on the importance of multi-trait multi-method analyses when seeking support for null hypotheses.

10. Your discussion entertains the possibility that transformational leadership is 'universal' in its effects rather than contingent. You choose your words and phrase your ideas carefully ("do not appear" ... "appear to be," page 27) - perhaps to ward off criticism that your results do not conclusively rule out any moderating effects of individual differences. But - even though stated tentatively, and despite being carefully qualified - the ideas you advance are those that depend on conclusive support for the null hypothesis. You are close to that, but I think not close enough, and so the conclusions you draw are speculative. Please consider tempering these claims.

Best wishes going forward in your work!

Sample Review by Micro Editor

The authors examine individual difference moderators of the relationships between transformational leadership and followers' job attitudes and performance. In a series of two field studies and a lab study they find little evidence for moderation and conclude that the results are consistent with the idea that subordinates react similarly to transformational leadership. There are a number of positive features to this manuscript—I applaud the authors' professionalism and the care taken in the collection of three separate data sets. My comments and concerns with this version are listed below, separated by priority.

Major Points

1. Lack of specificity: I appreciate the justification for the study and agree with you that this is an important line of inquiry. My main concern with the theory development in this version is the lack of specificity in the hypotheses. You make some summary arguments concerning the relationship between transformational leadership and job-related outcomes, but you offer very little in terms of specificity for the interaction predictions. For example, on p. 3, you briefly explain that transformational leadership relates to job satisfaction and such, but on pp. 5-6 you offer very little in terms of arguments for exactly how cynicism and propensity to trust moderate these relationships. I'd suggest retooling your arguments and explaining the relationships at high and low levels of the moderators. One suggestion for increasing the precision of your arguments would be to isolate precisely how each individual difference variable interferes with the advantages of transformational leadership. Just as an idea, and as a single example, it seems as though cynicism would derail the emotional wallop while low propensity to trust might interfere with the cognitive identification. At the moment, all of the arguments and outcomes are lumped together and it's unclear what the arguments are for each outcome.

2. Theory—mediators and outcomes: A consistent concern I had when reading your prediction development section is that you've taken arguments that are related to mediators of transformational leadership and outcomes and turned them into moderation arguments. For example, you note that trust is likely to mediate transformational leadership on job-related outcomes and so therefore propensity to trust should moderate the relationship between transformational leadership. These two arguments are not the same. Even if we agree to make this leap, it would suggest that propensity to trust would moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and trust, but not necessarily job satisfaction, citizenship, and performance. Your next statement is that House (1977) argues that trust is a necessary condition, but here again note that the trust variable mentioned by House is not an individual difference variable, but rather a variable specific to supervisors and subordinates. This point is related to my first point, but again goes to the underlying logic for your interaction predictions.

3. Perhaps the contribution here is somewhat incremental—a series of moderators of known relationships—but I think you could do a stronger job of building a theoretical framework. You've taken some comments from prior researchers but don't attempt to

build a model of these relationships. Another way to say that is that it doesn't seem as though theory is driving your choice of variables. As such, the selection of variables seems rather ad hoc. One suggestion would be to build a moderated-mediation framework, although I realize you may not have the data available to do it. Following your logic, as using trust as an example, transformational leadership should lead to follower trust, but this should be moderated by propensity to trust. Trust, in turn, should then relate to satisfaction and other outcomes. Note that this would involve an interaction predicting the mediators, not the distal outcomes. One interpretation of your pattern of non-significance is that your moderation arguments apply to the mediators, but not the distal outcomes. I think this kind of theorizing flows more smoothly from the underlying logic than moderators of transformational leadership on the distal outcomes. Significant interactions predicting satisfaction and other distal outcomes are not necessary to show that the indirect and total effects of transformational leadership (through trust and maybe other mediators) differ across individual difference variables.

4. Analysis: In Studies 1 and 2, you have subordinates nested within supervisors. I'd suggest using multilevel modeling in both of these studies when the outcomes are reported by subordinates. This might, although possibility not, give you a little more precision and improve your results. But, whether it improves your results or not, I think it's the right approach. I see your point about averaging subordinate responses and washing out error and agree that it has this effect. But, it also raises other issues such as whether the mean or the variation in subordinate responses is the right outcome. Overall, I think that approach raises more questions than it answers and that a multilevel model with supervisor transformational leadership as a Level 2 variable moderated by Level 1 subordinate individual differences is the right approach.

Other Points

5. Variable definitions: I would suggest paying more attention to the definitions of key variables your study. I say this, in particular, with respect to transformational leadership. Most of your theorizing concerns the "high" end of transformational leadership, but little attention is given to the opposite end of the continuum. This is the case not only in the definition or description of transformational leaders in your opening paragraph, but it goes through your hypothesis development as well. This would help the casual reader understand your constructs, but it would also add richness to your prediction development by allowing you to describe why the slopes would be stronger and weaker at different levels of your moderators.

6. Measurement of transformational leadership: You mention that the bulk of literature support a single factor, but you don't report the structure in your own data set. On p. 12, you report an exploratory factor analysis, but I think the CFA would be more appropriate. Can you provide a brief description of a confirmatory factor analysis that supports your decision? In addition, and returning to the definitional issue mentioned above, can you explain what the lack of transformational leadership looks like? On p. 9, you evoke transactional leadership and suggest it is the opposite end of the continuum. Clarity here

would improve your predictions and also the understandability of your operationalizations.

7. I'd suggest deleting the report of the exploratory interactions with Big 5 personality dimensions. I think it detracts from your overall story and your attempts to show that the pattern of non-significance is substantive and not error-based.

8. I think your Discussion section is generally well written and is thoughtful, but I'd like to see a more elaborate discussion of the implications of your results. Where do we go from here? What specific suggestions do you have for future research? It seems to me that your model is somewhat misspecified and that a moderated-mediation model with first-stage moderation of individual difference variables might be the key.