

## Appendix A –Interview Protocol (Study 2)

### Interviewee as informal leader

- Do you consider yourself an informal leader of your work team?
- How do you feel about being [seen as] an informal leader? What makes you say that?
  - What, if anything, is positive about being [seen as] an informal leader? Are there any benefits, things you like?
  - What, if anything, is negative about being [seen as] an informal leader? Are there any downsides, things you don't like?
- Overall, how satisfied are you with your role as an informal leader? What makes you say that?

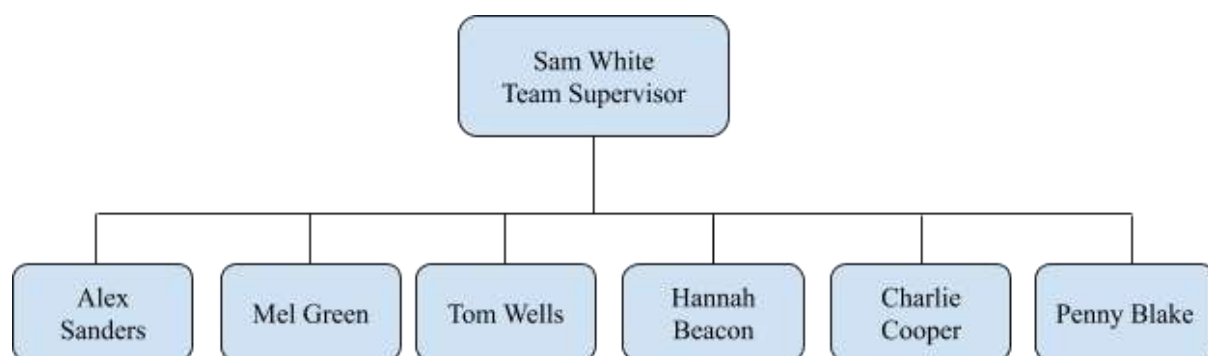
### Work interactions as an informal leader

- Does being an informal leader change the way you interact with your other team mates? How so? What's better? What's worse?
- What do your other team mates expect of you as an informal leader? (Possible prompts: What do they expect you to do? How do they expect you to behave toward them? How about toward others? Do they expect a certain attitude from you?)
- What do you expect of your other team mates as an informal leader? (Possible prompts: What do you expect them to do? How do you expect them to behave toward you? How about toward others? Do you expect a certain attitude from them?)
- Does being an informal leader change the way you interact with your formal leader? How so? What's better? What's worse?
- What does your formal leader/manager expect of you as an informal leader? (Possible prompts: What do they expect you to do? How do they expect you to behave toward them? How about toward others? Do they expect a certain attitude from you?)
- What do you expect of your formal leader/manager as an informal leader? (Possible prompts: What do you expect them to do? How do you expect them to behave toward you? How about toward others? Do you expect a certain attitude from them?)

## Appendix B – Scenario Manipulation Materials (Study 4)

### The Scenario

Engaging Communication (EC) is a public relations (PR) agency located in Melbourne, Australia. EC provides a variety of services for local companies, such as implementing digital marketing strategies to broaden brand awareness, leading media training sessions on how to best respond to media interviews, and assisting in managing the reputation of the company on social media and other outlets. Currently, EC has about 40 PR specialists divided into different project-based teams to serve its clients. Each of these professional work teams has its own area of expertise. You currently work in a 6-person team to work on an important project for one of your biggest clients. Here is an illustration of the team structure:



### *Informal Leadership Status Conditions:*

You are **Alex Sanders**, a senior PR specialist at EC. You are staffed in a 6-person team which mainly assists with product launches and marketing strategies. Although you do not possess a formal leadership position (e.g., supervisor or manager), you are often viewed as an informal leader on team projects due to your experience and expertise. In general, you are often expected to facilitate team planning and organizing, aid problem solving, provide interpersonal support, and sometimes foster development and mentoring for new staff. Your team supervisor, **Sam White**, usually allows you to take these informal leadership responsibilities, and your colleagues all see you as the “Number Two” of the team.

**Low Support Condition:** You like Sam as a person but feel that Sam is not a very supportive supervisor. For example, although you have Sam’s trust to be the informal leader, Sam is often reluctant to provide resources and assistance to satisfy the needs of team members. Sam often expects you to respond to the team’s needs and challenges yet does not offer support to meet these needs.

**High Support Condition:** You like Sam as a person and feel that Sam is a very supportive supervisor. For example, you have Sam’s trust to be the informal leader, and Sam often provides necessary resources and assistance to satisfy the needs of team members. Sam expects you to respond to the team’s needs and challenges and is always there to offer support to meet these needs.

Your team has an important project at hand with a client called UltraCan, who you are assisting to launch a new product. Your team meets up regularly each Monday to push the project forward, and today's meeting is particularly important. Your team wants to substantially revise its strategy for this project, so you asked Sam to lead this meeting. However, you just received a message, saying that Sam now needs to be away for the morning. Sam has asked you to informally step in as a team leader. You've just got into the office for the morning and have about an hour until the meeting. You decide to spend the next few minutes reviewing your emails and voicemails in case anyone needs something urgently from you before then.

***Non-Informal Leadership Status Conditions:***

You are **Mel Green**, a junior PR specialist at EC. You are staffed in a 6-person team which mainly assists with product launches and marketing strategies. As a rookie staff member, you are still developing your own skills and experience. You view **Alex Sanders**, the senior specialist in your team, as your mentor, and you are committed to assist Alex and the team to complete team tasks. Alex is also viewed as an informal team leader by others and expected to facilitate team planning and organizing, aid problem solving, provide interpersonal support, and sometimes foster development and mentoring for new staff like you. Your team supervisor, **Sam White**, usually allows Alex to take these informal leadership responsibilities and sees Alex as the "Number Two" of the team.

**Low Support Condition:** Both Alex and you like Sam as a person but feel that Sam is not a very supportive supervisor. For example, although Alex has Sam's trust to be the informal leader, Sam is often reluctant to provide resources and assistance to satisfy the needs of team members. Sam often expects Alex to respond to the team's tasks and challenges, and Sam does not offer support to meet these needs.

**High Support Condition:** Both Alex and you like Sam as a person and feel that Sam is a very supportive supervisor. For example, Alex has Sam's trust to be the informal leader, and Sam often provides necessary resources and assistance to satisfy the needs of team members. Although Sam expects Alex to respond to the team's needs and challenges, Sam is always there to offer support to meet these needs.

Your team has an important project at hand with a client called UltraCan, who you are assisting to launch a new product. Your team meets up regularly each Monday to push the project forward, and today's meeting is particularly important. Your team wants to substantially revise its strategy for this project, so you expected Sam to lead this meeting. However, you just received a message that Sam needs to be away for the morning. Alex is asked to informally step in as a leader until Sam returns. Sam is asking if you can assist by taking notes and updating the project plan. You've just got into the office for the morning and have about an hour until the meeting. You decide to spend the next few minutes reviewing emails and voicemails in case anyone needs something urgently before then.

***E-mails and Voicemail Message for Informal Leader (Alex):***

***Informal Leader/Low Formal Leadership Support Condition***

Date: Sun 9 Feb 6:34 PM

From: sam.white@engagingcommunications.com.au

Subject: Re: Leadership training

Hi Alex:

I've considered your application for the upcoming leadership training course at the Management Academy, and I'm afraid I can't approve it at this time. You're doing a great job as an informal leader of the team without any formal training or much support from me, and I don't think the team can spare you for a week as you do so much work to keep them all on track.

Keep up the good work – you really make my life easier.

Regards

Sam White  
Manager, Events  
Engaging Communications

On 5 Feb, at 3:45 PM, Alex Sanders <alex.sanders@engagingcommunications.com.au> wrote:

Hi Sam

As you know, I've been taking on a bit of leadership responsibility in the team recently, and I think I could really benefit from some formal leadership training to support this. The Management Academy is going to be running a 1-week leadership development course from 4-8 March and I would be very keen to attend. I'll put a formal application through the system but just wanted to give you a heads up.

Regards

Alex Sanders  
Senior PR Specialist  
Engaging Communications

Date: Sun 9 Feb 7:08 PM

From: sam.white@engagingcommunications.com.au

Subject: Re: Revised timelines for UltraCan launch

Hi Alex

Sounds fine to me. I trust you.

Regards

Sam White  
Manager, Events  
Engaging Communications

On 6 Feb, at 10:11 AM, Alex Sanders <alex.sanders@engagingcommunications.com.au> wrote:

Hi Sam

I've just been on the phone with Julie from UltraCan. She's indicating the company is very anxious about the current target to launch before Easter, given we've struggled to meet some of the milestones in the original plan. I'm thinking we should still push for the pre-Easter launch and want to present a revised timeline and plan to her – draft attached. However, since I haven't been working with UltraCan for very long I'd really like to get your input on this before I take it to the client. I'd really appreciate some guidance on the revised plan, and how to best sell it to UltraCan.

Regards

Alex Sanders  
Senior PR Specialist  
Engaging Communications

***Voicemail message received Monday 8:02 AM:***

Hi Alex. We've got that big planning meeting with the team today but something's just come up and I can't make it, so I want you to step in and lead it. I'm sure you're capable – you don't need a mentor, and it's not like you normally get a lot of hands-on support from me anyway. You'll be fine. The others on the team all look to you for the big ideas anyway, so I know you'll come up with a great plan. There's no need for me to go over it with you afterwards, it doesn't need my input. Just bear in mind I'm not going to be able to get any extra resources from the other managers to help put the plan into action. Good luck, you can do this – think about it as a real-life substitute for your training course.

***Informal Leader/High Formal Leadership Support Condition***

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Keep up the good work – you know I'm here to support you.

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Regards

Alex Sanders  
Senior PR Specialist  
Engaging Communications

Date: Sun 9 Feb 7:08 PM  
From: sam.white@engagingcommunications.com.au  
CC: sandy.newman@engagingcommunications.com.au  
Subject: Re: Revised timelines for UltraCan launch

Hi Alex

I've had a look at your revised plan for the UltraCan launch. I think you're making a wise decision to encourage them to stick to the pre-Easter launch, and your proposed timeline sounds very reasonable. Might also be worth reminding Julie that although we missed some of the earlier deadlines due to delays in approvals, we managed to get ahead on preparing the

marketing & communications materials while waiting, so overall we're still pretty much on track.

Sandy Newman over in the digital marketing team has dealt with Julie & UltraCan before. Maybe have a chat about the best approach to take with them as a client? I have called Sandy and asked for her help. She is happy to offer you some suggestions (thanks Sandy). I copy her here to initiate the conversation between you two. Feel free to keep me posted.

Regards

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On 6 Feb, at 10:11 AM, Alex Sanders <[alex.sanders@engagingcommunications.com.au](mailto:alex.sanders@engagingcommunications.com.au)> wrote:

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***E-mails and Voicemail Message for Non-Informal Leader (Mel):  
Non-Informal Leader/Low Formal Leadership Support Condition***

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From: sam.white@engagingcommunications.com.au

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Hi Mel

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Hi Sam

As you know, I've been trying hard to assist the team as a junior staff member, and I think I could really benefit from some formal project management training to support this. The Management Academy is going to be running a 1-week project management course from 4-8 March and I would be very keen to attend. I'll put a formal application through the system but just wanted to give you a heads up.

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***E-mails from Teammates to the Informal Leader (All Conditions)***

Date: Mon 10 Feb 8:45 AM  
 From: tom.wells@engagingcommunications.com.au  
 Subject: Meeting before the meeting?

Hey Alex, any chance we can catch up this morning to go over some ideas around the UltraCan strategy before we head into the all-team meeting at 10AM? I know you already spent an hour with me yesterday going through the progress reports but I really benefit from you spending time with me, and it will give me a lot more confidence to speak up in the team meeting if I've run it through with you first.

Tom

Tom Wells  
 Senior PR Specialist  
 Engaging Communications

Date: Mon 10 Feb 8:32 AM  
 From: hannah.beacon@engagingcommunications.com.au  
 Subject: Heads up

Hi Alex,

I know you asked us all to prepare some ideas for this planning session, but just a heads up that I didn't get around to it. You always have the good ideas anyway, so I figured I was better off clearing up some admin jobs. Some of our admin processes are really inefficient, so that might be something else for you to think about how to improve. Let me know if you have any good ideas! Can we talk about that after this morning's UltraCan meeting?

Han

Hannah Beacon  
 PR Specialist  
 Engaging Communications

Date: Mon 10 Feb 8:32 AM  
 From: charlie.cooper@engagingcommunications.com.au  
 Subject: Lunch

Hey Alex, how did it go with getting approval for that training course?

Not that you need the training anyway, you're already pretty good at bossing us around. I even heard Scott saying as much in the kitchen the other day.

Want to go for coffee together after the UltraCan meeting today? I can fill you in on all the gossip.

C

Charlie Cooper  
PR Specialist  
Engaging Communications