

# THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

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THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

**TITLE** Effective Leadership Practices of Undergraduate Teaching Professors

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**OBJECTIVE** The purpose of this study was to examine the premise that outstanding undergraduate teaching professors practiced more effective leadership than non-award winning undergraduate teaching professors in their classrooms.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Twenty-four teaching professors from three diverse Midwestern universities participated in the study. Half had received a teaching award from his/her institution and the other half had not been so honored. There were seven males and five females within each half of the sample. Students within their courses completed the LPI-Observer on the faculty member and a random sample of 59 was selected from each subpopulation for the analysis. Semi-structured interviews were completed with four representatives from each subpopulation with categories of questions related to the Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders, the characteristics of a learning organization (Handy, 1995) and the system for knowledge creation (Nonaka& Takeuchi, 1995). The author also sat in on a class session taught by the same professors chosen for interviews.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

Comparison of LPI-Self scores from award winning professors and non-award winning professors revealed no significant differences, although the scores of the former were in all cases higher (Modeling approached significant,  $p < .10$ ). The lack of significance may be a result of small sample sizes. LPI-Observer scores, provided by students, did not reveal any significant differences between the two categories of faculty.

The author postulates that the “lack of statistical significant between the two groups of participants may indicate that the criteria for receiving an award for teaching excellence has little to do with leadership” (p. 126) and “may reveal that university awards for excellence in teaching do not separate leaders from non-leaders” (p. 127).