

---

# THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE research

---

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

- TITLE** Stress, Hardiness and Leadership Style: An Examination of Factors that Foster Nurse Manager Survival in the Healthcare Environment
- RESEARCHER** Sarah Elizabeth Nash  
School of Nursing  
San Diego State University  
Unpublished Masters Thesis: Fall 2009
- OBJECTIVE** The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships among nurse manager stress, hardiness and leadership. The study aimed to identify moderating factors that may decrease manager stress, specifically hardiness and transformational leadership practices.
- METHODOLOGY** The study was conducted in a large healthcare system in San Diego, with participation of five hospitals belonging to this single system. Forty-eight managers (53% response rate) completed the Leadership Practices Inventory, Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarack & Mermelstein, 1983), and a short version of the Hardiness Scale (Bartone, 1995). The respondents all had supervisory responsibilities, were all women (with one exception), 50 years old an average age, forty-one percent had a masters degree in nursing, the mean number of year's employment at the current hospital was 13 years and average time in their position was nearly five years. Internal reliability coefficients in this study for the LPI were .74 for Model, .89 for Inspire, .82 for Challenge, .71 for Enable, and .90 for Encourage.

## KEY FINDINGS

There were no significant correlations between the five leadership practices and respondent's age, educational level, number of direct reports or number of stress classes taken. The correlations between years in the hospital and the five leadership practices were all in the negative direction. Years in their current position was negatively correlated with the leadership practices of Model and Enable, but not the other three leadership practices.

Hardiness (overall) was correlated with Inspire, Challenge and Encourage, but not with Model and Enable. Hardiness (Challenge) was correlated with all five leadership practices; while Hardiness (Commitment) and Hardiness (Control) were not correlated with any of the leadership practices (Note: the internal reliability for the control subscale was unacceptable at .37; and for the commitment subscale was only .67). Regression analyses supported the proposition that nurse managers with higher hardiness would have greater propensity for transformational leadership practices. Perceived Stress was not significantly correlated with any of the five leadership practices.