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# Transformational Leadership and Safe Driving Performance in the U.S. Electric Utility Industry

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College of Management and Technology

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Mackington Joseph

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Walden University
2015

Abstract

Transformational Leadership and Safe Driving Performance in the U.S. Electric Utility

Industry

by

Mackington Joseph


MSM, Thomas Edison State College, 2009

BSAST, Thomas Edison State College, 2007




Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management



Walden University

February 2015

Abstract

Transformational leadership (TL) has been found popular in many industries in the
United States and abroad for the perceived leaders' effectiveness in improving
occupational safety. There is a lack of empirical evidence to confirm these claims for safe
occupational driving. This phenomenological study attempted to fill this knowledge gap
in the electric utility industry where employees must drive in all weather conditions to
restore power to customers. The conceptual framework for the study was based on
leadership and motivation theories of Burns and Maslow. The research explored the
influence of (a) TL on safe driving performance improvement in organizations and (b)
emotional intelligence (EI) on leaders' efficiency to improve safe driving performance in
organizations. These questions were addressed using a 14-item in-depth, open-ended
interview questionnaire by a convenience sample of 18 management and 12 union-
represented personnel drawn from 5 U.S. electric utility companies using the snowball
method. Data were analyzed using NVivo 10 and were interpreted using the
methodological framework of Leedy and Ormrod, and Maxwell. The findings suggested
that (a) TL influenced safe driving performance through these leaders' idealized
influence, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation; and (b) EI ineffectively
and unreliably influenced safe driving improvement, but it improved organizational trust
through the leaders' empathy and drivers' empowerment. The implications for positive
social change include raising employees' commitment and contribution to safe driving
performance improvement, and improving organizational trust as well as public safety.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral dissertation to my grandmother and godmother Helene

(Tikris) Louis, and to my late grandmother Zilmie (Grann-Ninie) Marcelin.

Acknowledgments

I want to acknowledge Dr. David Banner (my third dissertation committee chair) for rescuing me in the tumultuous impasse I was going through with my dissertation. Along the same path, I want to thank Dr. Steven Tippins for agreeing last minute to be my research methodology expert. I also want to acknowledge Dr. John Latham (my second dissertation committee chair) for sending me the first rescue rope of hope from the bottom of my calamities in completing this dissertation. Dr. Latham played a heroic role in helping me regain hope and confidence in my abilities to complete this dissertation successfully. A special acknowledgment goes to Dr. Ahmad Aqueil (my first dissertation committee chair) and Dr. Elizabeth Wilson (my first dissertation methodology expert) for their assistance in helping me lay the basis of this research.

I also want to recognize the complementary support of the faculty and staff at Walden University. Especially, I want to thank Dr. Gould, Dr. Burkholder, Dr. Thakkar, Dr. Ewald, and Dr. Sherman for their professional advice. I want to thank a meticulous professional editor, Ms. Loma Huh, for her outstanding efforts to accurately detect and address all of the flaws in my dissertation in terms of grammar, APA compliance, structure, and so on. Ms. Sarah Matthey also contributed immensely in making sure this dissertation was in compliance with APA and Walden University doctoral dissertation guidelines; I thank her for her assistance in that regard.

I want to thank my personal mentors Dr. Thomas Devine and Deacon Peter Cistaro for their guidance and assistance during the times when desire to move on and clear paths were scarce. I want to thank my bosses, colleagues, and friends Dr. Ralph

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

**Introduction**

Leaders of organizations with small or large motor vehicle fleets have striven to devise safety initiatives to better control and prevent work-related motor vehicle accidents.  Researchers have found that the interests of leaders in organizational safety are, in part, intended to (a) increase workers' safety, (b) reduce direct and indirect costs related with worker injuries, and (c) improve bottom-line stability of organizations (Burke, Clarke, & Cooper, 2011; Davey, Freeman, Wishart, & Rowland, 2008; Probst & Estrada, 2010). However, the success of leaders in applying those safety initiatives is often challenged by the need to increase their effectiveness in a few significant features of leadership. For example, besides being aware of their cognitive abilities and limitations—which dictate their level of success in the conception, implementation and adjustment of their vision for the organization—leaders must also be cognizant of how their followers can be influenced by the psychological interactions promoted by the leaders of their organizations, as the ways in which leaders deal with emotion might be the key to followers sharing their own emotions with them (Smollan & Parry, 2011).

In addition to this self-awareness, leaders must ground their success in the quality of relationship with their followers (Goleman, 1998). Bass (1985) indicated that transformational leaders develop connections with their followers because they relate to their followers emotionally through understanding and compassion. In effect, Boseman (2008) stated that the emotional connections transformational leaders build with their followers are linked to employee empowerment and leaders' delegation of leadership

roles to their followers. Such practices have become antecedents to followers' perception and acceptance of leaders as the guardians of their safety and growth, not as marshals appointed by senior executives (Boseman, 2008). Chapter 1 of this study is comprised of the following sections: Background of the Study, Problem Statement, Purpose of the Study, Research Questions, Conceptual Framework, Nature of the Study, Definition of Terms, Assumptions, Scope and Delimitations, Significance and Social Change, and Summary.

## Background of the Study

Researchers have found that occupational motor vehicle accidents have affected the U.S. electric utility industry for decades. For example, Kelsh and Sahl (1997) showed that between 1960 and 1991, 144 U.S. electric utility workers died as a result of work-related motor vehicle accidents. Among those fatalities, there were 27non-represented employees that included management, administrative, service, and technical personnel. Between 2005 and 2010, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS; 2012) reported a number of nonfatal injuries and fatalities caused by work-related motor vehicle accidents within the U.S. electric utility workforce. As those numbers are an indication that motor vehicles that happen on the job have been severely affecting U.S. electric utility corkers and companies. These findings support the context and purpose of this study, which was an attempt to understand how, if at all, transformational leaders could help improve occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. The opinions collected from the research participants suggested a few ways safe driving could be improved in their organization.

As those numbers are an indication that motor vehicles that happen on the job have been severely affecting U.S. electric utility corkers and companies. These findings support the context and purpose of this study, which was an attempt to understand how, if at all, transformational leaders could help improve occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. The opinions collected from the research participants suggested a few ways safe driving could be improved in their organization.

Whether the people involved in such accidents are utility workers or not, the antecedents of occupational motor vehicle accidents are often found to be human errors, misconceptions, or faulty judgments. For instance, in a study conducted in the United States and Great Britain about the causes of motor vehicle accidents, human behaviors and decision making were found to have played a causative role in 93% of all such accidents for the period studied (Lum & Reagan, 1995). Other human errors also caused work-related motor vehicle accidents. For example, Williamson et al. (2011) indicated that failure to obey traffic protocols, speeding violations, unsafe driving behaviors, and inattention due to psychological and physical states are primary causes of occupational motor vehicle accidents.

Rowden, Matthews, Watson, and Biggs (2011) found work-related stress to play a role in causing motor vehicle accidents that happen in the workplace. Sarma, Carey, Kervick, and Bimpeh, (2013) reported that drivers' errors, misjudgment, and other behaviors, such as braking too quickly on a slippery road, speeding and rule violation, are often found to be the causes of occupational accidents. Other researchers have found different factors that have increased motor vehicle accidents in the workplace. For

example, occupational drivers' perceptions of workplace safety climate, safety policies, practices, and procedures set forth by leaders of organizations, and the level of loyalty and compliance those leaders expressed toward organizational safety standards, can negatively affect the drivers' attitude and behaviors toward safety, thereby creating the context for work-related motor vehicle accidents (Bosak, Coetsee, & Cullinane, 2013; Öz, Özkan, & Lajunen, 2013).

Many leadership styles and strategies improved safe driving performance in organizations with motor vehicle fleets. However, many scholars indicated that, in order to deal effectively with work-related motor vehicle accidents, group efforts between leaders and followers, which can include occupational drivers, are necessary to perform reliably as a group and to achieve organizational goals mutually and collaboratively (Bolman & Deal, 2011).

Transformational leaders have been found to possess a set of traits that help them identify a few key followers whom they transform into leaders to create organizational value congruence, which Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, and Sutton (2011) described as "a key proximal outcome of transformational leadership" (p. 781). Such features help transformational leaders delegate power and authority to key followers to solve more efficiently issues for which they lack expertise (Hoffman et al., 2011) and increase their ability to improve success, morality, and motivation in the organization (Burns, 1978; Groves & LaRocca, 2011).

Researchers have found that transformational leaders are effective in situations of organizational instability. For example, (Bass, 1985) found transformational leadership to

be "required at all levels of organizations especially when they are confronted with crisis and chaotic, unstable and unpredictable environment" because transformational leaders have shown the ability to identify accurately the needs of followers and the organization and to fulfill them aptly (p. 154). Work-related motor vehicle accidents have been creating crisis and chaotic, unstable and unpredictable work conditions for U.S. electric utility employees and organizations and unsafe environments for society for many decades, as reported by the BLS (2012) and by Kelsh and Sahl (1997). In this study, I explored in which way, if any, the emotional intelligence trait of transformational leaders can help in addressing successfully occupational motor vehicle accidents in the U.S. electric utility industry.

**Problem Statement**

The number of fatal and nonfatal injuries from work-related motor vehicle accidents is gradually increasing among the nearly 200 investor-owned companies of the U.S. electric utility industry. These accidents affect all levels of management and union-represented employees. For instance, they caused 3.8 % of the total deaths that occurred in the Southern California electric utility workforce from 1960 to 1991 (Kelsh & Sahl, 1997); 1,270 nonfatal injuries and 32 fatalities between 2005 and 2010 within the U.S. electric utility workforce, (BLS; 2012), and eight deaths among U.S. electric utility workers and 110 nonfatal injuries in 2011 alone (BLS, 2012). Further, from 1998 to 2000, "motor vehicle crash injuries on and off the job cost employers almost $60 billion annually" (Zaloshnja & Miller, 2006, p. 148). Scholars have found transformational leaders effective in the context of safety in many industries (Conchie, Taylor, & Donald,

2012; De Koster, Stam, & Balk, 2011; Inness, Turner, Barling, & Stride, 2010; Kelloway, Mullen, & Francis, 2006; May, Tranter, & Warn, 2011). Nevertheless, no researcher has explored the ways in which transformational leaders could help improve safe driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. In this study, I addressed this gap in the literature.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this interview-driven qualitative study was to explore the role transformational leadership may play in inspiring occupational drivers to improve their safe driving behavior and their awareness of external factors conducive to motor vehicle accidents, and thereby contribute to the improvement of safe driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. Using a combination of snowball and purposive sampling approaches, I conducted a comprehensive investigation of the likely influence of transformational leaders in the conception and implementation of safety cultures based on empathy.

Data for this study were collected from a 14-item questionnaire that was used to interview 28 active management and union-represented U.S. electric utility employees recruited from five U.S. electric utility companies in different geographic parts of the United States. This study might contribute to social change and/or impact business practices in the U.S. electric utility industry by the way it may improve the quality of leader-employee interactions toward safe driving related decision making, the wellbeing of employees and U.S. road users, and safety in the industry and the country.

## Research Questions

Two research questions guided this study:

- How does transformational leadership influence safe driving in organizations?

- How does leaders' emotional intelligence influence safe driving in organizations?

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework that supported this study emerged from a combination of motivation and transformational leadership theories. They were respectively developed by Maslow (1943), Burns (1978), and Bass (1985). The ideas from Maslow's (1943) used in this study revolved around the concepts used to define and to establish a link among human psychology, motivation, and performance achievement. Maslow's ideas helped put in perspective how emotional intelligence can increase transformational leaders' ability to identify the key motivating factors that would improve U.S. electric utility drivers' safe driving behaviors accurately.

Burns's ideas revolved around the core traits of transformational leaders and the way they affect work environment and followers' performance improvement. Burns's ideas helped clarify how transformational leaders' characteristics of idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration can create conditions to improve safe driving performance of drivers in their organization. The evidence from the answers received in the interviews helped me in understanding how the work environment and safe driving culture created by transformational leaders can improve safe driving performance in the U.S. electric utility industry.

Scholars have found that transformational leaders' ability to relate to followers increased their effectiveness (Bass, 1985). For example, according to Burns (1978), transformational leaders' emotional intelligence plays a significant role in their success in delegating authority to selected members and motivating employees to improve their performance. Underlying the theory of motivation and human needs is the notion of inspiration. This concept translates into predictable performance outcomes by individuals who were not marginalized by organizational structures and whose leaders identified their needs accurately and met them satisfactorily (Maslow, 1943).

According to Maslow's motivation theory and psychological conditioning of behaviors and attitudes, in order for leaders to improve followers' performance toward the achievement of specific organizational objectives, they must do two things: (a) managers and/or supervisors must let employees contribute freely, spontaneously, and dynamically; and (b) they must allow team members to apply their talents and new insights in the conception and implementation phases of organizational processes for which they exhibit particular aptitude.

**Nature of the Study**

In this qualitative study, I used data from five electric utility companies to provide answers to the research questions listed earlier. I used a 14-item questionnaire to address the research questions. I recruited the research participants I interviewed for the study through the snowball and purposive sampling method. The participating electric utility companies were from different geographic areas of the United States, from Kansas to

Pennsylvania. At each company, I selected six participants who participated in a 30-minute interview.

The research population comprised 28 participants: 12 were union-represented employees and 16 were management personnel. In this study, I identified the latter group as management, administrative, supervisory, and technical (MAST) employees or MAST associates to encompass personnel. I organized, analyzed, and coded the data I collected from the interviews using manual techniques and NVivo (version 10). I present the details about the research design methodology in Chapter 3.

**Definition of Terms**

The operational definitions of the terms used in this study were as follows:

*Electric utility*: Conglomeration of any corporation, persons, agency, authority, or other legal entity or instrumentality aligned with distribution facilities for delivery of electric energy for use primarily by the public (U.S. Energy Information Administration [EIA], n.d.).

*MAST associates or employees*: Electric utility employees hired or promoted to management, administrative, supervisory, and technical positions (Public Service Enterprise Group [PSEG], 2013).

*Motor vehicle accidents*: Unintended events that (a) involve one or more motor vehicles on a highway publicly maintained and open to the public for vehicular travel and (b) result in physical injuries, deaths, or property damage (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [NHTSA], n.d.)

*Occupational driver*: Any employee who drives at least once a week for work-related purposes, including commuting to and from work (Davey et al., 2006).

*Union-represented employees or workers*: Any employee represented by a Collective Bargaining Unit as stated in the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA; 29 U.S.C.A. §§ 151 et seq.) in 1935.

## Assumptions

Given the system structure of work-related motor vehicle accidents in the U.S. electric utility industry, and the road safety in general in the United States, the first assumption I made was that an enhancement of safe work-related driving in the U.S. electric utility industry will improve road safety in the country. According to Wright and Meadows (2012), a system structure is the origin of system behaviors, which reveals itself as a series of events over time.

Another assumption I made was that the quality of relationship between leaders and occupational drivers could improve or deter drivers' safe driving behaviors and attitudes. This assumption was needed in the context of this study because the risk of motor vehicle accidents is always present any time a vehicle fleet (small or large) is used (Evans, 2004), and because scholars have shown that when work-related drivers need to have excellent rapport with their leaders they improve their safe driving performance (Barling, Loughlin, & Kelloway, 2002). The anticipation is that relationships based on feelings and emotions may increase occupational drivers' comfort level in discussing an accident event with superiors or in contributing to effective planning of work-related safety and decision making processes.

Other assumptions were also vital to the study. For example, previous researchers showed that empowerment of followers, emotional intelligence, and group-oriented organizational cultures, which are key features of transformational leadership, have helped many other organizations to improve safety. Therefore, the application of transformational leadership to the U.S. electric utility industry may also help U.S. electric utility drivers behave in a safer way while conducting activities that involve driving a company-owned vehicle.

In addition, I assumed that the authorities from leadership, management, and collective bargaining units in the participating U.S. electric utility companies would see a value to the study and therefore grant me permission to conduct recorded interviews with selected employees (MAST or union-represented employees). Likewise, I assumed the themes, categories, and patterns that would emerge from data analysis would be significant and consistent with the purpose and objective of the study. The last assumption was that superiors, union or shop stewards, or colleagues would not intimidate or influence research participants in any way and thereby jeopardize the quality of their input to the study.

The relevance of those assumptions to the study is that when employees are empowered and know that they can add to organizational decision processes, they will be more enthusiastic in their efforts to work toward organizational goals, independently of whether there is a link to safe driving. When employees feel connected with their leaders, have a compassion-based rapport with their leaders, and live and work with the other members of their organizations as team, they will feel more concerned for one another.

As a result, they may do all that is needed to keep the group safe. Lastly, it is just as important that there are enough participants for the study to be successful as it is for the data collected to be valid and unbiased.

## Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study extended to five U.S. electric utility companies from the eastern half of the United States. The sampling selection excluded more than 190 other U.S. investor- or shareholder-owned U.S. electric utility companies. The Edison Electric Institute (EEI; 2013) indicated that the U.S. electric utility industry contains roughly 200 shareholder-owned electric companies. My plan was to recruit most of the participating companies in the vicinity of New Jersey to avoid having to travel. This means that proximity was a big factor in the selection of the companies that constituted the sample of my research population. However, I ended up drafting one company from Missouri, one from New Jersey, two from New York, and one from Pennsylvania.

## Limitations

The first limitation may reside in the methodology used for this study. The most prevalent criticism about qualitative studies is the researcher's biases. Therefore, qualitative studies are dependent on anecdotes, researcher's skills, personal impressions, and idiosyncrasies, which constitute a source of researcher's biases (Maxwell, 2013). Such reliance translates into a limitation for this study because it amplifies the consequences of my lack of experience in conducting research of this scope. In addition, accuracy in the interpretation and assessment of interview responses may be a fundamental limitation. It may compromise replication or generalization of the study as

identified themes and categories may be a reflection of my background and preconceived ideas.

I conducted the interviews at different locations with interview settings over which I had no control. In addition, in the interview questions, I asked the interviewees to draw from memory some of the information that constituted their responses. Thus, distinctions in interview settings and accurateness of participants' recollection of past events, behaviors, and perspective may be factors limiting the validity of the study.

Other limitations for this study included geographic distribution of the research participants, sample size, interview guide, and reactivity of research participants. Regarding the limitations due to the geographic dispersion of research participants, I faced travelling expenses that limited access to certain companies. In addition, I sometimes had to conduct telephone interviews instead of face-to-face interviews; therefore, I was not able to capitalize on the clues in interviewees' behavior change or body language.

Sample size, as anticipated, was also a limitation to the study. Information from the five electric utility companies that made up the study sample was not representative of the nearly 200 that compose the U.S. electric utility industry (EEI, 2013). The size of the sample was not representative of the population under study; therefore, it may not offer comprehensive and accurate information about the larger group.

The type of questionnaire used for data collection was a limitation to the study. The informality, open-endedness, and friendliness of the qualitative interview procedure exposed the study to deviation from research objective and time allocation (Leedy &

Ormrod, 2010). That was why few interviews were more than 90 minutes long. Also associated with the interviews conducted, in terms of limitations, was the responsiveness of research participants to the interviewer. According to Maxwell (2013), reactivity or responsiveness is the influence of the researcher on the setting or individual studied. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) identified this condition as the Hawthorne effect. According to the Hawthorne effect, research participants tend to rehearse their contributions because they know the researcher will use the information they will provide in a study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

I addressed those limitations and minimized their consequences on the research by following the direction of my dissertation committee chair. In addition, I applied the recommendations on the best interview planning techniques from Leedy and Ormrod (2010), Maxwell (2013), Patton (2014), and Turner (2010). Those recommendations included, among others, neutral and objective open-ended questions and strong synergies with interviewees.

## Significance and Social Change Implications

This study is significant because I addressed a condition that has been affecting the U.S. electric utility industry and the entire country for decades. Work-related motor vehicle accidents have caused a significant number of fatal and nonfatal injuries among U.S. electric utility drivers for more than half of the century (BLS, 2012). The most advantage of this study is its attempt to provide an alternative approach to promoting safe driving in the U.S. electric utility industry through an improved relationship between

leaders and occupational drivers. Therefore, the results of this study may be meaningful

and helpful for safety within the electric utility industry in the United States.

The results of this study could help reduce both the direct and indirect costs of

utilities for consumers and the insurance cost for the industry, in addition to improving

road safety as a public health issue. An improved safe driving performance in the U.S.

electric utility industry may have a direct impact on U.S. road safety as well as on the

U.S. economy altogether.

**Summary**

In Chapter 1, I introduced and explained the processes by which I investigated

how transformational leaders could influence the management of work-related motor

vehicle accidents in the U.S. electric utility industry. In this chapter, I also offered a

detailed introduction of the study's background, problem statement, and purpose. In

addition, I presented the research questions and put emphasis on these aspects of the

study: the conceptual framework, underlying assumptions, operational definition of

terms, scope and limitations, significance, and potential social implications.

In Chapter 2, I will present a review of scholarly literature on previous studies

regarding road safety in the United States, with special reference to motor vehicle

accidents. I will include scholarly research reports on the theory and background of

transformational leadership and Maslow's theory of motivation. The emphasis of the

literature cited regarding transformational leadership will be on the leaders' emotional

intelligence, the drivers' empowerment, and organizational safety culture, all of which

will contribute to an understanding of how to improve safe driving performance.

In Chapter 3, I will discuss in detail my research design and methodology;
including the role of the researcher; the selection process of research participants; and the
processes of data collection, codification, analysis, and management. In Chapters 4 and 5,
I will present my analysis of the collected data along with a summary of the research
findings, conclusions, recommendations, significance, and social change implications. In
Chapter 5, I will also point out focus areas for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

**Introduction**

In my research, I considered several studies in which emotional intelligence of transformational leaders improved safety in an organization. In those examples, transformational leaders created an organizational structure and culture that stirred employees to exhibit desired behaviors to meet organizational safety goals. I also used seminal studies conducted by Bass, Burns, and Maslow to explore how emotional intelligence can help leaders in the U.S. electric utility industry to motivate occupational drivers. In addition, I used those original works to gain an understanding of how leaders inspire drivers to exhibit safer driving behaviors. Moreover, Burns's and Maslow's fundamental works helped me to understand how leaders increase drivers' awareness of the external factors conducive to motor vehicle accidents.

I divided the following literature review into sections; each section offers information about the key aspects of this study. The development of this chapter starts with a discussion of the characteristics, the influence, and the prevalence of motor vehicle accidents in U.S. workplaces. I depart from this topic to address safe work-related driving and to introduce the effectiveness of transformational leadership in that context. I also include in this chapter the responsibilities of leaders in organizational settings, Maslow's theory of motivation and human needs, and an overview of transformational leadership including its features. However, the focus of the literature review is on emotional intelligence, followers' empowerment, organizational culture, and work-related safety. The seminal works of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) guided the discussion of the

literature about transformational leadership, while Maslow's (1943) work helped me in

the selection of literature about motivation.

## Literature Search Strategy

As indicated above, I consulted a few seminal works that were published over 50

years ago. However, for the literature reviewed, I used peer-reviewed, online journal

articles, and books published between 2008 and 2013 by experts in the field of

leadership, human psychology, and motivation. I searched several databases in the

process of gathering the content of this literature review. The databases I used included

the ABI/INFORM Complete, the Academic Search Complete, the Bureau of Labor

Statistics, the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), the Emerald Group

management journals, the International Organization of Scientific Research (IOSR),

PsycARTICLES, PsycInfo, SAGE Premier, and ScienceDirect. The keywords and search

terms I used in various combinations to collect the articles for literature review included

*emotional intelligence, empowerment, leader-follower relationship, motivation,*

*occupational driver, organizational culture, safe driving attitudes, safe driving*

*behaviors, safety climate, safety-specific transformational leadership, U.S. electric utility*

*industry,* and *work-related motor vehicle accidents.*

## Prevalence of Motor Vehicle Accidents in the United States

As long as there is a need for the operation of motor vehicles, the risk exists for

motor-vehicle-related accidents to occur; therefore, the skill with which leaders approach

work-related motor vehicle accidents will affect the level of performance outcome.

According to Evans (2004), the use of a transportation system always involves some risk

of harm, and this "has been the case since antiquity and seems likely to remain the case in

the future" (p. 67).

Consistent with Evans' assessment, in the traffic safety facts published by the

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA; 2011), between 2000 and

2009, more than 411,000 people died in traffic-related inadvertent crashes of one motor

vehicle with another, with a stationary object, or with a person. In addition, the NHTSA

reported that in 2010, there were an estimated 5,419,000 police-reported traffic crashes,

in which there were 32,885 deaths and 2,239,000 bodily injuries.

The antecedents of motor vehicle accidents have been identified to be the driver

and the environment, with the drivers making up most of the contexts for those accidents

with inaccurate judgments, errors, and traffic violations (Haddon, 1972; Reason, 1995a,

1995b; Reimer et al., 2009). According to Haddon (1972), the driving contexts for motor

vehicle accidents stem from four components: the driver, the road, the vehicle, and the

environment. However, Reimer, Coughlin, and Mehler (2009) categorized these driving

contexts for motor vehicle accidents into three groups by combining Haddon's *road* and

*environment* components into one, which they labeled *environment*. The Haddon Matrix

diagram derived by Reimer et al. shows all possible logical relations among these three

finite components: environment, driver, and vehicle. These relationships are represented

by the different regions of the Venn diagram. For example, the number 1 indicated in the

figure shown below marks the region where the driver and the environment combined to

create driving contexts for motor vehicle accidents. Consequently, the regions marked

with numbers 2, 3, and 4 respectively point regions where (a) driver and vehicle, (b)

vehicle and environment, and (c) driver, vehicle and environment contribute to create

contexts for motor vehicle accidents. See Figure 1 below.
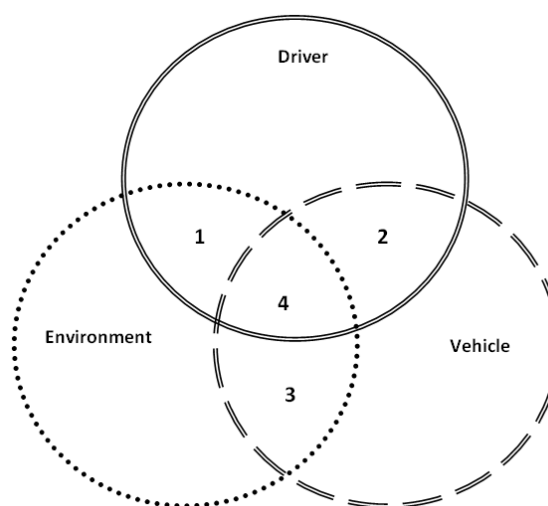


*Figure 1*. Components of the driving context as detailed in a derivation of the Haddon
Matrix by Reimer et al., with the overlap between the regions numbered.

As scholars further investigated the core components of motor vehicle accidents

identified by Haddon (1972) and each component of the driving context contributing to

motor vehicle accidents at different levels, more researchers reported human-related

factors to continuously have more prevalence in increasing the likelihood or risk for

motor vehicle accidents. *Risk* can be taken to have two meanings here. Friend and Kohn

(2007) defined risk as "the measure of the probability and severity of a loss event taking

place" (p. 9). Additionally, the risks taken by drivers, which they manifest in their

behavior, are an indication of their attitude toward safety, which has an influence on the

drivers' involvement in motor vehicle accidents (De Winter & Dodou, 2010).

The prevalence of the human element in a motor vehicle accident is such that

many identified it as both principal actor and causative component in any traffic system

(Regan, Hallett, & Gordon, 2011). Other studies aligned with the one by Regan et al. For example, Medina et al. (2004) revealed that drivers' errors contribute to as many as 75% of roadway crashes. Personality traits (Adrian, Postal, Moessinger, Rascle, & Charles, 2011; Rike, Johansen, Ulleberg, Lundqvist, & Schanke, 2015), driver' locus and behavior (Huang & Ford, 2012), and other human-related factors, such as the ability of a driver to anticipate potentially dangerous situations on the road ahead (Horswill, Anstey, Hatherly, Wood, and Pachana, 2011), are a few of the fundamental causes of drivers' inclination toward greater involvement in road traffic collisions.

Other researchers also found motor vehicle accidents to be often the result of driving performance issues, such as drivers' aberrance, lapses, slips, and mistakes (Reason, 1995a, 1995b). Lum and Reagan (1995) reported driving behaviors and poor decision making to make up nearly 93% of all the driving contexts that engender motor vehicle accidents in Great Britain and the United States (see Figure 2).
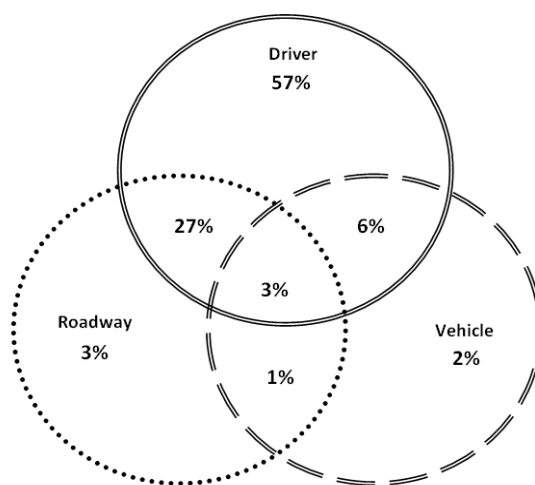


*Figure 2*. Venn diagram showing the causes by percentage in road accidents in the United States.

While scholars have pointed to human-related driving components as the most crucial determinants of driving contexts leading to motor vehicle accidents, other researchers found that motor vehicle accidents do not happen in isolation and that there is an interactive dynamism of many other factors that must be taken into account. For instance, a systemic approach is necessary between the drivers and their environment when human errors and/or drivers' unsafe acts are the center of investigation (Bakiri et al. 2013; Reason, 1995a, 1995b; Reason et al., 1990; Haghi, Ketabi, Ghanbari, & Rajabi, 2014; Salmon, Lenné, Stanton, Jenkins, & Walker, 2010; Young, & Salmon, 2012).

Those researchers found that human errors are a systems phenomenon or process and represent a set of integrated events that have an interactive relationship with the other components of the system. Therefore, because the operation of a system is contingent on the marginal contribution of each of its components, there is a reflective relationship in the outcome of altering one factor of a system. When leaders implement resolutions aimed at changing any aspect of their organization, they must be aware of the systemic relationship between each of the elements of the system and the way each of them affects the whole structure (Pellissier, 2011).

**Prevalence of Work-Related Motor Vehicle Accidents in the United States**

Work-related motor vehicle accidents affect the U.S. economy and society at many levels, and have emerged over time as the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries from unintentional workplace traumas (Pratt, 2003). In fact, between 20 and 40% of all work-related deaths in most higher income or industrialized countries are due to

roadway motor vehicle accidents (Darby, Raeside, Ison, Quddus, & Murray, 2012; Fort,

Pourcel, Davezies, Renaux, Chiron, & Charbotel, 2010). Work-related motor vehicle

accidents have imposed high costs on employers. The costs of U.S. work-related motor

vehicle crashes to employers include expenses in fringe benefits, property damage,

workplace disruption, and wage risk premiums. According to Zaloshnja and Miller

(2006), "Including wage-risk premiums, on-the-job highway crashes cost employers over

$24,500 per crash, nearly $236,000 per million vehicle miles of travel and over $128,000

per injury" (p. 148).

In addition, Newnam, Griffin, and Mason (2008) found work-related drivers to

account for the highest number of fatal work injuries of any occupation in the United

States. Green et al. (2011) also indicated that 24% of work-related deaths in the United

States from 2003 to 2008, amounting to 8,173 deaths, resulted from work-related motor

vehicle accidents. The BLS (2004) reported that road traffic crashes during work or while

commuting to work are the most frequent reasons for occupational drivers' fatal and

nonfatal injuries in the United States. Those road traffic crashes were responsible for 67%

of all occupational drivers' deaths on public roadways or surrounding areas in 2004

(BLS, 2004).

In addition, the BLS (2007) reported that in 2006, 5,804 work-related fatalities

and 4.1 million nonfatal occupational injuries illnesses, and disabilities among U.S.

workers were due to work-related accidents. Furthermore, from 1962 to 2002, 13,337

work-related highway deaths occurred in the United States, which were 62% of all U.S.

highway accidents (Burke et al., 2011). Lastly, a study revealed that the number of road

fatalities averaged more than 40,000 annually for the past 40 years in the United States (Oster Jr. and Strong, 2013).

As motor vehicle accidents have been affecting the U.S. workforce at many levels, research has shown that increased driving exposure is an important determinant of motor vehicle accidents (Darby et al., 2009). The U.S. electric utility companies' exposure to driving is high as it is essential to meet customers' requests for reliable and resilient electric services. Safe work-related driving has become more and more a necessity in the U.S. electric utility industry as the need to protect the workforce and the industry's bottom line intensifies overtime.

It is nearly impossible for any organization with a small or large motor vehicle fleet to build an accident-free environment. In fact, scholars showed that even the organizations and industrial structures with the most complex defense system still, from time to time, experience the occurrence of unwanted outcomes. However, Reason (1995a, 1995b), showed that, despite the causative active and latent effect of elements such as organization, workplace, and people, organizations, via their leaders, can minimize accident recurrence by building a safety system or defense mechanism using learning and compliance processes rules, training, and technology (see Figure 3 below).
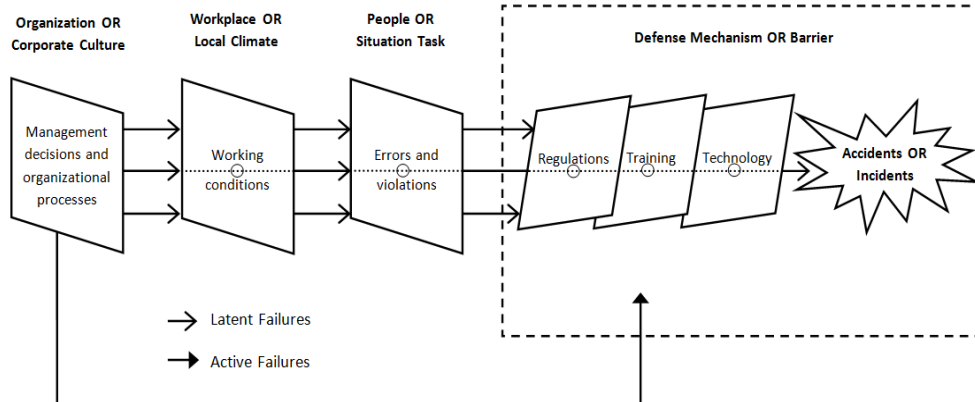
*Figure 3*. Stages of development of organizational accidents.

Other researchers also revealed that production processes based on safe operation of motor vehicles is a two-level safety mechanism that can help reduce undesired outcomes. The first level involves the management system in the way supervisors and managers build safety barriers based on perceived organizational values; the second level deals with change in driving behavior and occupational drivers' attitude toward driving safely in response to inspiration received from management's expressed safety values, self-efficacy, and reactions toward safe driving attitudes (Newnam et al., 2008). As this last study showed, leaders of organizations have appeared to play a significant role in the level of safety within their organization.

**Safe Work-Related Driving**

The dynamism and wide range of today's internal and external occupational challenges hinders the attempts of leaders of organizations to ensure smooth and reliable organizational processes and the safety of followers (Probst & Estrada, 2010). Routine nonconformity is an internal challenge that causes predictable and recurring outcomes shared by most socially organized systems and societies; these outcomes vary based on

workplace settings and features as well as cognitive practices of employees (Vaughan, 1999). Other challenges also contribute to the deterioration of safe work-related driving at many levels, which make work-related motor vehicle accidents a serious concern for all organizations where employees are engaged in work-related driving (Newnam, Greenslade, Newton, & Watson, 2011). Despite the countless internal and external challenges that have hindered successful implementation of safety in the workplace, leaders of organizations in many industries have continued to keep workplace safety as first priority (Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Hofmann, 2011). Transformational leaders often face those challenges successfully because of their focus on prioritization of followers' needs, decentralization of power, and open relationship with followers (Du & Sun, 2012; Minavand, Mokhtari, Zakerian, & Pahlevan, 2013).

### Responsibilities of Leaders in Organizational Settings

Many researchers agreed that the responsibilities of organizational leaders rely on the work environment they provide for their followers, their direct interactions with them, their behaviors, and the way their followers perceive and accept them as leaders. Martínez-Córcoles, Gracia, Tomás, Peiró, and Schöbel (2013) found that top-level managers have a strong impact on safety climate in organizations, particularly in relation leaders' empowering behaviors, higher safety compliance behaviors, higher safety participation behaviors, and risky behaviors of team members. In addition, Bolman and Deal (2011) argued that two of the most prevalent tasks of leaders are (a) to envision and implement the processes that best fit the needs of their organization, and (b) to promote social exchange and association within the organization on a basis of empathy.

Other theorists also hypothesized a close linkage between leadership and organizational effectiveness. For example, Van Wart & Kapucu, (2011) found organizational effectiveness to be an accurate indication of how effectively and promptly, particularly in situation of crisis, leaders combine wisdom, creativity, and intelligence to make decision. Leaders are often found to be responsible for inspiring friendly work climates and ensuring happiness, success, and performance within their workforce (Northouse, 2012; Lam & O'Higgins, 2012; Vincent-Höper, Muser, & Janneck, 2012). They are also accountable for organizational change, positive and productive work settings, organizational trust, and followers' safety and growth (Caldwell & Dixon, 2010; Conchie, Taylor, & Charlton, 2011; Newnam & Watson, 2011; Sabir et al., 2011; Xu & Thomas, 2011). Leaders also define the overall safety performance in their organization in the way they encourage a positive safety environment (Kath, Magley, & Marmet 2010).

In addition, many researchers showed that followers look up to their leaders to decide what safety behavior and attitude to have. For example, Probst and Estrada (2010) showed that followers' perceptions of their leaders' lack of commitment to put into effect organizational safety practices and a resilient safety climate is an accurate factor in under-reporting of accidents and, therefore, in deterioration of work-related safety in the workplace. Moreover, the culture that leaders implement in their organizations will condition their employees' motivation toward improving their safety performance (Conchie, Taylor, & Donald, 2012; Conchie et al., 2011; Guldenmund, 2010; Inness,

Turner, Barling, & Stride, 2010; Newnam, Lewis, & Watson, 2012; Morrow et al., 2010;

Öz, Özkan, & Lajunen, 2013).

Moreover, leaders' gratitude and appreciation of followers' contributions to

leadership success is vital in determining reliable organizational performance. In fact,

when organizations fail to recognize followership as a justification to leadership, it may

contribute to weakening effectiveness and efficiency at all level within the organization

(Agho, 2009). Often, such influence results from the inherent mechanistic structure of

organizations (Morgan, 2006). The leaders' influence assists in enhancing workplace

performance improvement when (a) there is skill and performance complementarity

within the workforce, (b) there is prioritization of mutual performance liability, and (c)

work settings stimulate and commit followers to shared goals (Riaz & Haider, 2010).

### Maslow's Theory of Motivation and Human Needs

When peoples' needs are inaccurately identified and hence unsatisfied, leaders'

attempts at motivating workers to improve their performance often tend to fail. Similarly,

people feel valued in an organization when they take part in some aspect of

organizational decision making processes. As described by Maslow (1999), human

beings "resent being rubricized or classified" (p.145); they are motivated to improve their

performance when they can freely express their creative impulses and enjoy and expand

their talents (Maslow, 1943).

Consistent with Maslow's statement, Zoogah (2010) argued that when people feel

deprived, or their expectations about entitled rewards are thwarted, they become

resentful. In addition, growth-motivated people grow, improve in performance, and self-

actualize within their environment through appropriate gratifications, close love relations, and recognition; otherwise, they develop neuroses (Maslow, 1999).

While marginalized followers perform poorly, Maslow (1999) indicated that leaders motivate followers successfully when they radiate or emit their own sense of motivation. The work setting and culture in which people evolve determines their level of inspiration for performance improvement (Maslow, 1943). Also, according to Maslow (1999), motivation becomes real when decision-makers become familiar with internal and external dissonances and dichotomies; when they make use of them effectively to generate work conditions where pleasure and duty merge; and where the distinction between work and play becomes shadowy. Such a level of motivation is possible when leaders establish clearly the difference between conation and cognition; and when they understand thoroughly and express careful attention to those psychological determinants of behavior and decision making (Maslow, 1943).

### Transformational Leadership Overview and Characteristics

Burns (1978) used the generic taxonomy of transformational leadership to tag leaders with characteristics such as emotional intelligence, charisma, and ability to inspire followers to achieve shared goals using values, such as self-worth, empowerment, and meaningfulness. In addition, transformational leaders are also found to be relationship-oriented leaders who maintain organizational reliability through (a) safety motivation and (b) active management, such as exact role definitions, clear objectives and evaluation criteria, and specific planning of goals achievement (Northouse, 2011). As employees' contributions to their organization become tangible, their enthusiasm

increases; this is a determinant factor in some aspects of leadership effectiveness (Conchie, 2013).

*Transformational leadership* has different meanings based on the context and the person defining the concept. For example, experimental research supports the idea that transformational influences positively the performance of follower and that of the organizational (Diaz-Saenz, 2011); scholars, such as Gundersen, Hellesoy, and Raeder (2012), portrayed transformational leadership as a manifestation of the leaders' and the organization's effectiveness in raising followers' motivation and achievement to levels beyond previous expectations and allow them to grow to their fullest potential and contribution independently on the dynamism of the work environment. Bass (1985) and Grant (2012) found that transformational leaders helped both the organization and the people constituting it by envisioning and implementing goals that meet the needs of the former while allowing the latter to transcend their self-interests, and to shift their goals to facilitate self-actualization. In addition, Martins Marques de Lima Rua and Costa Araújo (2013) found transformational leaders to establish a type of work setting that enhances organizational trust.

The responsibilities of transformational leaders extend far beyond the necessities of the bottom line of their organizations. For example, they combine moral and ontological ethical values to relate with followers because of shared values, goals, and motives; they ensure that they meet followers' safety, economical, and physical needs; and they condition followers' performance by influencing their attitudes (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Groves & LaRocca, 2011). In addition, transformational leaders implement

integrative leadership visions and approaches, such as value-based and individualized dealings as well as prioritization of followers' safety and active participation in organizational decision making processes (Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, & Sutton, 2011; Schaubroeck, Lam, & Peng, 2011). They inspire followers' development by combining followers' personal goals with those of the organization so their success contributes to the accomplishment of a shared vision (Du & Sun, 2012; Flin & Yule, 2004; Wang & Rode, 2010). Transformational leaders promote humanistic ideals and value effective exchanges within the organization; they reduce work-related stress and improve followers' attitudes and behaviors (Cherniss, 2010; Cigularov, Chen, & Rosecrance, 2010; Törner, 2011).

Transformational leaders improve followers' performance at all levels by strategically empowering the latter and by building strong and compassionate relationships with them through shared emotion (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Personal growth, trust, engagement, comfort speaking up about safety, and values such as self-appreciation and deontological ethics are a few essential outcomes of applying transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Burns, 1978; Groves & LaRocca, 2011). In addition, transforming leaders build cultures that promote integration of individual interests with those of the organization. In the case of safe driving performance improvement, transformational leaders can help achieve the shared goals of reducing unsafe driving behaviors and attitudes and enhancing safe driving outcomes in the U.S. electric utility industry.

**Transformational Leadership and Emotional Intelligence**

Scholarly literature shows different levels of connection between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, from emotional intelligence being an inherent feature of transformational leadership (Goleman, 1998) to a paradigm where the former is an antecedent of the latter (Lindebaum & Cartwright, 2010). Emotional intelligence is also found to be a significant indicator of an individual's problem-solving and social relationships skills; its deficiency leads to interpersonal and group conflicts, while its presence is a reliable predictor of better social outcomes as they identify emotional information, through emotional intelligence, to reason about emotions, and to use emotions to solve life problems (Mayer, Caruso, Panter, & Salovey, 2012).

Researchers also reported that emotional intelligence influences the performance of transformational leaders at different levels within the organization. For example, emotional intelligence enhances leaders' personal and social management awareness, as well as their management of rapport with others (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013). It has also been discovered that employees with high emotional recognition often express stronger internal feelings of job satisfaction (Çekmecelioğlu, Günsel, & Ulutaş, 2012). Moreover, researchers showed that emotional intelligence relates significantly and positively to the various dimensions of transformational leadership and other leadership behaviors (Harms & Credé, 2010). This internal satisfaction generated by emotional acknowledgment is an influential determinant of performance improvement of employees and effectiveness of leaders (Caldwell & Dixon, 2010; Rosette & Tost, 2010).

Research findings concurred on emotional intelligence having a significant link with transformational leadership in the way the former overlaps with (a) performance improvement, (b) job commitment, (c) work climate enhancement, (d) compassionate relationship, and (e) positive context and settings within the workplace (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Lindebaum & Cartwright, 2010). However, other researchers stated just as enthusiastically a strong divergence in the way they defined emotional intelligence. For example, many of them defined emotional intelligence an innate characteristic that enables and promotes well-being that relates strongly to transformational leadership (Harms & Credé, 2010), while others defined the concept as abilities leaders retain which allow them to gravitate toward efficiency (Goleman, 2011). In addition, Clarke (2010), identified emotional intelligence and empathy as likely the key strengths in helping successful management of conflicts, especially where there is scope for misunderstanding and miscommunication on the basis of cross-cultural differences. Still, Shuck and Herd (2012) found that emotional intelligence empowers transformational leaders with accurate understanding, thereby enabling their effective satisfaction of employees' needs. Furthermore, the emotional intelligence of transformational leaders increases the level of engagement and marginal performance of followers, improves the followers' perceptions of their leaders, and enhances the quality of the work climate in the workplace.
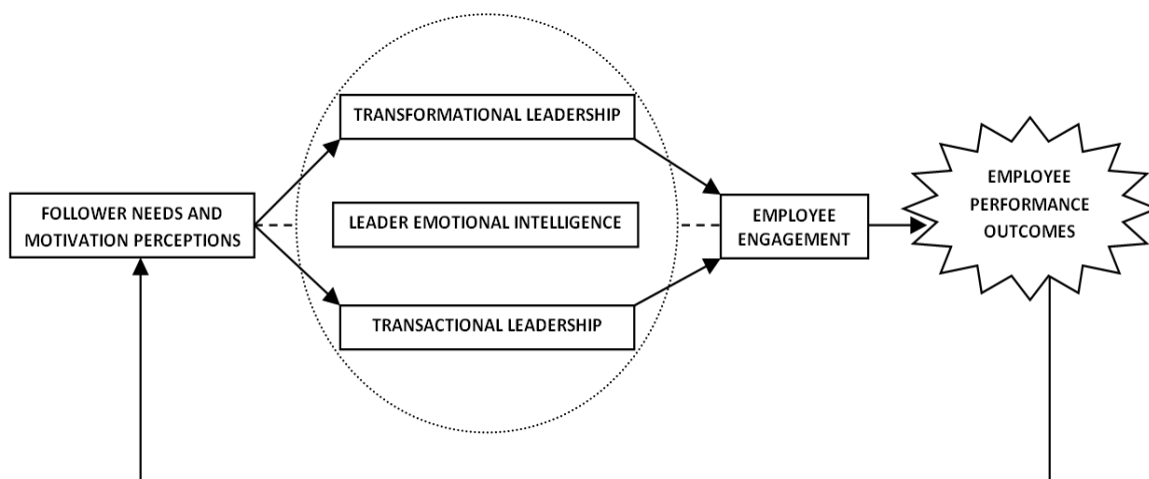
*Figure 4*. Conceptual model of leadership and employee engagement.

Moreover, emotional intelligence strengthens the abilities of transformational

leaders to manage conflicts and to improve social interactions within their organizations

(Clarke, 2010). It contributes to successful implementation of cultures of collectivity and

facilitates the alignment of interests within the organization (Joseph & Newman, 2010;

O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2011); and it transforms the workplace

settings by arousing and uniting followers toward superordinate goals (Burns, 1978).

According to Sherif (1958), superordinate goals are highly appealing and compelling

goals to members of two or more hostile groups. Sherif stressed that superordinate goals

are unattainable with isolated use of resources and energies of the groups applied

separately, and can be attained "only when groups pull together." (1958, p. 350)

The emotional intelligence feature of transformational leadership allows leaders

to fulfill accurately their key stakeholders' needs. For example, it enhances the abilities

of transformational leaders to motivate followers more predictably because of the

former's agility in cultivating and maintaining the cognition of the latter and fostering

based trust, which facilitates openness and comfort among members of organizations

(Schaubroeck et al., 2011). It is also an even more significantly accurate determinant of how successful transformational leaders can be than cognition and technical expertise. For instance, Goleman (1998) quoted a 90% direct attribution of emotional intelligence to making individuals in senior leadership outstanding performers; whereas, Watkin (2000) specified, "for top leadership position, Emotional Intelligence is more than 85% of what sets star performers apart from the average" (p. 89). Lastly, emotional intelligence is a part of the leader's behavioral skill set that is necessary predominantly during the delicate time when he or she tries to satisfy the basic needs of an employee, or when trust is at an early stage of development in the life cycle in the organization (Shuck & Herd, 2012).

### Transformational Leadership and Followers' Empowerment

Research about employee motivation repeatedly showed that empowerment of followers facilitates the improvement of performance in many capacities. Empowerment is an expansion of members' self-efficacy perceptions that enables and increases their decisions to improve on desired behaviors. This is accomplished by identifying and isolating powerlessness-fostering conditions through application of new formal organizational practices and improved techniques of communication and learning (Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

Empowering followers helps transformational leaders (a) promote mutual motivation and morality improvement among followers; (b) develop new visions and strategies that strengthen followers' personal work ethics and efficacy expectations; and (c) assign delegated influential responsibilities to followers, which allow them to

contribute in organizational decision making processes (Burns, 1978; Groves & LaRocca, 2011; Wang & Rode, 2010).

Empowerment also means delegation of authority (a) when employees are able to make independent decisions about their work without the worries about imposed control, instructions, and orders; and (b) when there is decentralization of power, authority, and decision making (Burke, 1986). Lauver and Trank (2012) defined *decentralization* as the "deployment of responsibility and authority to lower levels of the organization so that the safety function is enacted closest to its operational base" (p. 67). However, as transformational leaders empower their followers, the latter feel more valuable to the organization; they become more confident; and they engage more in organizational processes (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). People's perception of and belief in their efficacy, value, and contribution to the team or group to which they belong is likely to dictate their decisions to act in unaccustomed settings (Bandura, 1977). Subsequently, Bandura (1977) stated:

> The strength of peoples' conviction in their own effectiveness is likely to affect whether they would even try to cope with given situations… They get involved in activities and behave assuredly when they judge themselves capable of handling situations that would otherwise be intimidating… Efficacy expectations determine how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences. (pp. 193-194)

Furthermore, the antecedent conditions for employees to engage fully in decision making processes reside in the abilities of leaders to do several things. For example,

because when employees are engaged they behave differently (Parker, & Griffin, 2011),

the leaders' ability to integrate followers actively in organizational processes and to raise

the meaningfulness of their contributions helps them feel comfortable and safe to express

themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during the execution of their tasks or

performance of their roles (Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013). Consistent with the

claim of improving followers' performance through integration, transformational leaders

engage followers and raise their commitment to joint goals through inspirational

motivation (Xu & Thomas, 2011). Other researchers found that when followers are

inspirationally motivated, it increases (a) their performance and self-confidence, (b) their

self-value, (c) their feeling of group belongingness, (d) their rapport with their leaders,

and (e) their perceived role in organizational success (Ghafoor, Qureshi, Khan, & Hijazi,

2011).

**Transformational Leadership and Organizational Culture**

In order to improve safe occupational driving, leaders of organizations need to

adopt a broader perspective and develop initiatives targeted at the underlying cultural

issues that influence fleet safety, along with adopting the necessary supportive

organizational processes that facilitate safe driving (Davey, Freeman, Wishart, &

Rowland, 2008). Several factors contribute to culture; this subsection of the chapter

attempts to define the concept to include a wide range of considerations.

Schein (2010) defined *culture* as a ubiquitous concept accepted by a group as

basic collective assumptions of ontological values that helps its members deal with

internal and external challenges. Culture complements many characteristics of

organizational development.  For example, culture identifies accurately what is important for the organization (Törner, 2011). It facilitates the classification of shared values, perceptions, beliefs, and social relations, which facilitates the convergence of individual goals toward organizational objectives; and authenticates the degree to which the members of the organization are motivated to behave consistently with organizational goals (Hoffman et al., 2011; Verhezen, 2010).

In addition, employees' safety is largely reliant on the system of safety conceptualized and implemented within their organizations by their leaders (Rijal, 2010; Sabir, Sohail, & Kahn, 2011). Culture influences organizational safety climate when leaders specifically promote safety-related values within the organization (Wu, Lin, & Shiau, 2010).

Research findings revealed a strong, direct, and positive link between organizational culture and transformational leadership. For example, transformational leaders are found to (a) improve the existing transitive link among organizational culture, organizational success, and employee value proposition (Sabir et al., 2011), and to (b) create the context for more effective organizational and individual performance (Bass & Avolio, 1993). The altruistic feature of transformational leadership contributes to the application of organizational cultures that value deontological ethic; a milieu where leaders see followers as ends and never as a means to an end; and strong leader-follower rapport that is often grounded in mutual respect (Groves & LaRocca, 2011).

Moreover, transformational leaders often instill an organizational culture of alliance rather than command and control to allow members to commit to organizational

goals and to see organizational changes as a prospect instead of a threat (Burns, 1978).

Transformational leaders inspire such innovative work cultures by encouraging

employees' growth and promoting personal values and trustworthiness (Vincent-Höper,

Muser, & Janneck, 2012). While motivation may have spontaneous effects, commitment

takes time to evolve. Consistent with that statement, Bass and Avolio (1993) contended:

> Commitments are long-term. Leaders and followers share mutual interests and a
>
> sense of shared fates and interdependence. A transformational leadership culture,
>
> like leadership, can build on or augment the transactional culture of the
>
> organization. The inclusion of assumptions, norms, and values which are
>
> transformationally based does not preclude individuals pursuing their own goals
>
> and rewards. (p. 116)

As described by Sabir et al. (2011), employee value perception encompasses

features such as compensation, stability, growth and future career opportunities, respect,

and a collegial work environment.

Culture plays an important role in an organization, and many scholars reported

that culture is not only a concept to explain many organizational phenomena but also a

concept used by the managers of an organization to create an effective organization

(Danaeefard, Salehi, Hasiri, & Noruzi, 2012). In addition, researchers have found that

culture influences organizational safety in the way safety is valued and legislated in an

organization (Törner, 2011). Culture affects work climate and safety outcomes, such as

employee safety behavior, attitudes, and related accident and injury ratios (Luria 2010;

Zohar, 2010), as well as improves overall performance in organizations when leaders

implement transformation-oriented work settings (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

**Transformational Leadership and Work-Related Safety**

The failure to effectively implement interventions that improve safe occupational

driving often stems from an immense discrepancy between what leaders of organizations

plan to do and what is actually undertaken in addressing work-related road safety risks

and initiatives; this is frequently the result of a lack of management support and general

under-resourcing (Davey et al., 2008). Work-related safety is a difficult task to

accomplish. In fact, providing safe work settings for employees is one of the most

common challenges organizational leaders are obligated to deal with (Braun, Peus,

Weisweiler, & Frey, 2012). Workplace safety, which is verified predominantly by

organizational safety performance (compliance and participation) and outcomes

(accidents and injuries), results from a constant interaction among distal (situation-related

and person-related) and proximal (person-related) antecedents, which determine

organizational safety performance level (Christian, Bradley, Wallace, & Burke, 2009).
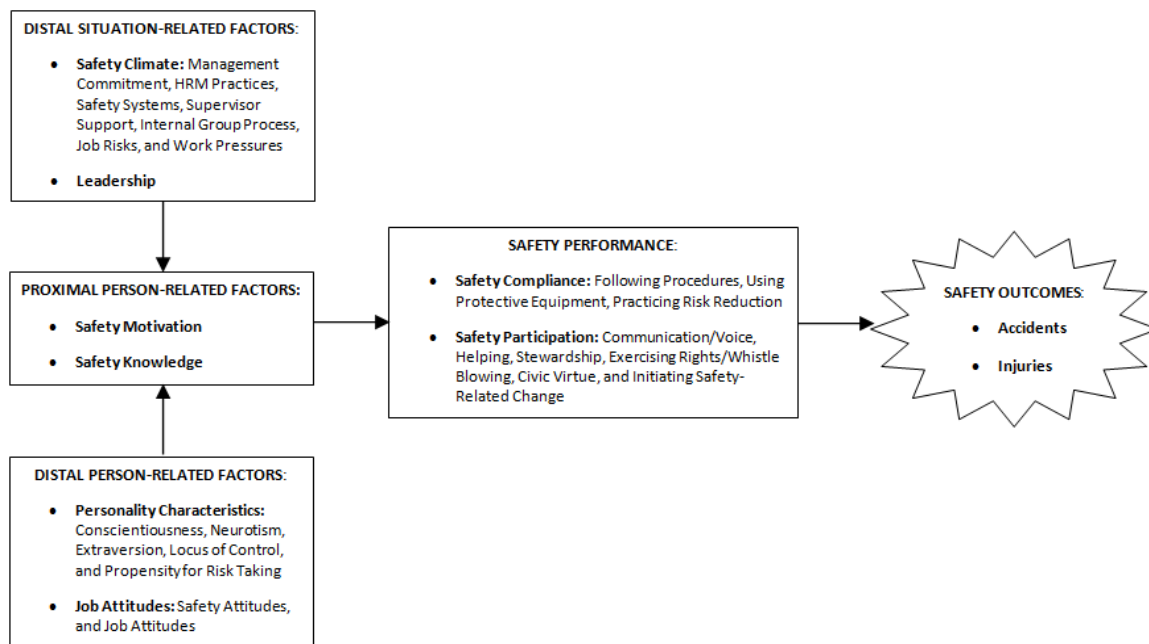
*Figure 5*. An integrative model of workplace.

Leaders are responsible to ensure organizational safety. In fact, many researchers revealed that one way to decrease human errors or incidents is effective safety leadership (Lu & Yang, 2010). The setting and context for work-related safety that leaders instill in their organizations often define the outlooks of drivers toward safe driving behavior (Öz, et al., 2013). Also, when organizational safety climate is perceived by employees as weak, working environments has a poor organizational safety climate or where supervisor safety enforcement is inconsistent, they behave accordingly and adopt the negative attitudes, such as under-reporting of incidents and accidents, which influence safety-related determining factors such as employee safety compliance and recurrence of accidents and near-misses (Probst, Brubaker, & Barsotti, 2008). Scholars also showed that transformational leaders provide suitable workplace settings for effective application of organizational safety. For example, scholars such as Ford and Tetrick (2011); and

Hadjimanolis and Boustras, (2013) argued that in the context of social exchange theory, employees tend to reciprocate expected safety performances through positive work attitudes and behaviours that are linked with the perceived support in the workplace.

Researchers found that transformational leadership applied to organizational safety, also identified as safety-specific transformational leadership, is successful in addressing many aspects of work-related safety in numerous industries in the United States and abroad. In context, Conchie (2013) defined safety-specific transformational leadership as leadership actions and attitudes that allow employees to approach organizational safety as a collective goal and provide the necessary motivation, knowledge, and self-efficacy to achieve this vision. Conchie (2013) further detailed that a transformational leader embodies a provider of inspiring visions for safety who uses informal mutual efforts between leader and the followers toward the realization of those visions rather than formal contingencies, such as organizational procedures.

Researchers have reported that the application of transformational leadership in numerous industries in the United States and abroad brought about significant safety improvement in those industries. For example, in a study of 174 restaurant workers and 164 young workers from many occupations in various cities in Canada, Barling et al. (2002) developed, tested, and replicated a model with which leaders predict occupational injuries using safety-specific transformational leadership. The researchers learned that transformational leaders manage safety effectively when internal organizational structures allow them to build plans that address (a) followers' perception of safety climate, (b) work-related safety awareness, and (c) safety-related events and contexts.

Barling et al. (2002) also stated that while transformational leaders may not have direct influence on all the events and contexts that lead to work-related injuries, they can nevertheless inspire safety awareness, maintain a positive perception of safety climate, reduce occupational injuries, and provide a prospect for enhancing job-related safety that exceeds ergonomic design or regulator approaches. In addition, Barling et al. findings revealed a direct, interactive, and powerful tie among perceived safety climate, safety consciousness, and transformational leadership.

Finally, Barling et al. (2002) reported that the application of transformational leadership to organizational safety does not occur in isolation; it evolves within a cohesive, dynamic, and interactive structure and is vital in the creation of a work environment that encourages high performance, which ultimately supports safety performance or reduces work-related injuries. I model this interaction in Figure 6, below, which shows the directional exchanges among the components.
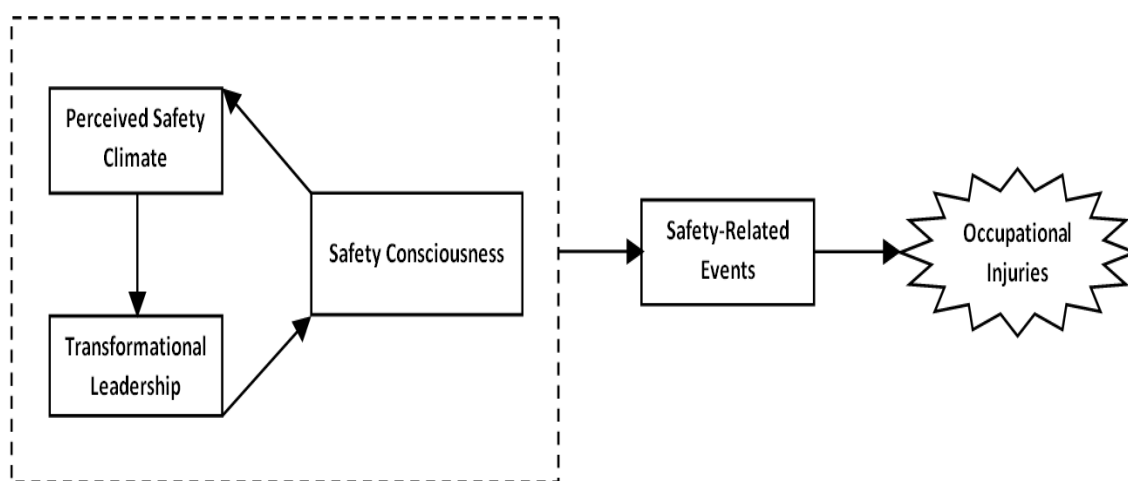


*Figure 6.* Proposed model linking transformational leadership and occupational injuries.

Safety-specific transformational leaders improve followers' safety behaviors because of their inspiration, their vision, and the careful attention the former devote to the latter. To that effect, Conchie (2013) contended that transformational leadership is an "attractive leadership style for management to adopt" (p. 199). In addition, other researchers revealed that in conditions where members of an organization develop high safety-specific trust in one another, safety-specific transformational leaders could significantly improve followers' safety behaviors through supportive and empathic relation-focused interactions between leaders and followers (Conchie & Donald, 2009).

This condition increases the effectiveness of any strategies to increase safety-specific transformational leadership in organizations.  In addition, a study in which a model associated safety-specific transformational leadership to safety voice through many dimensions of trust in 150 supervisor-employee dyads in the United Kingdom oil industry revealed that safety-voice citizenship behaviors improved safety performance when there was safety support from management in the form of safety-specific transformational leadership (Conchie, Taylor, & Donald, 2012). The study also showed that the connection safety-specific transformational leaders have with followers incites leader-follower exchanges around socio-emotional benefits and mutual apprehensions.

Furthermore, investigations about organizational safety performance revealed safety-specific transforming leadership to be an antecedent of organizational safety performance. For instance, a study of the inducing factors of accidents that have occurred among Dutch warehouse workers for a 36-month period revealed that safety-specific transformational leadership affects and predicts safety performance and may be an even

more important predictor of safety performance than hazard-reducing systems (De Koster, Stam, & Balk, 2011). Moreover, De Koster et al. pointed out that transformational leadership is one of the most suitable leadership styles for organizations in need of employee safety management, because of its historical positive influence on improving organizational safety performance.

A study conducted by Inness, Turner, Barling, and Stride (2010) revealed that exhibition of transformational leadership behaviors has facilitated work-related safety planning as well as accurate prediction of employee safety performance. In addition, Inness et al. stressed that the use of transformational leadership in organizational safety-related concerns will be effective when there is a collaborative effort of members of organizations in processes involving safety-related decision making and action taking. Such is accomplishable when leaders influence those members through motivation and strong compassionate rapport.

Other scholars have exposed the successes of transformational leadership in the context of work-related safety in other industries. For example, Kelloway, Mullen, and Francis (2006) echoed and extended the Barling et al. (2002) safety-and-leadership model. Kelloway, et al. found that transformational leaders could reduce unsafe behaviors and the collateral fatal and nonfatal injuries by becoming champions of workplace safety and envisioning safety initiatives that successfully improve workplace climate and organizational safety consciousness. The study also revealed that there is no neutral position when it comes to workplace safety, and that an insufficiency in workplace safety involvement leads frequently to direct and indirect adverse safety outcomes.

In addition, May, Tranter, and Warn (2011) revealed a need for leadership perception to move more toward a global and metaphoric approach to incorporate transformation at strategic, organizational, and community levels. May et al. also indicated three factors that are mostly responsible for road safety in most organizations: (a) necessary political will, (b) proper organization, and (c) knowledge. They pointed out that the mixture of leadership and transformational strategies is particularly important at a social level when as organization desires to achieve outcomes for conceived and innovative policy goals.

## Summary

In Chapter 2, I reviewed the literature relevant to the influence of transformational leadership on work-related motor vehicle accidents using emotional intelligence of transformational leaders, safety culture and climate, and followers' empowerment. In particular, I pointed to pertinent literature showing that motor vehicle accidents caused most of the fatal and nonfatal accidental traumatic workplace injuries in the United States (Pratt, 2003). However, I also indicated that whether or not motor vehicle accidents occurred at work, it is impossible to eradicate them. Evans (2004) explained that motor vehicle accidents are always a possibility because of the inherent link they have to risks of harm that exist in any transportation system.

In the literature I reviewed above, I reported many facets of transformational leadership and a number of remarkable instances where transformational leaders have been effective in various aspects of work-related safety. The details offered in the review accounted for the safety-specific actions taken and decisions made by transformational

leaders, from conception to implementation of strategies to improve organizational safety at many levels. As an example, I reported findings that showed the following information about transformational leaders: They use emotional intelligence and empathy to strengthen their relationship with members of their organizations. They enhance organizational safety culture and work climate. They delegate authority to members of the organization by empowering and engaging their followers. They encourage the people they oversee to improve their behaviors and attitudes toward safety. They increase two-way communication within the organization and improve trust. They promote mutual goal achievement.

In the literature I reviewed for this study, I also showed that transformational leadership improves safety management at different levels of the organization and is vital to sustain any occupational road safety management. I also showed in this review that transformational leaders balance followers' performance by the way they relate, work, and interact with them. Many of the studies I reviewed revealed that transformational leaders help subordinates excel in tasks from which they and the organization benefit (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Du & Sun, 2012; Goleman, 2011; Riaz & Haider, 2010; Vincent-Höper et al., 2012; Wang & Rode, 2010).

Moreover, in this literature review, I showed that when leaders properly select, train, and support followers by providing a safe workplace climate, such leaders' actions motivate subordinates to acquire the necessary knowledge to behave safely, thereby reducing occupational injuries including work-related motor vehicle accidents (Christian et al., 2009). This review also facilitates the discovery that transformational leaders

engage followers to assume organizational responsibilities. In doing so, transformational

leaders create long-term organizational commitments (Bass & Avolio, 1993); they also

improve the safety compliance of followers and reduce incidents and near misses

recurrence (Probst et al., 2008). Furthermore, many scholars revealed that

transformational leaders control effectively the factors that influence safety in the

organization, including the human factor (Bakiri et al. 2013; Reason, 1995a, 1995b;

Reason, et al., 1990; Regan et al., 2011; Young, & Salmon, 2012).

In Chapter 3, I will outline in detail my research design and methodology. This

will include a description of the research, the role I played as the researcher, and the

processes I used to select research participants, collect data, and codify, analyze, and

manage the data.

Chapter 3: Research Method

**Introduction**

In this chapter, I will first describe the methodology I selected for the study, including clarification on the research design. Secondly, I will offer a description of the study population, sample size, and selection procedures. Lastly, I will discuss the procedures related to data collection, storage, and analysis, as well as ethical issues.

**The Research Design**

This study conformed to the standards of interview-driven qualitative research design as defined by Leedy and Ormrod (2010). I followed a semistructured research design involving two fundamental research questions. I collected data for this study through a combination of face-to-face and telephone interviews. I recorded every interview; each one lasted anywhere from approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour and 20 minutes.

The interviews comprised 14 open-ended questions. In each question, I addressed one of the constructs related to the two central research questions. The manner in which I designed those interview questions allowed for the exploration of the extent to which emotional intelligence of transformational leaders can help improve driving behaviors and attitudes of occupational drivers. I structured the interview questions so that, collectively, they helped me to understand whether the leaders interviewed use empathy toward and empowered their employees and whether the union-represented employees perceived their leaders as empathic with them and/or empowering of them. The questions

also helped me to know whether the participants believed quality relationships with leaders could improve safe driving performance in organizations.

I used two interview guides, one for management-level interviewees and the other for union-represented employees. Each interview guide included at least two questions related to each of the four constructs of transformational leadership and two aspects of emotional intelligence: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, empathy, and empowerment. The first four of those constructs relate to transformational leadership and the last two relate to emotional intelligence. I collected all of the data for this study with the aim of learning how the application of these leadership traits can help improve the safe driving performance of U.S. electric utility company drivers.

The problem statement and purpose of the study directed the following specific research questions explored for this study:

- How does transformational leadership influence safe driving in organizations?

- How does leaders' emotional intelligence influence safe driving in organizations?

As the sole investigator for this study, I ensured that the assessment and evaluation of data collected for the study related to the purpose and circumstances of this qualitative study as suggested by Maxwell (2013). In addition, I made sure to protect the privacy of each research participant and avoid any personal harm by taking the following steps. In each company I approached to collect data in person, I requested and obtained a

private space to conduct the interviews. Except for one research participant who

requested the presence of his union shop steward during the meeting, there were only the

interviewee and I in the conference room, and I did not interview more than one person at

a time.

Most of the interviews were conducted face-to-face. As requested, in each

company I was allowed to use a small room to conduct the interview sessions. With the

face-to-face setting, each research participant was able to provide his or her contributions

privately. Conversely, to insure the same level of privacy for the research participants

with whom I had telephone interviews, I asked each of them to find the time that was the

most convenient for them. As a result, most management personnel asked me to schedule

their interview either early in the morning before they began their day of work, or late in

the afternoon, after they had completed their assignments for the day. One of the

management personnel, *MAST-4-1*, asked me to schedule his interview on a Saturday; he

stated that he would feel more comfortable to speak with me then and would have less

interference.

The leaders of the organization where I had to conduct telephone interviews with

union workers granted me 30 to 45 minutes of interview time at the convenience of the

employee during work hours. I conducted the interviews with *UNION-3-1*, *UNION-3-2*,

and *UNION-3-3* at different times before or after lunch. *UNION-3-1* agreed to speak with

me before he began work; the other two spoke to me immediately after lunch while still

sitting in their truck waiting to resume work. The union-represented employees who

participated in the telephone interviews and/or face-to-face interviews were not selected

from the same group. Therefore, there were no instances where two research participants were near when answering the research interview questions. Table 1 below indicates the type of interview and what time it was conducted for each research participant.

Table 1

*Types and Dates of Research Interviews*

| ID Codes | Interview Type | Interview Date | ID Codes | Interview Type | Interview Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAST-1-1 | Face-to-Face | 07/31/2014 | UNION-1-1 | Face-to-Face | 07/31/2014 |
| MAST-1-2 | Face-to-Face | 07/31/2014 | UNION-1-2 | Face-to-Face | 07/31/2014 |
| MAST-1-3 | Face-to-Face | 08/15/2014 | UNION-1-3 | Face-to-Face | 08/15/2014 |
| MAST-2-1 | Face-to-Face | 08/20/2014 | UNION-2-1 | Face-to-Face | 08/20/2014 |
| MAST-2-2 | Face-to-Face | 08/20/2014 | UNION-2-2 | Face-to-Face | 08/20/2014 |
| MAST-2-3 | Face-to-Face | 08/20/2014 | UNION-2-3 | Face-to-Face | 08/20/2014 |
| MAST-3-1 | Telephone | 09/26/2014 | UNION-3-1 | Telephone | 09/26/2014 |
| MAST-3-2 | Telephone | 09/26/2014 | UNION-3-2 | Telephone | 09/26/2014 |
| MAST-3-3 | Telephone | 09/30/2014 | UNION-3-3 | Telephone | 09/30/2014 |
| MAST-4-1 | Telephone | 09/05/2014 | UNION-4-1 | No interview | No interview |
| MAST-4-2 | Telephone | 08/27/2014 | UNION-4-2 | No interview | No interview |
| MAST-4-3 | Telephone | 09/09/2014 | UNION-4-3 | No interview | No interview |
| MAST-5-1 | Face-to-Face | 10/08/2014 | UNION-5-1 | Face-to-Face | 10/08/2014 |
| MAST-5-2 | Face-to-Face | 10/08/2014 | UNION-5-2 | Face-to-Face | 10/08/2014 |
| MAST-5-3 | Face-to-Face | 10/08/2014 | UNION-5-3 | Face-to-Face | 10/08/2014 |
| MAST-5-4 | Face-to-Face | 10/08/2014 | --- | --- | --- |

I did not share with anyone else any of the raw information that the research participants shared with me, not even with the members of my dissertation committee or the university, because it was not necessary. I kept the recordings, notes taken during the interviews, and all information the research participants shared with me in a securely protected cabinet. I secured all the audio files and other documents with information about the research participants in encrypted storage devices and protected with alphanumerical codes that only I know. I did not inquire the names of the research participants or any other personal and/or confidential information that can identify them. I also made sure that I explained the Informed Consent Document to all research participants and left a copy with anyone who wanted a copy.

I shared all the details of the study with the research participants before I began each interview. Among other things, I discussed all the sections of the Informed Consent with each research participant to comply with the institutional review board (IRB) and in line with Leedy and Ormrod's (2010) suggestions. It was only after the research participants had indicated they understood every aspect of the consent form that I allowed them to sign it and started the interview session. Finally, as suggested by Patton (2014), I made sure the findings and results of the study were accurate and meaningful, independently of the knowledge they disclosed.

## Role of the Researcher

Researchers who conducted seminal studies on qualitative research have reported that, in these type of studies, the role of researcher is paramount because qualitative researchers represent the pivot around which all the critical phases of this investigative initiative revolve. For example, in talking about the role of a qualitative researcher, Maxwell (2013) said that a researcher's actions and decisions must be coherent and logical for their study to be successful. Moreover, Miles and Huberman (1994) said that the relative worth of the data collected for any study can be affected significantly by the researcher independently on the data collection method. Patton (1990) stated,

> In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument. The credibility of qualitative methods, therefore, hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing fieldwork—as well as things going on in a person's life that might prove a distraction. (p. 14).

As Patton indicated, in qualitative research, the researcher plays a crucial role in the success completion of the study. The quality and value of a qualitative research is contingent with researcher's ability to collect, analyze, interpret and report the data used for the study. My role in this qualitative interview-driven study extended from the conception of the study to the writing of the final report and the presentation of the research results, findings, and recommendations. As a result, my role as the sole researcher in this interview-driven qualitative study included the following:

- Making sure the study was meaningful;

- Performing an exhaustive review of the literature to identify a gap that, if filled, can significantly help society in the social changes it might provoke;

- Making the appropriate selection of a research method to conduct the investigation;

- Collaborating with my dissertation committee chair and content expert, and member design, and methodologist expert to ensure the study is valid as termed by Maxwell (2013), and credible as indicated by Patton (1990);

- Making fair and equitable selection of research participants;

- Protecting participants' privacy and other rights (private or otherwise appropriate settings for face-to-face as well as telephone interviews, data-securement through proper storage and coding, right to withdraw from or discontinue their contribution to the study, etc.);

- Making accurate collection, analysis, and interpretation of all data collected by maximizing accuracy and minimizing bias, by using "empathic neutrality and mindfulness" during interviews to generate meaningful research results, findings, and recommendations (Patton, 1990, p. 40);

- Making sure descriptions, conclusions explanations, and interpretations were presented correctly and with less personal bias as practicable;

- Follow guidance of the university as well as the standards of American Psychological Association (APA) writing style.

Given the fact that I conducted this study in my professional field, I made sure to not ask for the participation of anyone who could be a potential colleague or an employee with whom I had or could have instructor-student interactions to avoid that potential research participants feel obligated to participate, or ashamed to share his or her true opinions. In addition, my role was to make sure the participants were comfortable before, during and after participating in the study. Occasionally, I adjusted my work schedule to fit the time that would best meet the participants' availability or unexpected changes in assignments. As a result, interviews were scheduled to minimize any potential inconveniences that could emerge for any employee who were qualified and who wanted to participate in the study.

<p style="text-align:center"><b>Population and Sample Size Selection</b></p>

The U.S. electric utility industry comprises nearly 200 investor-owned companies (EEI, 2013). However, the five U.S. electric utility companies I recruited to participate in

the study constituted the primary sources of data for this study. Those utility companies

are located in different geographic areas in the United States; their selection took effect

after an authorized employee signed the Cooperation Letter and returned it to me. That

Cooperation Letter gave me access to the premises of those organizations, as well as the

authorization to speak in person or on the phone with qualified employees who agreed to

contribute to the study. A copy of the cooperation letters I received from the officials of

all participating companies is shown in Appendix D.

I used purposeful sampling (Maxwell, 2013) to ensure that my random attempts to

reach out to the electric utility companies in the areas would not be seen as cold-calling,

which Ellis et al. (2007) described as "non-relationship-based opt-out strategies" (p. 258).

In addition, my exploitation of previous relationship to avoid cold-calls (Ellis et al., 2007)

implied asking a few of my friends and acquaintances to share with me the names of

other of their acquaintances who may know a few companies in my residential area that I

would have a greater chance to recruit for the study. The latter process is known as

snowball sampling (Patton, 1990). With these two sampling strategies, I selected the first

five companies that responded positively to my request to participate in this study. These

five companies are located in widely dispersed areas from where I live. However, all of

them share the same selection criteria: They are electric utility companies as described by

the EEI (2013), and/or they are contracted by electric utility companies to complete

electrical projects. In addition, each of the five companies used in this study has a vehicle

fleet, a union-represented workforce, and management personnel. The selection was not a

random drawing from the pool of 200 companies. I sent a Cooperation Request letter to

ten companies. See an example of the draft of request for cooperation letter I used in Appendix G.

Initially the population for this study was planned to be more than five. However, in close collaboration with the dissertation committee chair, I found that the sample of five companies with 28 participants would suffice because the selection was done in a homogenous group (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006; Green & Thorogood, 2013; Latham, 2013). According to Crouch and McKenzie (2006), "A small number of respondents is in no way an approximation of the manner in which 'ideally' research is to be done, given the excuse, as it were, of the laborious nature of the activities involved. On the contrary, we have argued that this is the way in which analytic, inductive, exploratory studies are best done" (p. 496). In addition, in using a nonprobabilistic, purposive sampling approach of collecting data, Green and Thorogood (2013) agreed with the inappropriateness of linking the validity of a qualitative research with the number of research participants; but, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) also reported,

> Based on our analysis, we posit that data saturation had for the most part occurred by the time we had analyzed twelve interviews. After twelve interviews, we had created 92% (100) of the total number of codes developed for all thirty of the Ghanaian transcripts (109) and 88% (114) of the total number of codes developed across two countries and sixty interviews. Moreover, four of the five new codes identified in the Nigerian data were not novel in substance but rather were variations on already existing themes. In short, after analysis of twelve interviews,

new themes emerged infrequently and progressively so as analysis continued. (p. 74)

Lastly, the sample size of 28 research participants (16 management personnel and 12 union-represented employees) that I used for this study is consistent with Latham's (2014) explanation of how to check if there is homogeneity in a research sample. The sample for my research regroups management personnel and union-represented employees of U.S. electric utility companies. Homogeneity is the first condition for a sample to be saturated when at least 12 participants are selected in the group (Latham, 2014). Therefore, the sample for this study is sufficient considering the explorative purpose of the study.

With the letter of cooperation and the approval of Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB), I contacted the employees who had agreed to participate in the study. I selected six volunteers (three management personnel and three union-represented employees) from each participating U.S. electric utility company to participate in the data collection for the study. The Bargaining Unit of one of the U.S. electric utility companies was in negotiation with the company at the time of the study, and the leaders of that union stopped their members from participating in the study. As a result, I recruited 28 interviewees (12 drivers and 15 management personnel plus one more manager who insisted on participating) from those five U.S. electric utility companies in a non-coercive manner. I did not take advantage of any existing acquaintances of authority to force, encourage, or intimidate members of anyone to contribute to the study. In addition, I

made sure that all research participants understood that their contribution was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty.

The participating occupational drivers consented to cooperate with me in the study because they wanted to contribute. They contributed to the data collection in this study because they were current employees and matched the description of occupational drivers as Davey et al., (2006) reported. I did not use any discriminating factors, such as age, sex, or seniority, or any factors other than the two selection criteria indicated earlier (management personnel or union-represented employee) to exclude anyone from participating in the study.

### Data Collection, Storage, Tracking, and Analysis Procedures

As mentioned in the previous sections, I used interview as the primary source of data collection for this study. However, I did not collect any data until I had permission from Walden University IRB, which I received on July 24, 2014; the confirmation number is 07-24-14-0181362.  Data collected for the study originated from an average 45 minutes recorded face-to-face or telephone interview with 28 employees from five U.S. Electric Utility Companies. I conducted the interviews from August to October 2014.

Before starting each interview session, I reviewed the Letter of Informed Consent with each research participants to reiterate the protocol of the study. I told each of them about their right to stop the interview if they felt uncomfortable with any aspects of the process. I also described to them the modalities by which I would conduct the interview. I informed each interviewee that they could find out more about me and about my research by contacting the Director of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), and

I gave them the email address and telephone number of Walden's IRB Director. Lastly, I explained to each research participant the clause of confidentiality and how I would use the information they were about to give.

I assured each research participant that the information provided would stay strictly confidential, and would serve only the purpose of the study as described in the consent form. I informed the research participants that after successful completion of the study, I would share a one- to two-page summary with them. After each interview session, I asked the participants if there was anything else of importance that they felt I should inquire about but hadn't. In addition, I reminded all of them that I will destroy all of the data I received from them, five years after completion of the study.

I then used an interview guide with 14 open-ended questions to gather relevant information that informed the two research questions. A list of the open-ended questions that I used in the interview sessions are in Appendices A and B. I recorded each interview and stored them all temporarily in one recording device, then moved them permanently to another storage device. I protected both the temporary and the permanent storage devices with an alphanumerical password and encryption accessible only by me.

I did not include participants' names or contact info in any of the research records. Instead, I labeled the data from all participating management personnel with the series MAST-$\alpha$-$\beta$ and from union-represented employees by UNION-$\alpha$-$\beta$. In both series, $\alpha$ represented the U.S. electric utility where the interviewee worked, and $\beta$ indicated the order in which I interviewed the participants.

I conducted the on-site, in-person interviews at each host company in a small conference room. The seclusion of the conference room from the general public reduced most of the undesired outside interferences; in all cases, it helped the research participants to feel comfortable during the entire session. For the telephone interviews, I asked that each participant tell me when would be the best time for me to call them when they would not be disturbed and would be able to talk privately. The nine research participants with whom I had telephone interviews asked me to call them when they felt the conditions I indicated earlier were met to their satisfaction.

The interviews lasted on average 45 minutes. Although I recorded each interview session, I also took handwritten notes, in line with the directives of Miles and Huberman (1994), as this is a crucial ingredient in qualitative analyses. I interacted enthusiastically with the research participants and showed undivided attention to them as they were answering each of the 14 interview questions. I also followed up with questions during and after the interview to validate and verify the accuracy of collected data. During the validation and verification process, I reviewed my written notes with the interviewees to ensure that they reflected their statements or opinions. Richards (2014) identified this process as the member checking technique, which helps researchers minimize their biases during the data collection process of a qualitative study.

I transcribed verbatim all recorded interviews; I securely filed those transcripts and will keep them for a period of at least five years as required by the university. I organized, coded, and managed the data I gathered for themes and patterns using manual coding techniques, as well as NVivo version 10. I secured all data for this study in

personal password-protected computers, and used portable storage devices as backup; I

am the only person who knows those passwords.

The data analysis for this study followed a four-step process: organization,

examination, classification, and synthesis (see Figure 7 below).
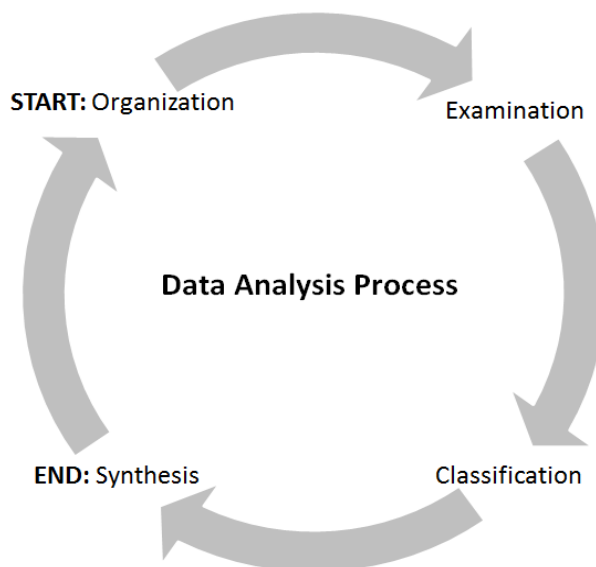


*Figure 7*. The data analysis process.

The value of qualitative data analysis depends on how the decisions made by the

researcher inform and provide information to the rest of the selected research design

(Maxwell, 2013). Researchers use a multiple-stage process of data handling, which

includes filing, creating computer databases, and breaking large chunks of information

into small units through inductive reasoning (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The first step in

the process of analyzing the data collected for this study was to listen to all interview

recordings several times and to compare them with the notes taken during each interview

session. This approach helped to re-create the scene and to make it easy to rewrite and

reorganize the collected data. This practice is in line with Maxwell's (2013) approach to

transcribing interviews effectively. I organized, filed, and classified the transcribed

interviews using Microsoft Excel; I coded, synthesized, and examined those data using

NVivo version 10. During the classification stage of the data analysis process, I

categorized the data collected to assist the coding process (Maxwell, 2013).

As Bazeley and Jackson (2013) suggested, NVivo (version 10) helped me to

efficiently handle the qualitative data collected from the verbatim transcripts of

interviews and the notes I took during the meetings. With the help of that tool and manual

techniques, I coded, analyzed, and organized the data into meaningful themes and

contents according to the essence of the coding process. As indicated by Babbie (2012),

this process also entailed finding answers to questions such as who said what, why, how,

and with what effect.

<center>**Ethical Procedures for Research Participants' Protection**</center>

Ethical issues are often among the factors that jeopardize the quality and validity

of most research initiatives. In effect, Leedy and Ormrod (2010) indicated that most

ethical issues in qualitative research fall into one of four categories: protection from

harm, right to privacy, honesty with professional colleagues, and informed consent.

Fortunately, I did not have to deal with ethical issues related to data files management

and safeguarding of participants' identity. I avoided this issue by not recording the first

stage of our interview session, which dealt with the introduction of each research

participant. After introducing ourselves, I told the research participants that I would

address them as MAST-$\alpha$-$\beta$ or UNION-$\alpha$-$\beta$ for privacy reasons throughout the entire

interview session. Therefore, I did not have on record during any interview the name of a

research participant. Even during the signing of the Informed Consent, I specifically instructed the research participants not to print their names.

As anticipated, two research participants were psychologically anxious although they wanted to contribute to the study. The uneasiness arose from being in a room or on the telephone with a stranger directing a half-hour recorded interview. I reassured those research participants by authorizing them to have their union shop steward present with us throughout the entire interview session. In addition, I did not inquire about any personal or confidential information that could make any research participants feel uncomfortable or put their job in jeopardy. I reiterated to all research participants their right to discontinue their input in this study at any stage during the interview.

In general, the risks associated with contributing in this study were minimal. They were reasonable comparing to the wealth of suggestions the research findings propose on how leaders could approach more efficiently the topic of safe driving improvement in the U.S. electric utility industry.

## Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the details about the research methods and approaches that I used to conduct this study. I have also indicated why in-depth, open-ended questions were the most appropriate approach for this qualitative study. In addition, I noted that the population for this study came from five U.S. electric utility companies and consisted of 28 electric utility associates with 16 employees from supervision and 12 employees from the union-represented workforce. I described the method by which I organized, coded, and analyzed the data I collected for the study.

Lastly, I indicated how this study complied with all ethical requirements established by the IRB.

Chapter 4 will consist of archival and interview data analysis. Chapter 5 will include my findings, social change implications, recommendations, and the conclusion based on findings of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

**Introduction**

In this section, I present the results of my interviews of 16 leaders and 12 workers from five U.S. electric utility companies to explore the potential relationship between transformational leadership and work-related motor vehicle accidents in the electric utility industry. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I collected data for this study through interviews using a 14-question interview guide for consistency in the data collection process. The information received facilitated a better understanding of the participants' perceptions of the likely influence of transformational leadership on safe driving performance improvement in organizations.

**Characteristics of Participating U.S. Electric Utility Companies**

I recruited the U.S. electric utility companies that participated in this study from various locations within the United States. Among them, Company #3 did not generate electrical energy. Company #3 was an electrical utility contracting organization that provides installation, maintenance, and repairs of electric facilities, systems, and structures solely for electric utility companies throughout the United States. Company #3 fit this study because it had (a) a fleet vehicle, (b) a workforce that operated those vehicles and thereby exposed the company to work-related motor vehicle accidents and incidents, and (c) both a leadership team and a union-represented group of employees.

Table 2 shows the vehicle fleet size of the companies enlisted for the study. Tables 3, 4, and 5 display the average numbers of motor vehicle accidents (MVA) for three of these companies from 2009 to 2013.

Table 2

*Motor Vehicle Fleet Size of Participating U.S. Electric Utility Companies*

| U.S. Electric Utility Companies | Motor Vehicle Fleet Size |
|---|---|
| Company #1 | Over 6,000 vehicles and construction equipment |
| Company #2 | About 160 vehicles and construction equipment |
| Company #3 | About 7,000 vehicles and construction equipment |
| Company #4 | 550 vehicles and construction equipment |
| Company #5 | Just over 440 vehicles and construction equipment |

Table 3

*Motor Vehicle Accidents for U.S. Electric Utility Company #1: 2009-2013*

| Year | Total MVA Year End | Average MVA per Month |
|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 259 | 22 |
| 2010 | 259 | 22 |
| 2011 | 244 | 20 |
| 2012 | 262 | 22 |
| 2013 | 265 | 22 |
| 2014 YTD July | 159 | 23 |

Table 4

*Motor Vehicle Accidents for U.S. Electric Utility Company #4: 2009-2013*

| Year | Total MVA Year End | Average MVA per Month |
|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 43 | 4 |
| 2010 | 42 | 4 |
| 2011 | 53 | 5 |
| 2012 | 40 | 4 |
| 2013 | 31 | 3 |
| 2014 YTD September | 20 | 2 |

Table 5

*Motor Vehicle Accidents for U.S. Electric Utility Company #5: 2009-2013*

| Year | Total MVA Year End | Average MVA per Month |
|---|---|---|
| 2009 | 244 | 21 |
| 2010 | 228 | 19 |
| 2011 | 168 | 14 |
| 2012 | 124 | 11 |
| 2013 | 116 | 10 |
| 2014 YTD October | 32 | 3 |

A table was not presented for U.S. electric utility companies 3 and 4 for specific reasons. The authorities from company #3 did not want to mobilize any workforce to put a table that would contain just motor vehicle accidents to provide me with. Therefore, this authority revised the summary of safety related data available reported an average total of 190 to 200 motor vehicle accidents and incidents for from 2009 to 2013, with a monthly average of 15. I could not obtain enough information to build a table for U.S. electric utility company #2 because the organization was in transition from merging with another company. Therefore, the authorities of company #2 were able to share information about motor vehicle accidents and incidents only from the period January to August 2014. The number they provided averaged to 52 motor vehicle accidents a year; this quantity aggregated to a monthly average of five motor vehicle accidents.

**Characteristics of Participating Company Employees**

For this study, I interviewed 28 U.S. electric utility employees with a range of occupations and years of experience. There were 16 management personnel and 12 union-represented employees. The extra management personnel came from Company #5. MAST-5-4 insisted on contributing to the study, although I told him I had reached the desired quantity per company in his organization; therefore, I included his answers in the study. Three union-represented employees from Company #4 could not participate because their bargaining unit was in the middle of contract negotiations with the company.

**Occupations of Participating Company Employees**

The occupations of the management personnel interviewed for this study included many classifications, from safety supervisor to vice president of safety. For the union-represented employees, the job titles included division mechanic, foreman line crew–shop steward, general foreman, Grade 1 lineman, underground splicer, and senior engineering technician, among others. Table 5 shows all the employment details about each participant. Union-represented employees from Company #2 asked for the presence of their shop steward during the interview to increase their comfort and build up trust between the interviewer and the research participant being interviewed. I spoke with all the other participating union-represented employees individually. Data collected from the recorded face-to-face and or phone interviews with the research participants were organized, analyzed, and coded using manual techniques and NVivo (version 10).

Table 6

*Facts about the Research Participants*

| ID Codes | Occupation | Time in Position | 410 employees (149 management and 261 union-represented) | Bargaining Unit |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAST-1-1 | Director of Utility Operations | 2½ years | Underground Splicer | Not applicable |
| MAST-1-2 | Manager of Facility Ratings in Transmission | 18 years | 3 employees (all management with no direct reports) | Not applicable |
| MAST-1-3 | Distribution Manager, Overhead Electric Constructions | 28 years | 100 employees (8 management and 92 union-represented) | Not applicable |
| MAST-2-1 | Field Engineering Supervisor for Line Academy | 26 years | 8 employees (all union-represented) | Not applicable |
| MAST-2-2 | Training Supervisor | 38 years | 2 employees (both union-represented) | Not applicable |
| MAST-2-3 | Labor Relations Manager | 36 years | 700 employees (management and union-represented) | Not applicable |
| MAST-3-1 | Vice President of Safety | 3 years | 65 employees (direct reports, both management and union-represented; responsible for 5,491 employees) | Not applicable |
| MAST-3-2 | Director of Electric Operations | 2½ years | 50 employees (management and union-represented) | Not applicable |
| MAST-3-3 | Director of Safety | 13 years | 8 employees (all management) | Not applicable |
| MAST-4-1 | Safety Supervisor | 2½ years | 50 employees (management and union-represented) | Not applicable |
| MAST-4-2 | General Manager of Substations | 36 years | 80 employees (management and union-represented) | Not applicable |
| MAST-5-1 | Senior Specialist for Employee Health and Safety | 36 years | None now, but used to oversee about 90 union represented employees. | Not applicable |
| MAST-5-2 | Operating Supervisor and Training Coordinator | 36 years | About 200 employees (both management and union-represented employees) | Not applicable |
| MAST-5-3 | Field Technician Specialist | 27 years | About 90 employees (both management and union-represented employees; mostly union) | Not applicable |
| MAST-5-4 | Employee Health and Safety and Transmission System and Operating Group Section Manager | 14 years | 150 employees (both management and union-represented employees; mostly union) | Not applicable |

*table continues*

| UNION-1-1 | Grade 1 Lineman | 7 years | 0 employees | IBEW Local 94 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNION-1-2 | Division Mechanic | 7 years | 0 employees | IBEW Local 94 |
| UNION-1-3 | Senior Engineering Technician | 24 years | 4 employees (all union-represented) | OPEIU** Local 32 |
| UNION-2-1 | Safety Advocates for the Overhead and Underground | 26 years | 0 employees | IBEW Local 1049 |
| UNION-2-2 | Foreman Line Crew – Shop Steward | 25 years | 0 employees | IBEW Local 1049 |
| UNION-2-3 | Lineman | 26 years | 0 employees | IBEW Local 1049 |
| UNION-3-1 | Superintendent Lineman | 19 years | 0 employees | IBEW Local 53 |
| UNION-3-2 | General Foreman | 10 years | 0 employees | IBEW Local 53 |
| UNION-3-3 | Superintendent Lineman | 19 years | 170 employees (all union-represented) | IBEW Local 53 |
| UNION-4-1 | Could not be interviewed because of Bargaining Unit negotiation | Not available | Not available | IBEW Local 102 |
| UNION-4-2 | Could not be interviewed because of Bargaining Unit negotiation | Not available | Not available | IBEW Local 102 |
| UNION-4-3 | Could not be interviewed because of Bargaining Unit negotiation | Not available | Not available | IBEW Local 102 |
| UNION-5-1 | Distribution Splicer – Shop Steward | 30 years | 3 to 6 employees (all union-represented) | UWUA*** Local 1-2 |
| UNION-5-2 | Underground Splicer | 29 years | 0 employees | UWUA Local 1-2 |
| UNION-5-3 | Underground Splicer | 8 years | 0 employees | UWUA Local 1-2 |

*Note*. In the table above, IBEW stands for International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, OPEIU stands for Office and Professional Employees International Union, and UWUA, stands for Utility Workers Union of America

## Overview of Results and Findings: Primary Research Questions

As indicated earlier, two primary questions guide this study. The sections that follow present the results and findings for each of those questions based on the answers provided by the participating leaders and union workers for the two concepts explored: transformational leadership and emotional intelligence. Consequently, the results and findings for this study are presented separately for the participating leaders and union-represented employees.

**Research Question #1**

Eight interview questions from each interview guide overlapped to give depth to answer the first research question: "How does Transformational Leadership influence safe driving in organizations?" In each interview guide, at least two questions addressed each of the four constructs of transformational leadership. Questions 6 and 7 discussed idealized influence; questions 8 and 9 dealt with inspirational motivation; questions 10 and 11 probed about intellectual stimulation; and questions 12 and 13 inquired about individualized consideration.  All 28 participants responded to all eight of the questions pertaining to how the features of transformational leaders influence safe driving in organizations.

The most predominant opinions expressed by the leaders with whom I spoke included the idea that incentive programs are not effective in improving safe driving performance because they tend to make people reluctant to report accidents. However, the leaders accepted that acknowledgement, respect, trust, and clear expectations are very useful tools to let someone know that you know they can do their job, while appreciating their efforts to be better at it. Leaders who participated in the study also stated that accountability, a sense of ownership and pride, and autonomy are determining factors for safe driving reform in organizations.

The union-represented employees shared few fundamental ideas that informed the first research question. Their answers indicated that recognition inspires them to continue to perform with excellence, but that leaders seldom demonstrate appreciation for outstanding driving performance.

Each leader and union-represented employee answered every one of the eight questions relating to Research Question 1 with contextualization that reflects their occupation. However, in many instances, the results either aligned or supported one another. Almost unanimously, the respondents recognized that an organizational structure is necessary to reinforce any process aimed at stimulating performance improvement.

**Research Question #2**

The second research question was "How does leaders' emotional intelligence influence safe driving in organizations?" As indicated earlier, I only probed only two constructs of emotional intelligence in this study: empowerment and understanding. In both interview guides, questions 2, 3, and 14 addressed leaders' empathy, while interview questions 4 and 5 examined workers' empowerment. The answers provided by leaders specifically demonstrated that circumstances such as experience regulate the level of authority an employee will have, and that empathy is a delicate field in which leaders must act with tact to be effective.

Almost all union-represented employees reported that when they relate well with their leader, it increases their level of comfort and inspires them to improve and maintain their performance in order not to deceive their boss. In the responses received for each of the constructs that define transformational leadership, the participants suggested that transformational leaders could add vastly to the development of positive safety cultures in organizations. In such a culture, employees act professionally, respect the equipment and tools they operate, support one another, and take accountability for all their decisions on the road. Almost all the research participants agreed that individual acknowledgment and

positive reinforcement and feedback from their leaders would make them want to do a better job in general, including driving. However, a large group of employees also said that their desire to do a good job arose from personal reasons, such as safeguarding their own well-being, ensuring the well-being of their family by being able to provide for family members, and promoting the general safety of the public.

In the sections that follow, I share the interviewees' exact perceptions on how they believe a leader who shares the features of transformational leaders could affect the performance of occupational drivers. Their responses are grouped according to the specific transformational leadership trait or emotional intelligence aspect that the questions dealt with.

### Idealized Influence and Safe Driving Performance Improvement

Many researchers have found that for leaders to inspire employees through idealized influence, they focus more on occupational safety and less on short-term productivity goals. For example, Barling et al. (2002) reported idealized influence of leaders enhances the employees' perceptions of safety climate. Such a leadership feature facilitates healthy relationships with employees through solid moral and ethical basis (Burns, 1978).

To probe the potential influence transformational leaders' idealized influence may have on the improvement of safe driving performance in an organization, two questions (questions 6 and 7) from each interview guide addressed the construct. The answers provided were not always moving along the same patterns of thought in terms of how critical is the importance of such a trait in improving safe driving performance.

**Leaders' Answers Regarding Idealized Influence**

For the leaders, questions 6 and 7 were as follows:

**MAST Question 6**:   What incentive programs are there in your organization to motivate employees to drive safely?

**MAST Question 7**:   How do you make employees with outstanding safe driving performance feel proud of their achievements?

My intent for interview questions 6 and 7 was to inquire about how the leaders with whom I spoke motivate their employees to drive safely. These two questions also examine the drivers' perceptions of safety climate in the organization, while showing to what degree leaders focus on occupational safety. The patterns and themes that emerged from the answers provided by the research participants were common among all respondents.

All the leaders who answered interview questions 6 and 7 stated that there was no incentive program in their organization aimed specifically at inspiring employees to drive safely. Some of the thought process those leaders used to explain that incentive programs are not essential to motivate employees to drive safely revolved around the fact that not only are those programs are inefficient, but too often they work against the goal of reporting accurately every motor vehicle accident and incident that affects the vehicle fleet of the organization.

In addition, consistent with what the leaders with whom I spoke indicated, safe driving performance of their employees, whether exceptional or not, is not attributable to the motivating power of incentives to drive safely. They indicated that they had not been

rewarding their drivers specifically for driving safely. Nevertheless, their safe driving performance has not decreased; if anything, it has improved over time. In fact, while acknowledging that there is value to identifying people with outstanding safety performance in all categories, all of the leaders I interviewed admitted to not having such a program in their organization. Accordingly, they felt that the "idealized influence" feature of transformational leaders had no bearing on the improvement of safe driving in their organizations. One of the reasons was that safe driving is in part the responsibility of the employees and there is no reason to see their safe operating performance as something unusual enough to warrant special recognition. Most of the leaders expect their employees to drive safely while on company time. Therefore, they do not think safe drivers should receive any reward for something that they were supposed to do in the first place.

The majority of the participating leaders openly expressed their discontentment concerning the application of an incentive program to recognize safe driving performers in their organization. However, one of them shared a different experience with incentive programs and the reasons there are no such programs in her organization. MAST-1-3 stated that there are no incentive programs for employees with excellent safe driving performance in her organization, but not because there is no value in recognizing outstanding safe driving performers. The leader explained that her organization did not have such a program mostly because it is difficult to allocate a budget to an incentive type of program. The fact that incentives must keep changing in order to keep the interest

of the person who will receive the rewards makes it tough to allocate a reasonable budget to such an initiative. Here is how MAST-1-3 expressed that idea:

> I am a team builder. I work side-by-side with the group, instead of merely delegating; I see the potential in others. Regarding recognizing people that have superior driving records: When I think of an incentive program, I think, "Oh my goodness, I am going to have to put a huge team together." I always thought an incentive program is going to be something more than I can handle right now. That is why I never get to have one for my group.

All of the other leaders had a more in-line, logical explanation as to why there had not been an incentive program in their organization. Here is how those leaders explained why there are no incentive programs in their organization to inspire employees to drive safely, while still acknowledging drivers with outstanding overall safety and safe driving performance.

Table 7

*Leaders' Answers Regarding Idealized Influence*

| ID Codes | Answer provided for Question 6 | Answer provided for Question 7 |
|---|---|---|
| MAST-1-1 | In general, I am a leader who always looks for employees with the right potentials to delegate authority. However, when people act irresponsibly, I tell my people what they need to do and by when it should be done. I don't reward employees for their safe driving performance. I give them positive feedback in their yearly evaluation, and rate them high in the safety section for overall safety performance | We provide breakfast for the groups with outstanding safety performance; we invite the executive team to call out their names during group and business safety meetings to give them very nice safety shirts; also once a year, we offer them cash rewards |
| MAST-1-2 | I am a team management leader; I practice and execute an effective blend of concern for tasks with concern for people. I perform my duty with a committed interdependent group of employees who execute their tasks to reach common organizational goals; I lead my employees with respect and trust. | We have recognitions to motivate people who have good safety records at All Hands Safety Meetings where they get a simple thank you and a round of applause. However, we don't have a reward program to drive safely here. |
| MAST-1-3 | I am a leader who sets the expectations; trusts employees and allows them to make their decisions, having in mind they will assume the consequences of their choices; and holds people accountable for their actions. But, incentive programs…we don't have something that specifically is an incentive for our folks to drive safely. | We have an incentive program for safety itself, which includes motor vehicle accidents. |
| MAST-2-1 | We seldom do that for safe driving performance. | We have an annual safety recognition breakfast for outstanding performers, for accident-free employees. |
| MAST-2-2 | I don't recognize employees for exceptional safe driving performance! | When we recognize our employees, we recognize them for safety in general; there is nothing specifically for driving. |
| MAST-2-3 | We don't recognize people particularly for safe driving performance. | In my organization, we recognize employees' milestones through positive feedback in their yearly evaluation to make them take pride in what they do every day. |
| MAST-3-1 | We have one incentive program; we call it the paycheck! Besides, incentives don't work that well; we just do not do them anymore. Driving is just part of doing their job. That is just what we expect of them. There is nothing unique that we do, or I do. I do not do anything special with it, and I am a servant leader | There is always value to saying thank you to someone for doing the right thing. However, we do not have anything as "if you achieve this, you get that." |

*table continues*

| MAST-3-2 | There is no incentive program in my organization because if you incentivize them to drive safe you are not going to hear about all that happens on the road. | I am a friendly leader; I will tell them I appreciate what they do for the company in the way they drive safely when I am driving around with them. To me, that is a heart-given incentive that their boss values their safe driving performance. Positive reinforcement will make you think about the right thing, and in your actions, you will continue doing it; in the same way, negative reinforcement keeps you from repeating a wrongdoing. |
|---|---|---|
| MAST-3-3 | We do not have any sort of incentive programs to drive safely. I do not think there is anything particular to do to recognize employees for driving safe. The reason for that is that it is an expectation for them to follow the rules of the road and obey the traffic laws. | *(No answer was provided.)* |
| MAST-4-1 | We don't have one. | If I observe one of my employees following all the correct rules of the road and defensive driving techniques, I try to compliment them. |
| MAST-4-2 | We don't have an incentive program in our organization. | We try to recognize on a more frequent basis because it is always good to say, "Great job, we made it another month here at location X without a motor vehicle incident!" They will have coffee and doughnuts on me as a way to say "Excellent job, we went another quarter without a driving incident; but, here is our focus for next month and next quarter." |
| MAST-4-3 | I lead by example; I make sure the employees know and understand that I care about them; I want them to be successful and safe. I do not know of any program that the company offers for people to drive safely. | If I have employees with outstanding safe driving performance, I thank them personally, for their commitment to safety. |
| MAST-5-1 | There are no reward programs for safe driving. | If we have success in some areas, we want to celebrate that success and make sure the people know that we are happy for their safe achievements; that we appreciate them being successful. |
| MAST-5-2 | I don't have an incentive program in my organization for safe driving. | I recognize employees with overall safety successes with fine breakfasts, gift cards and certificates at safety meetings. |
| MAST-5-3 | I care about my employees. Nothing is more important for me than they go home the way they came to work; they know that. However, we do not have an incentive program for employees with outstanding safe driving performance. | We thank them when we have our monthly business and safety meeting. |
| MAST-5-4 | If I cannot demonstrate they are my number one concern, and my number one priority is that they all do well, then I failed as a leader. In our organization, we do not have a reward program per se for safe driving. | We have group milestones recognition where we give outstanding performers a cooler or some sort of thank you for acknowledging their exceptional performance and for motivating them to keep the momentum going. |

## Union-Represented Employees' Answers Regarding Idealized Influence

I explored the same construct with the union-represented employees. Researchers

have found that the idealized influence trait of transformational leaders has a direct effect

on many key factors determining the success of an organization. For example, collective mission, development and maintenance of leader-member exchange relationships, arousal of followers' perception of value congruence with the leader and with the organization in which they belong, and organizational values

Through role modeling attractive behavior and exhibiting idealized influence, a transformational leader arouses perceptions among followers of value congruence with the leader. At the same time, while emphasizing a collective mission and organizational values, these same leaders encourage a sense of congruence with the organization to which he or she and the followers belong (Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, & Sutton, 2011). I used question 6 of the interview guide to inquire about the actions the participating union-represented employees observed their leaders had been taking to make them feel proud of their safe driving performance. I also used question 7 specifically to ask those union-represented research participants about the impact of their safe driving performance on their organization and their family.

Questions 6 and 7 on the interview guide for union-represented employees were as follows:

> **UNION Question 6**: Describe for me a time where your leader made you feel proud to be a safe driver.

> **UNION Question 7**: How does driving safely at work help both your family and your organization?

In answering question 6, the participating union-represented employees almost unanimously reported that their leaders had never approached them to acknowledge their

safe driving performance or progress in a way that would make them feel proud. Almost all the respondents indicated that they would enjoy it significantly if their leaders had done so.

Although the majority of the union-represented interviewees said their supervisors or managers had never approached them to acknowledge their safe driving performance or improvement, a few of them indicated that their supervisors had done that in the past. For example, UNION-1-3 mentioned that he has been in one motor vehicle accident, and his manager noticed him driving safely on the highway and approached him to let him know that he saw him. Another employee, UNION-3-1, also stated that his manager approached him with positive feedback. Below are their particular responses.

*UNION-1-3:* I have worked for this company for 24 years; I have been in one rear-end motor vehicle accident during that time frame. Once, my manager noticed me on the road; he said that I was following all the safe driving rules. He approached me personally and mentioned that in a meeting with my fellow workers. I felt good that somebody actually recognizes me for doing something right rather than something wrong or something I did not do.

*UNION-3-1:* I have never been in a motor vehicle accident in my 19-year career with this company. I got commended once. I shared that experience with the men who work with me to let them know our supervisors are watching, and that I just received a compliment from my boss for noticing me driving safely on the road.

Below is a listing of how the rest of the participating union-represented employees responded to interview question 6.

*UNION-1-1:* I have seven and a half years, going to my eighth year with the

company. Nobody ever comes to me specifically and said they appreciated that I had

been driving our trucks and never got into an accident.

*UNION-2-2:* There has never been any recognition or mention of my safe driving

performance by a supervisor or a manager. Here, supervisors and managers approach

us more or less when something bad happened, like when someone gets into an

accident.

*UNION-2-3:* I have never been in a motor vehicle accident for the 26 years I have

been driving for this company. I have never been approached by a supervisor or a

manager to get recognized for my safe driving performance.

*UNION-3-3:* For the 18 years I have been working for this organization, and I only

have been in one motor vehicle accident, my supervisor never told me that I've been

doing a good job being a safe driver.

*UNION-5-2:* I had one motor vehicle accident while driving a company car, but I am

a very safe driver. I do not think there has been a particular instance like that where a

supervisor told me that I had done an excellent job driving. I would be surprised that

someone noticed me, be honest to you. However, that would make me feel good

about my achievements.

*UNION-5-3:* I have never been in a motor vehicle accident before; no one ever

acknowledged me for my safe driving performance.

In answering question 7, the union-represented employees expressed how they

think their efforts to drive safely at work had helped their corporation and contributed to

the overall well-being of their family. Almost all of the respondents affirmed that when they drive safely at work the company benefits in many ways.

On the one hand, they listed two of the primary benefits of their safe driving performance to their organization. They indicated that when they drive company vehicles safely, they contribute indirectly to increasing the earnings, thereby widening the profit margin of the company. In addition, they said that when they drive safely, it reinforces the overall safety stance of the company as their performance contributes to the reduction of motor-vehicle-related injuries and expenses.

On the other hand, those research participants also said that driving safely at work helps their family greatly. They explained that if they drive safely at work, they wouldn't get hurt; therefore, they would continue to enjoy substantial quality time with their family. Furthermore, those respondents reported that driving safely at work helps them support and provide for their family. Lastly, a few of the participants stated that when they drive carefully at work, they do not present a burden to their family members who would have to attend to their needs while they received care in the hospital.

Below are the most pertinent answers the union-represented employees provided in explaining how their safe driving at work helps the organization and their family.

*UNION-1-1:* Well, of course, if I get involved in an accident, it is not going to affect only me; it is going to affect my family too. Every decision that I make on the road, I don't make them only for myself; my kids are the reasons I am driving safe on the road whether I am driving a company vehicle or not. When I drive safely, I build

good driving behaviors, which increases overall productivity. In addition, it could be pricy for the company when accidents happen.

*UNION-1-2:* Regarding my family and I, when I try to drive safe every day, I force myself to avoid creating conditions to get injured so after work, I can go back to my family the way that I left them the morning of that day. The fact is, when I drive safe, I don't get into an accident. By not getting into an accident, I reduce the possibility for my supervisor to assign me light duties in the garage, for example. In addition, when I drive safe, the company doesn't have to worry about insurance companies, or the expenses to incur to repair trucks and other damaged equipment because of a motor vehicle accident. Just for those two factors alone, I think when I drive safe it is a plus for the company.

*UNION-1-3:* I try to drive safe all the time, not just for work. So, pretty much I have sort of the same driving habits in work as of out of work. The safe driving skills I learn at work, I try to carry that home with me. I have three sons; they all drive now because the youngest just got his driver's license. I try to tell them many of the things we see here at work. My driving safely at work helps the organization vastly because there are no accidents, claims, or complaints against us from other drivers.

*UNION-2-2:* Going home in one piece as always it is the goal. Driving safely at work teaches me to minimize everything that can lead to an accident. In other words, I learn to be more careful, and to pay attention to the conditions of any vehicle I drive.

*UNION-2-3:* Apparently, if I am safe, it helps me keep my job and healthy. Driving big vehicles safely over the years for the job helps me teach my family safe driving habits. I had a lot of experience on the road that I shared with them.

*UNION-3-1:* Vehicle accidents can cost a lot of money to fix or to replace the damaged vehicle or equipment. In addition, if the equipment is down, we are not able to do the job, and we would not be reliable to the customers. When we drive safely [it] helps the company. If I am in an accident, I can hurt myself or someone else; the medical bills can get through the roof.

*UNION-3-2:* Driving safe helps the organization keep the cost down from insurance premium increase [due] to lawsuits. It helps my family because I come [home] safe every night; I continue to have an employment and bring home a paycheck every week.

*UNION-3-3:* On a personal level, if I drive safe at work, I will not get in any motor vehicle accidents; I will not get hurt; I will not be in the hospital; I can still provide for my family. When I drive safely, the company saves money, and there are no liabilities or expenses related to those accidents.

*UNION-5-1:* Driving safe means you drive and get to the job; you get your job done; you reach home to your family the same way you got to the job. Driving unsafely means you are going to be rushing to the job; you will not pay attention; you will get in accidents.

*UNION-5-2:* When I drive safe, I go home the way I went to work, with no worries about having hit and hurt someone with a vehicle. It is nice not to have any added

stress due to having been in a motor vehicle accident at work. My driving safe saves

the company money [and] reduces lawsuits and the damage to vehicles in the fleet.

*UNION-5-3:* Well, driving safely at work helps greatly because I have a family at

home, and I am the one who provides for my family. Driving safe is my responsibility

for my family. The safer I drive and work during the day, better it is for my family.

My driving carefully also helps the organization significantly because we did not get

into an accident; we have good safety records.

### Inspirational Motivation and Safe Driving Performance Improvement

Inspirational motivation helps leaders to articulate persuasively appealing and

inspiring visions, and to challenge followers with higher values that inspire them to

nurture a sense of group belongingness (Burns, 1978; ). Such a leadership feature helps

leaders relate with subordinates on a more personal level, which inspires them to be

positive in most circumstances (Walumbwa & Hartnell, 2011).

**Leaders' Answers Regarding Inspirational Motivation**

At different levels and using different strategies, each of the leaders interviewed

recognized that their employees could have personal issues that can affect their safe

driving performance at work. All of them also said that they had discussed similar issues

in their company in the past, either personally or through the help of a delegate. In many

instances, leaders indicated that those delegates were the supervisors or the managers

who were overseeing those employees directly.

In addition, most of the contributing leaders knew that when employees have

personal problems, it can distract the employees. Those distractions can take the minds of

any drivers off safe operation of a motor vehicle, thereby creating conditions that could result in motor vehicle accidents. To help those employees, the respondents said that they often approached the employees directly. Moreover, they also reported that they had professionals available to help employees in distressful situations. Moreover, those leaders said that they have individual training sessions, in addition to apprentice and other-awareness training available to help employees drive carefully. Below are the specific answers those leaders gave to question 8.

**MAST Question 8**:   How do you inspire your employees to stay focused on their driving assignments even when things may not be going well in their personal life?

*MAST-1-1:* I try to inspire them to stay focus on their driving tasks in the safety group meeting I have with them. In those meetings, I always have very passionate and heart-felt 30-minute discussions about driving; I'd like to think is has a positive effect on their safe driving performance.

*MAST-1-3:* Inspiring employees to stay focus on their driving assignments in circumstances like those is the job of our supervisors. We train them to pay attention to their employees before they begin to work to make sure they are ready to work every day. In addition, our supervisors know that they should check for oddities in the behavior of their direct reports; even pull them aside to ask them are they ok depending on what they observe.

*MAST-2-3:* I inspire those employees by leading by example.

*MAST-3-1:* In the contracting world, these people work long hours and travel long distances. So, if we have somebody who has a problem at home, typically, we would just tell them to take care of their issues at home and then, we deal with them in a different way. We don't want people to come to work and not focus on what we assign them to do.

*MAST-3-2:* Again, this is for me. The way I do that is personally recognize that they have an issue to know if there is any way I can help. A boss is not just a boss when things are going well; when things are going bad, we have to show them that we are there to support them. I am there to support all of my employees.

*MAST-3-3:* We make it clear that if they have something that bothers them personally that they can stay home for the day or two. However, if they report to work disturbed and or distracted, we'd ask that they don't drive to avoid that they hurt themselves or the public.

*MAST-4-1:* Local supervisors are the closest to the employees. They are the ones to know if there is an issue going on with their employees that might be a major distraction for them at work. Therefore, it is our supervisors' responsibility to preventing them to be on the road in that mindset, which can impede their ability to make the right or safest decisions while driving.

*MAST-4-2:* We try to inspire and get our employees to think that safety is about them, who they are as individuals. Of course, we acknowledge and call out right away if they are distracted. However, the obligation is to them first to think safety, not to the company.

*MAST-4-3:* I am around these folks long enough, so I know when my employees are in a normal or disturbed emotional state. So, if I see one of my employees is in a suspiciously distractive or disturbed state of mind during our safety meeting, I would ask him to see me in private after the meeting so I can talk to him to find out how I can help. My employees trust me; I earned their respect. By that, I mean I have upfront and open communications with them.

*MAST-5-1:* When we have a driver who shows up for work yet is having personal issues, especially family problems and things like that, we have a tendency to make them a passenger that day. Sometimes too, we try to keep them off the road that day to allow them time to get back in the swing of things little by little. With people's emotions and stuff like that you always have to be careful. If they are coming on the wrong day because something happened to them in their life, it can affect their ability to function safely in anything they do, including driving.

*MAST-5-2:* If I notice one of my employees has a personal issue or if he reveals that to me, I would focus mostly on him when I go downstairs in the morning to see the employees to find out how he is doing. It is usually easy because most of my employees open up to me with personal concerns and personal problems. They trust me, and I trust them as well.

*MAST-5-3:* If it is a noticeable attitude that one of my supervisors or my co-worker picked out on, prior to them leaving our yard, I'll have a chat alone with the person if he or she is comfortable with that. In some instance, I may even get the shop steward involved in the process if necessary. However, very often, if someone says he is not

feeling good, a co-worker will offer to drive that day; our folks take care of one
another.

*MAST-5-4:* If something like that happens, usually, there are a couple things our
supervisors or managers would do. The first thing they would do is to try to identify
the disturbed employee as early as possible. The second thing they would do is to pull
that person on the side to learn as much as possible about the issue to investigate how
they can help the employee.

Further investigation of how the leaders who contributed to the study used
inspirational motivation to improve safe driving in their organization led to the inquiry of
the actions those leaders took to help employees. Specific to question 9 shown below, the
participating leaders first shared dichotomic views about whether the requirement of
driving safely for the company puts pressure on the employees.

**MAST Question 9**:    How do you help your drivers to overcome the constant
pressure of safe driving requirements?

On the one hand, the majority of the respondents admitted that many conditions
contributed to making driving safely a demanding task for occupational drivers, as they
claimed. For example, operating conditions, which the leaders said could be the most
stressful elements for work-related drivers in regards to safety, represent the one aspect of
the job over which their employees have no control. Those leaders explained that
electrical utility workers must be on the road even in the most inclement weather
conditions, as long as there are customers who need their electric services restored.

The big revelation is that, in those harsh conditions, the professional drivers had always driven company vehicles to the highest safe standard performance. In addition, most of the leaders indicated that they have many types of safe driving training available for employees to help them be proficient in safe driving and hence be less concerned about the task of driving safe. The only safe driving issue most leaders reported is at low speed, where, they said, drivers become complacent.

MAST-3-2 said that he did not identify any driving conditions strictly related to the workplace that could create a stressful mental state that would interfere with the professional drivers' ability to stay alert on the road. He also said that the stressful conditions that most professional drivers had reported having to deal with while driving for the company had been more self-imposed stress than any factors specific to safe driving. In fact, MAST-3-2 expressed that idea as follow:

> I don't think driving safely for the organization puts pressure on the drivers. It is just a way of life, just like anything else. The driving conditions can certainly add stress on the driver. That stress is more a self-imposed than a job-related stress because they know that we never tell any employees to hurry, take chances, or do anything they shouldn't be doing. Therefore, I don't think the mere safe driving performance of an employee can be stressful. There is stress or pressure on people on the road just because they impose it upon themselves.

Another significant reason that participating leaders indicated that driving safe could not possibly be stressful to occupational drivers is that they have received safe

driving training; thus, they have the skills necessary to perform that task safely. To those

leaders, safe driving is simply an expectation that comes with the job.

On the other hand, many other leaders, in reflecting on what it takes to handle

driving a company vehicle safely, concluded that driving safely may indeed put stress on

the drivers. Those leaders used several explanations to justify their position. For example,

they cited the type of vehicle, the road conditions, and the neighborhood, among others.

Below are the answers leaders gave to question 9.

*MAST-1-2:* The pressure of safe driving is on the leaders as it is certainly on the

drivers. If my group has a lousy health and safety scorecard result at the end of the

year, or has too many motor vehicle crashes, this will affect the overall company

scorecard. I may not get an incentive bonus at the end of that year. Therefore, I put

focus on this aspect of driving safely, and that naturally trickles down to the craft

level. So, is the average driver fearful? Is there any pressure? I do not think it is a

negative pressure; I think it is a constructive pressure. It just makes people aware of

the fact that it is important for them to pay more attention when driving.

*MAST-1-1:* Safe driving is stressful depending on where you look in an electric utility

company. For example, in a department where employees may receive switching

instructions on a communication device to respond to an emergency while driving a

trouble truck or a bucket truck with an attached trailer, driving safely in those

conditions can be stressful. In my organization, however, we are not in that mode. I

have asked the people in my organization to wait until you can pull over; to wait until

you can get off the road; to wait until you are in a safe place; then, answer the phone

call or read the email or the text message. But don't try to do it while driving because there's nothing that we want you to do that is so important that requires you putting your life or somebody else's life at risk to take that phone call or to read that email or text message at that moment in time.

*MAST-1-3:* There is pressure on the drivers because they drive huge vehicles in extremely densely populated areas with very narrow streets where people are double-parked. I tell my employees to take their time driving to a job site because safety is first; productivity comes after that. I communicate clearly to my employees that during a storm, they have to try to get the job done even if it means calling for help, or having a supervisor meet them out there.

*MAST-2-1:* In my organization, I think it is more a responsibility our employees have to drive carefully. I do not think it is a pressure. I hold my drivers accountable for driving safely. I set clear expectations, and one of my expectations is that they are going to drive safely. However, I help them; I pre-check jobs; I review the area where they are going to be working. It is their responsibility to drive the company vehicles safely just likes their personal car; it is their license.

*MAST-2-2:* No, it is not a pressure to drive a company vehicle safely. We have always driven safe; it is part of our life. We get to that point by reinforcing principles; having safety meetings and training to reaffirm the policies that are in place. People get complacent over time, so you need to bring them back to square one occasionally by talking to them, communicating the message just to keep them back on the right track.

*MAST-2-3:* Our drivers have more pressure than anybody does because they have to uphold safe driving behaviors and performance in all circumstances with a truck that has a company logo and name on it. We expect them to drive responsibly by paying attention, stopping at stop signs, and obeying the speed limits and all traffic laws because they represent our company. Therefore, to help them stay alert, I offer them safe driving training; I speak to them regularly; I have safety meetings on a regular basis with them. Sometimes I even have the union leaders involved in transmitting the message that each employee is a representative of the company and that everyone must avoid doing anything unsafe on the road.

*MAST-3-1:* There is always pressure on drivers all the time. We know that as an organization; but I don't think we do anything to help the employees manage the stress of driving safely. I don't think that is an issue because the employees handle it themselves. It is normal for us because we don't have a static workforce; we have an itinerant workforce. When we hire workers, the Bargaining Unit that represents them gives us people with the skills needed for the project.

*MAST-4-1:* Driving safe doesn't put pressure on the drivers. I just reviewed our motor vehicle incidents report; all the events for this period happened when the employees functioned in that comfort zone where they are complacent operating the vehicles at very low speeds. That's where they strike fixed objects, such as parked cars and mailboxes. They exhibit safe driving behaviors in all other seemingly hazardous driving conditions, such as hauling poles and some of the much larger equipment we use. I give a lot of safe driving tips, safety talks and meetings on how to get the car

ready for those conditions. We always ask our drivers to be aware of their surroundings.

*MAST-4-2:* Oh, I think driving carefully for our organization puts a pressure and stress on our employees. It is a pressure mainly because our employees worry about what the other drivers are doing out there, which can put them in an unsafe, accident-prone condition. They have to be in that defensive driving mode to have a keen prospect of what they need to do to remain safe. To support them, we provide numerous tools, awareness on following with the proper distance, being aware of surroundings, and staying focused.

*MAST-5-1:* I do not look at driving safely for the organization as being stressful. I look at it as an incentive to keep them aware of their surroundings. We are a pipe and wire company, so our drivers have to be out in the field every day. Someone must take the vehicles to those locations to perform work on those facilities. Therefore, we need to be safe in doing that; it is part of our everyday routine; we should do our job right and do it right all the time. When our people are driving, we demand that they stay alert on their driving assignment 100% to limit distractions altogether. Our people have to be very aware of that and all else that may go on around them. Naturally the more familiar they are with their surroundings out there on the road, the easier and less worried they will be while driving.

*MAST-5-2:* Yes, keeping a safe driving performance can put stress on the drivers. That pressure can be more in certain areas than others, especially in urban areas where people walk and jog around, ride their bicycles, walk their dogs, and take their

babies places in carriages. To help them stay safe on the road, I do a pre-job brief

with them in the morning to remind them about emergency processes while on the

road. I also tell them to perform a 10-point safety check of their vehicle before

leaving every day. Moreover, I tell them to follow their instinct so that if something

does not feel right, they treat it as not right and be ready to react.

*MAST-5-4:* I think that people can never perform well without making the decision to

give full attention to what they need to do. I know that from experience. I drive a

company vehicle assigned to me a little differently than I drive my personal vehicle.

One of the reasons I do that is because I know what the expectations are of me not

only as a company employee, but also as a leader for safety. Therefore, because of

that expectation, I drive more defensively. I would not call that pressure. I would call

it an increased focus, increased attention to detail in making right decisions, not stress

or fear. If I could be liable for the accidents that I caused because I was driving a

company car unsafely, I would make better driving decisions. If that is stress, I think

it is a healthy stress.

**Union-Represented Employees' Answers Regarding Inspirational Motivation**

The union-represented employees also shared their views about the source of their

inspirational motivation to drive safely while driving a company car. In general, the

respondents indicated that personal safety is the primary reason they drive carefully for

the company they work for. They also reported that their responsibility toward their

family is another big reason they make sure they drive safe while in the company vehicle.

Personal financial reasons, pride, sense of professionalism, and self-respect are other

factors that motivated these employees to drive in a way that ensured safety on the road. Lastly, a few of the respondents said that they drive company cars carefully because they love their organization, their supervisors, and their managers. Consequently, those respondents said that if they do not drive company cars carefully they may cause breaches that can affect the financial stability of the organization.

Moreover, these employees expressed awareness that unsafe driving might also cause their supervisors' and managers' performance metrics, which are linked to the employees' driving performance on the job, to plummet. Following are the answers in which those research participants expressed their views on the perceived effect of inspirational motivation on safe driving improvement in electric utility organizations. The first question that addressed this trait of transformational leaders in the union-represented employees' interview guide was question 8.

**UNION Question 8**: What makes you want to stay safe on the road when you are driving at work (or commuting with a company vehicle)?

*UNION-1-1:* The first thing that makes me wants to stay safe while driving a company vehicle is because I don't want to sustain any injuries because of my unsafe driving. I love myself, but of course, I have to drive safely because that is company policy.

*UNION-1-2:* Me. As I said before, I am the first person responsible for my safety. So, when I go out there, I do everything that I can to stay safe: I don't talk on the phone; I don't text; I don't answer the phone. Those are magnificent ways to stay out of

trouble. As I said earlier too, I always try to be aware of my surroundings, and that helps me a lot.

*UNION-1-3:* The biggest reason I want to stay safe on the road when driving at work or commuting with a company vehicle is my personal safety and my well-being. I would like to survive and not to be involved in a collision that could end my life. I guess the next thing would be property damage or the safety of the other drivers also. I would never want to put anybody else in a situation where I can harm, or possibly kill, him or her.

*UNION-2-1:* I don't want to be responsible for somebody's death. I don't want to think that I made a mistake and unfortunately had an accident that would maim or kill anyone. In addition, I take a lot of pride in doing my job and doing it well. Not having a tarnished record, you might say, in the company, as far as being a bad driver or just a hazardous employee.

*UNION-2-2:* I have a good driving record; I would like to maintain that. The fact that I want to drive safe has nothing to do with the company. The truth is if I get into an accident with a company car, since I have never been in similar situations before, I don't think they would have an issue with it. Nevertheless, I don't want to be in that situation.

*UNION-2-3:* I don't want to cause bodily harm to anyone including myself. In addition, I don't want to go through any money issue with my car, insurance, or any other hassles that come with getting into a motor vehicle accident. Mostly I drive safely just to continue to be, and to be there for my family.

*UNION-3-1:* I think as an individual, I want to drive safely for my personal safety, to be able to go to my family. In addition, as I said before, I drive company cars carefully because if I damaged any equipment or vehicles in an accident, my boss would have to replace them; that could cost a lot of money.

*UNION-3-2:* Naturally, nobody wants to get in an accident. Nobody wakes up in the morning one day and says "I think I am going to have a motor vehicle accident today." One significant reason I drive company cars safely is to avoid causing property damage, personal injuries, or death to me or to others.

*UNION-3-3:* The reason I want to stay safe on the road when I am driving at, to, or from work with a company vehicle is my safety and other people's safety. In addition, it is part of my job. I do not want to lose my job. It may be that if I was not a good driver, if I were not driving safely, and got into numerous accidents, I would not be in a position that I am now.

*UNION-5-1:* I do not want to get hurt. I don't want to get hurt at all! In addition, I don't want my partner to get hurt because I was driving unsafely. Moreover, we have stuff in the truck—such as heavy equipment— that, although we have safety barriers if the truck rolls, they can become projectiles. I never see myself in situations like that in a company car as well as in my personal vehicle. That is why I just don't drive fast; I take my time. I don't rush to go anywhere.

*UNION-5-2:* It's better for everybody. I don't want to cause anybody any harm. In addition, I don't want to cause myself any harm or my partner. I want to get to the job, do it, and get back safely.

*UNION-5-3:* I don't want to get hurt and, I don't want to see anybody else get hurt

because of my unsafe driving behaviors, or because I wasn't doing what I was

supposed to. I drive safely because I don't want to hurt or kill someone else or

myself.

The answers I received from the union-represented employees for question 9

indicated that they would like their colleagues and bosses to remember them as good

drivers; as people who did not hurt or kill anyone because of their unsafe driving habits;

and as safe and conscientious drivers with no accidents in their records. In lieu of an

explanation about their choice of such legacy, a few stated it would be shameful if

anyone remembered them in any other way. Following are their specific answers to

question 9.

**UNION Question 9**: What kind of driver would you like your colleagues and

your supervisors to remember you as after you retire and

why?

*UNION-1-1:* I would like my colleagues to remember me as one of the best drivers

who worked for the company. That way, my name will probably be in a list

somewhere as one of the best drivers. That would make me feel great, to have worked

for a company for 25 to 30 years and never caused or was in a motor vehicle accident,

especially in an area where traffic is very congested. That would make me feel great

about myself!

*UNION-1-2:* I would like they remember me as a good one! It is difficult to say the

best one—that is a significant challenge. Nevertheless, I want to be remembered as

somebody who was very cautious; mindful about his driving; also someone who never hurt himself or anyone else.

*UNION-1-3:* I would like the people in my job to remember me as a very safe driver. I would like they remember me as a driver who followed all the rules; a driver who learned from his previous motor vehicle accident. More importantly, I would like they remember me as a courteous driver; a driver who never put anybody at risk.

*UNION-2-2:* I don't know that the people in the company would remember me for being a safe driver, to be honest with you. Because they have never recognized anybody in the past, you know! They do that when the accidents happen.

*UNION-2-3:* I would like they remember me as a safe driver, of course! However, I don't think our leaders think of us in those terms. They may think that I was a good lineman, but not a good driver, even with perfect safe driving records! Nevertheless, I would love to walk out of the door without any motor vehicle incidents on my record at that point.

*UNION-3-1:* I'd like they remember me as a safe one, a courteous one. I figured, if your co-workers remembered you as a safe driver, it would mean that you were not in too many accidents. In addition, this may also mean that you did not trigger significant car accidents where you sustained bodily injuries or someone else got hurt.

*UNION-3-3:* I would like the people at my job to remember me as a good and a safe driver, and as a driver who didn't have an accident for the company. If they can say I never had an accident, whether or not it's while driving, for me it would be a good thing.

*UNION-5-1:* There are monetary and physical losses in driving unsafely; I don't want either. To me, driving is a means to get to where I have to do a task. If I get in an accident, I don't get there; someone else will be doing the work I was supposed to do and will be earning the money I was supposed to make. That doesn't sit well with me at all.

*UNION-5-2:* I would like my colleagues to remember me as a safe and conscientious driver because the opposite would be embarrassing! Having a nickname "Crash," for example, would not be good.

*UNION-5-3:* You know what? I am almost tempted to say that usually the people who do something bad are the ones who they always remember. That is why almost not remembering someone often means that the person did everything right, including driving. If they were to remember me as a safe driver, that would be wonderful; I would feel I accomplished something that is worth emulating.

**Intellectual Stimulation and Safe Driving Performance Improvement**

Researchers have found that leaders stimulate followers intellectually when they challenge members of their group to be creative, and when they solicit their contributions in decision making processes, thus improve their performance using the dynamic abilities of organizational learning and innovation (Burns, 1978; García-Morales, Jiménez-Barrionuevo, & Gutiérrez-Gutiérrez, 2012). To understand how the intellectual stimulation affects the research participants to whom I talked, I asked questions 10 and 11 to the participating management personnel and union-represented employees.

**Leaders' Answers Regarding Intellectual Stimulation**

To understand how the participating leaders intellectually inspire their employees to learn how to improve their safe driving performance, I asked them interview questions 10 and 11 from the interview guide. Through the answers I received for those questions, I gained insights on the actions those leaders have taken to fulfill the intellectual needs of their occupational drivers in terms of safe driving skills and knowledge. I read both questions 10 and 11 to each participating leader before they began answering, to create a conversational atmosphere with the research participants.

**MAST Question 10**: Please tell me what kind of work environment is available for your drivers to learn more about how to drive safely for the organization.

**MAST Question 11**: What safe driving skills development and enhancement training programs are available for your drivers?

A few leaders indicated that they have purposely trained driving specialists in their organization to help drivers who need extra safe driving training skills. They also stated that other safe driving training programs from outside vendors are available for the employees only; those vendors may also offer safe driving training for employee-selected family members.

Collectively, the leaders with whom I spoke in Company #3 shared a common opinion regarding employees' need or request for more training to perform more efficiently, whether in driving or in some other task. The judgment was that employees never had been in a situation where they needed or inquired about more training to

operate a company vehicle safely. That judgment was in direct relation to the manner in which leaders recruit their employees. The leaders with whom I spoke from Company #3 stated that they had been recruiting their employees directly through the Bargaining Unit that represents those employees. In so doing, the leaders specified the particular set of skills required in employees they were hiring, contingent to the project for which they needed extra workers. Therefore, the workforce in Company #3 often comes on board with the appropriate skills necessary to perform a task or complete a project, including driving and other operating skills for motor vehicles and equipment. Nevertheless, the three leaders I spoke with from that company reported that they still have training opportunities available for the drivers who need improvement training. The following responses I received from those leaders express their opinions on the matter.

*MAST-3-1:* In general, our employees would not ask for training because of our recruitment process. Before someone comes to work for us, we ask the union to dispatch people with the suitable CDL and training skills needed for the project. When they get on board, however, our supervisor will verify whether they can operate our vehicles and equipment to our standard.

*MAST-3-2:* I never had that experience in our department. However, we can give our workers more training when necessary using outside vendors, such as JJ Keller.

*MAST-3-3:* We seldom have employees asking for training. When they do, a member of the Driving Excellence Team usually trains that employee.

Following are the most pertinent responses the participating leaders provided in their attempt to explain the work environment they made available for employees who

needed more safe-driving training. I am not including the majority of the answers management interviewees gave for these questions because they did not add anything that had not been already been said. In fact, all the other leaders said that their drivers have the Smith System available to them and that their apprenticeship programs offer all they need to know to operate their motor vehicles safely.

Table 8

*Leaders' Answers Regarding Intellectual Stimulation*

| ID Codes | Answer provided for Question 10 | Answer provided for Question 10 |
|---|---|---|
| MAST-1-1 | We create an environment where safe driving training opportunities are available. | There is an instructor-based safe driving techniques training called the Smith System Process available for employees only. In addition, we have a three-year online driving hazards identification training that uses a simulation system, where drivers have to identify road hazards in various driving scenarios, called Alert Driving or Alert Driver. The Alert Driving or Alert Driver training is available for all employees and any chosen member of their family. We also have the Drive-Cam, which we use as a tool to improve safe driving performance of selected employees. |
| MAST-1-2 | We have a work environment where we give employees the opportunity to learn and be proficient in driving safely. | We have the job hazard analysis (JHA) and the National Safety Council Defensive Driving training programs for employees to learn defensive driving techniques. In the JHA, employees go in a ride-along with a nonthreatening individual, such as a co-worker with excellent safe driving records, health and safety professional, or a training specialist. |
| MAST-2-3 | I cannot remember someone ever asked for training in the past. However, we have a few safe driving training for our employees. We have the Safe Driver Alert, the State's Division of Motor Vehicle training for Commercial Driver License, and the new Smith driving training programs | *(No answer was provided.)* |
| MAST-5-1 | We have a proactive work environment. | We usually offer the training before our drivers even ask because most of the time, through Drive Cam, we identify people who need more safe or defensive driving training. We coach our drivers based on driving behaviors [that] the videos we reviewed show we need to address. As a result, we provide backup training, driving assessment training, on-the-job training on driver safety, and the Smith driving training programs. |

**Union-Represented Employees' Answers Regarding Intellectual Stimulation**

To gain insight on the type of safe driving training the participating union-represented employees may need to improve their safe driving performance, I asked them to tell me what safe driving training would make them better drivers. I also asked these employees about their perceptions of the work environment their leaders had made available for them to learn how to stay more alert on the road. To conduct that investigation, I asked these research participants interview questions 10 and 11, shown below. The answers most of these participants provided in regard to training they might need encompassed hauling large equipment and very long poles on truck with assorted parts, such as trailer. However, one respondent said that awareness of non-local traffic laws might be what they need to know to drive safely while performing mutual aid tasks during storms or other emergency conditions.

All of the union-represented employees who contributed to the study stated that their leaders had safe driving skills development and enhancement training programs from which they can benefit. They listed, for example, the Smith System, the National Safety Council Defensive Driving, and the Load Securement training programs, among others. Below is how the union-represented employees combined their responses for questions 10 and 11 to express their opinions in the matter:

**UNION Question 10**:     Please describe for me the kind of work conditions that would make you want to learn more about how to drive safely at work.

**UNION Question 11**: What safe driving skills development and enhancement training programs are available for you as a driver?

*UNION-1-1:* Although we have been having the Smith driving training, which was a superb program, I might need more training to drive a big truck like that with a trailer pole with poles longer than 50 feet long.

*UNION-1-2:* We all had the yearly National Safety Council Defensive Driving Training. I think I might need more awareness training on how to drive our big combination truck we use to haul very long poles or our large equipment.

*UNION-1-3:* I received a training session in the Smith driving training program. I think I would need awareness training if I were driving in foreign territories or doing a lot more travelling. There are basic driving rules; there are local driving laws outside of our territory that can be good for us to know since we do mutual aid. I guess if a mutual aid assignment gets me in with unusual traffic patterns or regulations, or I was driving a different vehicle than what I usually drive, I would need some awareness training.

*UNION-2-2:* We all had the Load Securement training and Smith driving training programs. Nevertheless, I think most of us may need training on how to carry giant poles carefully. We may also require training beyond the Class A Driver's License training that teaches us how safely to pull loads weighing over 10,000 pounds,

because occasionally we tow and haul equipment that weighs more than 10,000 pounds.

*UNION-2-3:* We did the Load Securement training. However, any safe driving awareness training would help us because we are working in very congested areas with many drivers that are distracted with cell phone texting or whatever. I cannot think of any training specifically. However, if there were any safe driving training programs that would make us more aware of unusual driving conditions, or give us more information that would allow us to be more careful out there, it would be good for us to have them.

*UNION-3-1:* I think some more winter awareness driving training, especially during ice storms, where we have been driving on the interstates on just sheets of ice, and most other drivers cannot be on the road.

*UNION-5-2:* All of us have been in the National Safety Council Defensive Driving Training program. However, since everything has been the same for the most part in my job, our only gradually growing problematic condition is that the city is building up at a very fast pace. Traffic is denser every day. Maybe some awareness training on new driving distractions might be helpful.

*UNION-5-3:* The National Safety Council Defensive Driving training program and other in-house training programs (such as back-up training) helped us tremendously in the past. However, I would say that many of us would benefit greatly from safe

driving awareness training focus on how to drive utility vehicles safely in harsh
weather conditions.

In the answers the union-represented employees supplied, it seemed obvious that
knowledge, awareness, education, and training are essential for them to be able to drive
company vehicles safely. They also indicated that, for the most part, their organizations
have a structure that makes available the most important training programs they will need
to improve their safety performance on the road.

### Individualized Consideration and Safe Driving Performance Improvement

When leaders attend to followers' needs, coach them, and support them
individually to be active team members, they reveal the feature of transformational
leadership that Burns (1978) termed *individualized consideration*. This feature also
allows leaders to empathize and help their employees, and to maintain open
communications with them (García-Morales et al., 2012). In addition, Bass (1995)
indicated that when leaders encourage and recognize each team member's viewpoint and
ideas, it leads to an expanded source of knowledge for group members.

### Leaders' Answers Regarding Intellectual Stimulation

In the leaders' interview guide, questions 12 and 13, shown below, probed how
leaders demonstrate to individuals and to groups, respectively, that they recognize the
achievements of employees with outstanding safe driving performance.

Interview question 12 inquired about the personal relationship leaders have with
their employees to let them know they've been doing an excellent job of driving safely.
Question 13 probed how the leaders to whom I talked expressed their appreciation to

groups of drivers who had had exceptional safe driving performance. Because the information being offered by the participating leaders had contextual connection, I asked questions 12 and 13 together to enhance the conversational atmosphere of each interview session. Consequently, the respondents combined their answers for both questions into one response.

In their answers, most of the leaders I interviewed for this study admitted that they either never or seldom take the time to express personalized appreciation to their employees for the fact that they drive carefully for the organization. However, those leaders stated they acknowledge employees with high overall safety performance during group meetings; there too, occasionally they mention those with superior performance. According to the answers I received from the participating leaders, one of the reasons they do not acknowledge employees with excellent driving performance is that driving safely is part of overall occupational safety and is an expectation. Therefore, leaders should not identify employees for something they are required to do anyway. Following are the interview questions and the respondents' answers about acknowledging their employees individually and as a group.

**MAST Question 12**: How often do you let your drivers know one-on-one that you sincerely appreciate their effort to drive safely for your organization?

**MAST Question 13**: How do you make it known to the group that an employee has an outstanding safe driving performance?

*MAST-1-1:* If you mean, talk to them about their safe driving performance one-on-one, I never did that. However, I communicate my appreciation to my safe drivers through company, divisions, and/or local publications of motor vehicle collisions and accidents reports.

*MAST-1-2:* I am ashamed to say, not as much we should have.

*MAST-1-3:* I am so embarrassed to say that I have never recognized my safe driving performers on a one-on-one basis. I tend to do that during group safety meetings.

*MAST-2-1:* I do that regularly with my people during morning pre-job briefing and I do that in our monthly group safety meetings.

*MAST-2-2:* I do not do that very often. I expect them to drive safely! However, I mention our safe driving performers at general assembly safety meetings.

*MAST-2-3:* Anytime I get an opportunity, but in general, during yearly employee safety recognition programs.

*MAST-3-1:* I don't think I ever recognized somebody for driving safely; it is an expectation. However, we have done and still do individual and group recognition, but not for driving. We recognize people for other safety achievements.

*MAST-3-2:* I would say probably not enough. However, I do it on a regular basis in our group meeting, once a month.

*MAST-3-3:* No, I don't recognize people individually for safe driving; we do safety recognition for groups in our weekly safety conference call and once a month in our safety meeting.

*MAST-4-1:* I guess I cannot answer for the supervisors. However, I know we recognize safe performers during monthly safety meetings after we've looked at the statistics for the month.

*MAST-4-2:* We recognize people once a month, or at least once every two months as a group in our safety meetings.

*MAST-4-3:* At least once a week I tell them that I appreciate what they do in terms of driving safely.

*MAST-5-2:* I have done that many times out here. For example, if I see someone backing up and I see someone else helping him, I go ahead and pat the helper on the shoulder. I have a little physical contact with them, look him in the eyes and let him know I see he was doing the right thing, and doing it safely. However, ritually once a month, we recognize the individuals with excellent safe driving performance when we get a group together during safety meetings.

*MAST-5-3:* If I see somebody gets out of the truck to get a driver out of a tight spot to back him out. In addition, if I see someone drives cautiously in the yard, I will tell them thank you for driving safe and contributing to keeping our organization safe. I think that makes them feel good about their performance; and they often keep up their performance in whatever I recognize them. During the monthly business and safety meeting is also another instance I regularly tell the group that I understand what everybody has been doing to drive safely. Occasionally, we have stand-downs where we discuss an incident that happened in another group, or in another area. We talk about what went wrong and try to understand why the incident occurred. If the

incident was a driving accident, we try to understand what the driver could have done

differently to avoid that accident. We talk about it, and then after that, I tell them that

I appreciate that they have been driving carefully.

*MAST-5-4:* I regularly say thank you to my employees, especially in our monthly

safety meetings. I think it helps in so much that they know that I am looking at it, or

that I am watching it. When I thank or acknowledge them, is a way for me to tell

them that what they are doing is essential for the success of the organization. If they

know it is important to me, they will make an effort to perform well to please me and

to look good.

**Union-Represented Employees' Answers Regarding Intellectual Stimulation**

When employees do not feel like they part of a team, as if they can claim their

belongingness, they are affected mentally more than physically (Avolio, 2010). Very

often, when they experience that sense of belongingness, or feel that their contribution

affects their team performance, they tend to build within themselves a commitment to

improving their performance to the benefit of the group.

When employees feel they belong to a group and that their contribution matters,

their outlook about their work and the company increase in association with their

perceived level of performance (Ghafoor et al., 2011). Transformational leadership helps

improve followers' belongingness, increase trust, and improve performance. In fact,

Ghafoor et al. (2011) found

Employee engagement practiced under transformational leadership develops the

positivity in behavior that leads to trust and satisfaction that enhances sense of

belongingness. The sense of ownership is supported by the perception of

citizenship of employees. Once employees feel themselves as part of the

organization, their self-identity with the organization improves. This identity and

association with the organization develops commitment in employees and their

performance increases. (p. 7401)

Ghafoor et al. further noted, "Employees having blurred identity in terms of work

and weak sense of belongingness are not motivated to improve their work. The feeling of

dissatisfaction holds them back from performing right." (p.7392)

Consequently, I also asked the union-represented employees to tell me about how

they perceived that their safe driving performance contributed to the performance of the

group in which they belong. I materialized that inquiry through interview questions 12

and 13. With question 12, I inquired about employees' perception of how their safe

driving performance may contribute to the performance of the group.

With question 13, I probed the extent to which their leaders had made them feel

their safe driving performance had helped their group or company in reaching safe

occupational driving goals. Specifically, I emphasized in question 13 whether the leaders

acknowledged exceptional performers in front of their peers. It was important to know

whether the leaders of the union-represented employees who contributed to this study

recognized their employees publicly because public credit represents a manifestation of

how organizations recognize employees' efforts. In fact, researchers have reported,

Perceived support would promote the incorporation of organizational membership

and role status into employees' self-identity. The resulting affective attachment

would increase performance by (a) raising the tendency to interpret the

organization's gains and losses as the employee's own, (b) creating evaluation

biases in judging the organization's actions and characteristics, and (c) increasing

the internalization of the organization's values and norms. (Eisenberger, Fasolo, &

Davis-LaMastro, 1990, p. 582)

In answering question 12, most of the union-represented employees agreed that

their efforts to stay alert and attentive on the road contribute significantly to the

performance of the organization in many aspects. For example, they noted that when they

drive safely, their group is safer. They also indicated that their colleagues finish more

projects on schedule when they drive safely. Moreover, the members of their group will

have less stress if they are careful on the road. Because of their safe driving performance,

everyone in their group will be more productive and happier. Here are question 12 and

the most relevant answers I collected from the respondents.

**UNION Question 12**:      Please describe to me how your effort to drive

safely contributes to the performance of your group.

*UNION-1-1:* When I am on the road, I drive a truck with a chief or another Grade 1

Lineman. So if I drive safe, these people can perform the jobs or projects assigned to

them that day. In addition, if I drive the truck unsafely and a partner is following me

with another vehicle, I can get both vehicles involved in an accident. Therefore, I can

hurt and possibly kill an entire crew in an accident if I drive unsafely. That would

unquestionably affect the production of the department.

*UNION-1-2:* By driving safely, I will be a reliable worker; I will be able to do my job every day; I will not represent a danger for my co-workers.

*UNION-2-1:* My job as a lineman does not imply I just work on wires. In my function as a lineman, also means driving a vehicle is at least 50% of the time to get to and from jobs. Therefore, if I do not drive safely, there is a high likelihood that I will not complete my assignment for the day. If that is the case, the company will not get a return on the investment they put forth for that job, and the customers may not get the electric services for which they may have paid. That would not be good.

*UNION-2-3:* I guess financially it hurts the company if I do not drive safely. When I look at it, it is a good thing for me. When I drive safe, my colleagues and supervisors respect me professionally, in part, because I am reliable; I complete all my assignments safely, with no delay, and without causing expenses to the company. If I damage a truck or any other equipment, the cost of repair for the damaged trucks and equipment can be exorbitant.

*UNION-3-2:* If I do not get involved in any accidents because I drive safe, the group will be more productive. Therefore, I will contribute positively to the efforts of the members of my group to perform efficiently; there would be a reduction of our expenses and an increase of our profit margin.

*UNION-3-3:* As a Superintendent Lineman, I lead by example. I think if I was having all kinds of accidents and that was OK, [it] would show my people that I do not care for my safety and theirs. Therefore, to inspire my group to drive safely, I have to be a good leader; I have to lead by example.

*UNION-5-1:* I just think that we are just more reliable as a group when we drive

safer. If I say to a worker, "Here is your job," I do not think about if he is going to

reach the work location in a safe way. We cannot run business like that. Therefore,

driving is like walking; we just have to be careful, and everything is going to be just

fine.

*UNION-5-2:* If I was getting into many accidents, which would cause stress on my

supervisor, he probably would relay that stress onto the rest of the group, and my

colleagues would not appreciate that too much.

*UNION-5-3:* When I drive safely, it helps the group substantially. The fewer

accidents I have, the easier it is for us as a group to do our job better; eventually, the

more money we can make, and the happier everyone is. When everybody is happy,

everything goes smoothly, and we have a good time at work. However, if I get

involved in an accident, I have to go upstairs to explain why and how the accident

happened. That irritates my boss and brings the morale of the group down,

particularly if the consequences of my accidents affect the entire group.

In answering question 13, which addressed whether managers and/or supervisors

identify union-represented employees' safe driving performance publicly, the

interviewees stated that leaders in their organization rarely recognize them publicly for

safe driving performance. In addition, they pointed out that, although most of them would

welcome any recognition for driving safely, there has never been any formal recognition

program for that.

Another point that research participants brought up is the fact that leaders give too much attention to unsafe driving performance and bring little attention to safe drivers. Many agreed that the recognitions for driving safely would not make them operate company vehicles more safely, nor would the lack of them make them drive unsafely. However, they also indicated that they would not argue that they don't deserve recognition. In the segment below, I incorporated question 13 and several of the answers the participants gave.

**UNION Question 13**: Has your safe driving performance been acknowledged publicly among your peers? (If yes, how did such public recognition inspire you to stay safe on the road?)

*UNION-1-1:* No, my leaders never recognized me at all in public for my driving performance!

*UNION-1-2:* No, not before the accident I had or after. If a supervisor or a manager approached me and said to me that he noticed that I improved my safe driving performance, I would feel good about that. Although I would capriciously say "Thank you" or "That's OK," but I would like that he told me that I was doing better in my driving performance.

*UNION-1-3:* Yes, that has happened once, and it felt good! It is always nice for a supervisor to recognize an employee for something positive he did. I felt magnificent that day!

*UNION-2-2:* They usually shine the limelight on when something bad happened. Therefore, not hearing anything from them is a good thing. Although recognition in anything is always good, I do not think if they recognized me among my colleagues, it would motivate me any more than I am now.

*UNION-3-1:* No, nobody ever recognized me publicly for driving safely. I think it would be great if they did because some of us need a little bit more acknowledgment. I think more employees need to hear positive feedback about they what did right, rather than what they did wrong. It would create a sense of pride and achievement by knowing that our leaders are watching and recognizing us for our outstanding performances.

*UNION-3-3:* I have never had anybody pull me out in front my group and say that I did great in my safe driving performance.

*UNION-5-1:* I do not think we must receive public recognition because we drive safe at work. Our job is to be responsible; we are just doing what we are supposed to do. I should not need to receive appreciation from my supervisors for safe driving. Everyone should want to be safe. If someone is not thinking safety, there is something wrong with that person. I do not need recognitions or rewards to drive safely at work, though I would not argue that I should not get them.

*UNION-5-2:* No, I never received public recognition from my boss. Managers and supervisors commend us as a group when we do something outstanding, but never as

an individual in front of a group. To be honest with you, if they did it occasionally, it would make many employees feel great.

*UNION-5-3:* It did not happen to me in particular. However, I have seen other drivers receiving acknowledgment from supervisors for safety when we have our monthly safety meeting with everybody. I think it is a worthy thing to do.

**Overview of Emotional Intelligence's Contribution to Work-Related Safety**

Considering the overall opinions provided by both management personnel and union-represented employees, it seems clear that transformational leaders have the potential to improve safe driving performance of followers in organizations. However, other factors have contributed just as essentially to the level of performance of the employees interviewed, such as the employees' personal interests and intrinsic motivation to drive safely at work.

Among other elements, safe driving performance improvement involves people-based safety. People-based safety is a behavior-based approach where leaders evaluate performance quality, productivity, and safety improvement of followers using personality, emotions, perceptions, and abilities (Geller, 2011). Leaders who have a high level of emotional intelligence are among the most effective and successful leaders (Goleman, 1998).

However, leaders who exhibit a high level of emotional intelligence display accurate perception, appraisal, and expression of emotion, in addition to helping leaders access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought, understand emotions, and regulate them to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer et al., 2008). This

feature is responsible for many positive outcomes in the interactions between leaders and

followers, as well as the level of effectiveness of the former and the performance of the

latter. For example, Fisk and Friesen (2012) found that followers react distinctively and

dependently to how effectively leaders of organizations regulate their emotion, which is

often manifested – at least in part – on the nature of the leader–follower relationship.

Their perceptions of leaders' effectiveness in regulating emotion appear to mitigate some

of the negative effects associated with low-quality exchange relationships, perceived

surface acting, which often have potential undesirable repercussions on expected high-

quality relationships. Concerning leaders' management of emotion and overall efficiency,

Goleman (1998) stated:

> I have found, however, that most effective leaders are alike in one crucial way:
>
> They all have a high degree of what has been known as *emotional intelligence*.
>
> It's not that IQ and technical skills are irrelevant. They do matter, but mainly as
>
> "threshold capabilities"; that is, they are they entry-level requirements for
>
> executive positions. But my research, along with other recent studies, clearly
>
> shows that emotional intelligence is the sine qua non of leadership. Without it, a
>
> person can have the best training in the world, an incisive, analytical mind, and an
>
> endless supply of smart ideas, but he still won't make a great leader. (p. 94)

In the context of work-related safety, transformational leaders take actions that

promote shared group values, a vision for the future, and individualized support to reach

safety goals (Barling et al., 2002). Therefore, in the context of this study, I examined this

feature of transformational leaders to review the extent to which it may contribute to the

development and/or improvement of safe driving in an organization. However, I only included two of the features of emotional intelligence in exploring the potential influence of emotional intelligence on employees' safe driving performance improvement. Below, I offer a development of the concepts of followers' empowerment and leaders' empathy, based on the answers I collected from the participating leaders and union-represented employees.

### Drivers' Empowerment and Safe Driving Improvement

Using core values such as a unifying purpose, leaders' empowerment of followers expands the followers' potential and efficiency to think, be creative, and challenge outdated processes (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Burns, 1978). Employee empowerment helps the overall workplace performance in many ways. It facilitates "moving decision-making authority down the (traditional) organizational hierarchy" (Menon, 2001, p. 156). It promotes self-efficacy and confidence in one's ability to perform tasks to a high standard, and influences subordinates' initiation and persistence of task behavior (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Leaders' empowerment of employees creates a local work environment within a broader organizational context that motivates employees intrinsically to exercise their power entirely (Men & Stacks, 2013).

**Leaders' Answers Regarding Drivers' Empowerment**

To address how the participating leaders empower their drivers, I asked them two questions from the interview guide. Interview question 4 specifically addressed the extent to which the leaders delegate authority to their drivers to make autonomous safety-related decisions while operating company vehicles. Question 5 asked the leader to recall a

particular situation where an employee exerted their delegated power to stop a job because of driving conditions they identified as unsafe. The answers participating leaders gave for interview question 4 revealed that drivers' freedom to make decisions without the approval of a supervisor or a manager is contingent on their experience and a few rare instances. For instance, drivers who operate big trucks must follow specific routes approved by supervisors and/or managers because of clearance issues. Other than those situations, leaders indicated that qualified employees have the freedom to make any safety-related decisions while driving a company vehicle. Below are question 4 and the answers given by the leaders I interviewed, expressing their opinions on the matter of occupational drivers' empowerment.

> **MAST Question 4**:   When it comes to driving, what types of decisions do you allow your employees to make without asking a supervisor or a manager?

*MAST-1-1:* I allow my employees to make any decisions about the vehicle they drive, best traveling route, or any other aspect of using a company vehicle, as long as such use relates to company business. If there have to be vehicles out in certain bad weather conditions, then our leadership teams would decide how many vehicles go on the road, based on essential assignments to do.

*MAST-1-2:* In our organization, the ability employees have to make any decisions while driving our vehicle is contingent on the employees' level of qualifications and experience in the driving task in progress. If they have the appropriate skills, they can make decisions without calling a supervisor. Otherwise, they cannot.

*MAST-1-3:* They can absolutely make any decisions that would get them to their work location safely; they do not even have to tell me about it. However, they have to own that decision. That means if, unfortunately, they get into an accident on the route they chose, they would need a logical explanation about their decision to divert from the planned route.

*MAST-2-1:* As far as driving, my employees can make every decision they deem the best for their safety, the safety of their co-workers, and the safety of the public! After all, it is their driver's license. My expectations are they are going to drive safely, they are going to obey the rules, and they are going to follow the safest and most direct route to the job site.

*MAST-2-2:* My employees can make any decisions on the roads while driving.

*MAST-3-1:* They do not have to tell me anything. They are responsible for themselves. We do not control or watch our employees that closely like that. We have Zonar on our pieces of equipment just in case we need to know where they have been or where they are going. For the most part, our employees are big boys and girls; they can make any decisions to stay safe and do their job effectively.

*MAST-3-2:* Yes, my employees can make their decisions autonomously because they know their areas, they are out there, and they see what is going on every day. In addition, in our scavenger industry where one's destination can change in very short notice, they have to have the authority to make decisions based on traffic issues, where they are going, if their plan changes.

*MAST-4-1:* We provide our drivers with all of the safe driving training and skills they need to drive safely and make safe driving decisions on their own. Therefore, my drivers don't have to let me know the safe driving decisions they made during the course of any working day.

*MAST-4-2:* They don't have to call us if they make a driving decision on the road. We give them a lot of autonomy. We don't specify their routes. We expect them to take the shortest route, apparently the safest way, first if they are to be expeditious to the job site. We also avoid putting our drivers in error-likely times or error-likely situations. As we learn from our Safety Human Performance program, we are all human; we are not machines, and as a human, you make mistakes and errors that can cause an incident or accident. We keep them out of the time and situation error-likely conditions or distractions. It is their obligation to minimize all other self-imposed distractions. For example, we believe multitasking and safety are on the opposite ends of the spectrum. Obviously, you cannot be safe while driving if you are multitasking.

*MAST-4-3:* I allow the employees to make any decisions because I know they have the proper training to make the best decision they can to keep themselves safe.

*MAST-5-1:* We put some restrictions on the drivers as far as driving company vehicles. For example, with certain types of vehicles in my department, we are restricted to use certain roadways because of the type and size of the vehicle. Therefore, they are supposed to stay on the routes we pre-selected for our trucks so they can avoid clearance and other issues. In any other situation, the driver may make

any decisions on the best way, the safest and most convenient way to get to a given job.

*MAST-5-2:* They do not have to contact me. However, we can discuss it afterwards when a supervisor or I get to that location. The only thing they have to do is to let me know they are going to be 10 minutes, 20 minutes late, because we might have a customer to meet at a precise time. I think that helps improving the quality of our communication.

*MAST-5-3:* We instruct our employees to take the most direct route on the way to a job site. If [they take] a different route that is a few blocks here and there, they do not have to call me to tell me. I would say that they should call and tell us that they are arriving at the job site late with a delay of more than 15 minutes.

*MAST-5-4:* They are autonomous! I would say we set the expectations that they should be driving defensively, and then allow them to make decisions on the roads while they are driving those vehicles. We do attempt to find through history where we have had repeated instances of incidents or accidents to provide a list of roadways for our drivers to avoid because they are high-hazard areas. We have had a history of hit and broken mirrors because drivers were trying to fit through very tight corners. Therefore, we give them those lists of roads to avoid, and a few things not to do. However, as far as day-to-day decisions as they are driving, they are free to make whatever decisions they judge the safest or the most appropriate for the circumstances.

As mentioned earlier, interview question 5 inquired from the leader to recall one particular instance where an employee used their delegated authority not to proceed with an assignment because he or she faced a hazardous driving condition. Many leaders admitted that electric utility drivers have to be on the road in any storm conditions or other natural disasters that cause emergency electrical repairs. Those leaders further indicated that, in those cases, the only option electric utility workers have is to do their best to work and operate company vehicles safely. They have that obligation because they provide vital services to the community. If there are no emergency situations where hospital or municipal buildings are out of power, then in inclement weather conditions employees will not drive to any job site.

A few leaders also said that any road- or vehicle- related conditions that could render the operation of any company vehicle unsafe are valid grounds for any occupational drivers to stop any job that is in progress. The expectation is that the employees call their supervisors or managers to inform them of the decisions they made and why.

Below is question 5 as used in each interview, followed by the specific responses the participating leaders provided.

**MAST Question 5**:  Please describe an instance where one of your employees did not complete an assignment because they felt the driving conditions were unsafe.

*MAST-1-1:* My employees can stop any normal routine job for any unsafe conditions related to traveling time, road conditions, and vehicle operations.

*MAST-1-2:* Our Corporate Safety Commitment requires our employees to stop any jobs if they anticipate any conditions that can lead to them, another employee, or a member of the public to sustain injuries of any sort. As a result, for any driving circumstances that our employees identify as being hazardous they can make the decision not to continue with that project.

*MAST-1-3:* We accentuate that every single person, contractor, union, or management personnel, every employee of the company has the right and the obligation to stop any job where they notice unsafe conditions. In addition, we instruct all employees to be responsible for their safety and that of the people with whom or for whom they work. They have such responsibility whether those employees are colleagues, their supervisees, or superiors.

*MAST-2-1:* They can stop any job if the road conditions are dangerous. They know not to travel if the roads are unsafe. The only thing they have to do after they have made the decision not to move forward with a job is to call me to keep me assessed of what is going on.

*MAST-2-2:* During Hurricane Sandy, for example, the roads were flooded; it was unsafe to take the vehicle to the substations until the water subsided down enough to get there. Otherwise, there could have been damage to the trucks; the drivers could have had an accident. The employees decided that it was not safe to continue down the road; so they did not go to the job and had to come back the next day when the water receded.

*MAST-2-3:* Our employees can stop the job for anything. For example, they can stop a job if a boom is not working right, tires of one of our vehicles are out of alignment, or a trailer cannot haul a particular pole safely.

*MAST-3-1:* I have never had that issue. If there is absolutely no way to complete a job, then the employees will not complete that task. However, we usually have our projects completed no matter what.

*MAST-3-2:* The people who report to me seldom told me they could not complete the task assigned to them. For example, if there was an accident on the highway and they have a road traffic delay, they would just need to call and let us know. Rather than not doing anything for the day, they often go to other locations, to do other jobs. However, that is not something that happens on a routine basis.

*MAST-3-3:* Well, if they said there were no other options to get to the location of a job, I would accept that as factual. When they report that to me, I will ask them if they can find a different job or task to do for the day. Maybe they can revisit what their tasks were for the day and follow up throughout the week to see if they could get to that location to complete the job they did not get to do.

*MAST-5-1:* If we have to get to a job, and there is something in our way, we will see if we can work around it. There is no reason to put anybody at risk in trying to get to a job, or driving at all. I will give you a perfect example. One time I had one of my drivers going under a particular bridge in our work area during the events of 9/11. The driver was in the wrong lane because it was a new route for him. The sign on the bridge said height 11'1" and his truck was 12'2". Therefore, he stopped the truck; he

called us; we ended up calling emergency management; we had to back him off the entranceway for that bridge. No accidents happened that day because the driver had stopped; so, it was great! After that near miss, we set a new course for drivers who have to travel between those two locations. We dictate which way drivers should be traveling, which roads they should be taking, and which bridges have enough clearances for all the trucks we have.

*MAST-5-3:* Wintertime, for example—it might be raining and very quickly it changes into ice; the roads then become hazardous. Employees have called me before after they have completed one job to let me know that the roads are getting very slippery, and they feel like they will not be able to make it to the next location. In other words, those folks called me to let me know that they will not make it to the next job site because the road conditions made it unsafe to drive there. We typically make that [decision in] management before the crews have to notify us. However, unless there is a critical emergency, occasionally, based on the circumstances, we may ask them to stop for the day—get them off the streets and ask them to come back in.

*MAST-5-4:* If there were a situation where they could not gain access to a particular work location because there is a car parked there, they would ask me what I want them to do now. Then I would assign them different work or tell them what to do at that point. In addition, very often, employees would not be making decisions about their next job assignment. I would ask or tell them to let me know if they have any issues that preclude them from doing the work assignment they had to complete that day, and we will decide from that point.

**Union-Represented Employees' Answers Regarding Drivers' Empowerment**

Empowerment helps subordinates improve their cognitive and psychological performance abilities (Gurvinder & Hitashi, 2015; Krishnan, 2012; Sun, Zhang, Qi, & Chen, 2012). I also inquired about the perceived level of autonomy the participating union-represented employees have while driving a company car. Similar to the process used for the leaders, I asked each participating union-represented employee two questions. With interview question 4, I asked the participant to share a particular safe driving decision made without having to contact a supervisor or a manager. Interview question 5 invited the respondents to tell what unsafe driving circumstances could make them stop a job.

Based on the answers the respondents gave for interview question 4, it appeared that the majority of them feel they are very autonomous. On rare occasions, the research participants stated that they have no power to make typical decisions related to specific truck routes. They also showed no concern for not having the authority to decide spontaneously on roads to take when they drive big trucks. The global theme is that drivers feel empowered, free, and confident to make a decision on their own while driving a company car, and that being autonomous makes it easier for them to be safe while driving. Below are interview question 4 and a selection of the most relevant content of the responses I collected.

**UNION Question 4**:  Tell me about the last decision that you had to make without the approval of your supervisor or manager.

*UNION-1-1:* In my current occupation, if it has to do with safety, I have the freedom to make any decisions without the approval of my supervisor.

*UNION-1-2:* The fact is, when I am out there, I am the first person responsible for my safety. I am even more responsible for the decisions I make on the road when we have to work at night in very dangerous or unsafe neighborhoods or cities.

*UNION-1-3:* We can make any decisions without contacting our supervisors. In addition, our supervisors gave us clear instruction to make sure we are safe on the road first before calling them about any road issues or decisions we made that went against the plan we had for the day.

*UNION-2-1:* I am absolutely empowered to make decisions on the road regarding safety. I am the one who is aware of the fact that the vehicle that I am driving can seriously harm or kill somebody.

*UNION-2-2:* I think, as a foreman, I have the rights and authority to make sure my crew is safe. I think we all have that right.

*UNION-2-3:* I absolutely have the power to make any safe driving decisions without contacting the supervisor. If we were going to change our job, we would talk to a supervisor, but we would not do that if we are just changing route to get there. However, if we had to get to a certain location and we could not, we would certainly notify our supervisor that we could not do what we had on the schedule for that day.

*UNION-3-1:* I have the authority to make decisions without contacting my supervisor. In fact, during Hurricane Ike, we were going to a job location, and it started to get dark and then we just came into torrential rains. It was raining so hard that we could

not drive even about 20 miles an hour. I could not see; the people could not see. We were having trouble getting to our destination safely, in addition to fatigue that was settling in gradually. I made the decision to stop everybody and not go to our original destination that night; it was the right decision I made to stop them at that time.

*UNION-3-2:* When I am behind the wheel, I am absolutely in charge of all of my decisions whether because of road conditions, weather conditions, or any other unsafe conditions.

*UNION-3-3:* I think I am high enough in my chain of command not to have to report all I do to a supervisor. My supervisor doesn't necessarily have to know where I am exactly or the route I take every time. He knows I have a job to do; he knows what my job is; he does not necessarily have a definite period. We are not a trucking outfit where I have to deliver a load at a particular place at a certain time. Therefore, I am not under those restrictions that my supervisor needs to know at what time I made it to any job I have to do.

*UNION-5-1:* It is both. If it is a regular routine of the day, I do not call. However, if something comes up—for example, an emergency with a member of the crew or an accident on the roadways where I have a lengthy delay—to keep an open communication with my boss, I would always notify him of any obstacle I anticipate.

*UNION-5-2:* There is nothing specific that I can recall. However, there has never been an instance where I have had to call a supervisor. They give us the leeway to make a decision without contacting them. For example, we have the permission and authority to adjust our driving patterns or route depending on the safety-related issues

of the time; every one of us can do that. The only prerogative is to pick the safest way to get to a job location.

*UNION-5-2:* I think I somewhat own decisions related to driving safely. Any small decisions related to my safety as the driver, I own them; it is my duty.

About question 5 shown below, a general statement from the union-represented employees was that overall they feel enabled to stop any job, including driving, where they discover any unsafe conditions. Their explanation was that as the drivers, they are in charge of the vehicle; therefore, it is only logical for them to have the freedom to make spontaneous safety decisions while on the road.

One rare occasion where research participants indicated they had to obtain their supervisors' approval to make any driving decisions had to do with their level of experience on the job. For example, UNION-2-1 and UNION-2-2 reported that, because they are new in the positions and had just completed their apprenticeship trainings, they had to call their supervisors for decisions they deemed necessary while driving. The reason for such limited independence is because they are not qualified enough to make any substantial decisions without the approval of a supervisor or a manager. However, all union-represented employees, at different levels, specified they have to make the conditions safe for themselves before calling a supervisor.

In the pages that follow, I present the perceptions of the union-represented employees I interviewed in response to question 5. The standard opinions these research participants shared included that it is crucial for them to have the freedom make expedient safety-related driving decisions to remain safe on the road. Sometimes, they

stated that they have to divert from the planned activities, including driving patterns, to avoid exposure to unanticipated hazardous driving conditions.

> **UNION Question 5**: Let's say you have an assignment to do, and you have to drive to the job site to get it done; in what circumstances can you tell your boss you will not be able to perform that task that day?

*UNION-1-1:* None of my supervisors ever blamed anybody who made a decision which has to do with safety. As long as doing a task makes an employee feel uncomfortable, this person has the right to stop, and will not get in trouble for that.

*UNION-1-2:* If the road is too icy, during the wintertime, and I feel that I may not be able to break on time, the first thing I will do is to stop in a safe area, and then call my supervisor and my manager to explain the situation to them.

*UNION-1-3:* The first one is road conditions—if after a storm, the roads may be possibly impassable for the vehicle we had. There are many specific conditions that can determine whether we will make decisions without the permission of our supervisor. For example, certain neighborhoods are unsafe; we may have to stop or not even begin the job to ask for backup or other forms of security. There are areas you would not want to do anything there, including driving, without a partner.

*UNION-2-1:* I do not think I have the right to say "No, I am not going to that job" to do a particular job. It is usually the decision of the supervisor.

*UNION-2-2:* The supervisors tell us to stop. We drive in the most extreme weather patterns sometimes. Many times when we get hurricanes coming on, wind gets too

high; we go up on a bucket anyways. Many times too, the supervisor calls us and tells us to pull off, to come back because it is too dangerous.

*UNION-3-2:* There are all kinds of factors where I can choose not to go to a work location. For example, we may have to work in the city, but the police may have blocked off the street we were supposed to take. Another thing may be heavy traffic may not allow us to take the original route. At those times and other instances, we have to have the autonomy to make decisions without having to obtain a supervisor's approval. In those conditions, I can certainly refuse to follow a plan, or to go a job site for an assignment.

*UNION-5-1:* I have the authority to stop any job that is not an emergency in any harsh conditions, such as severe weather conditions that can increase our exposure to accident-prone driving conditions. For example, if I start sliding all over the road, I will stop because I know if I do not make the safest driving decision and I get into an accident, the blame will fall on me.

*UNION-5-2:* It is simple. For example, adverse winter conditions, or any mechanical and/or operational defects of the vehicle I will need to operate, will make us stop any driving assignment without thinking twice or having any concerns for repercussions.

*UNION-5-3:* If there were something wrong with the truck, and it would be unsafe for me to drive it, I would feel comfortable to say "No, I will not be going to the job location." Another thing is if I do not feel too well and I do not have anybody else with me who would drive instead of me, I definitely would say no. If it is safe for me

to go, I am going to do it. However, if something does not feel safe to me, I am not going to do it.

The answers of both the leaders and the union-represented employees to the questions that investigated the potential influence of employee empowerment on safe driving improvement in an organization indicated almost unanimously that it is necessary for the operator of any company vehicle to have the liberty to make decisions in emergency driving conditions without the permission of a supervisor or a manager. The two groups of research participants also admitted that drivers' freedom is contingent on job experience. Therefore, as with the previous constructs explored, employee empowerment is a factor that is useful in the promotion of safe driving performance in electric utility companies.

## Leader's Empathy and Safe Driving Improvement

Efficient operation of organizations is to some degree dependent on leaders' emotional intelligence abilities, predominantly compassion concerning others, emotional self-regulation, and understanding or empathy (Burns, 1978; Goleman, 1998). Empathy is a vital determinant of emotional intelligence. Cheung and Wong (2011) stated that high degree of empathy about followers' work needs, autonomy, honest communication, candidness and trust, and appreciation of followers' creative ideas, are a few of the ways transformational leaders support quality relationship with followers. Interactive empathy "measures whether leaders take initiative in creating a two-way emotional bond in which they influence others' emotions as well as feel others' emotions" (Humphrey 2013, p. 103).

In this study, I used three interview questions to address leadership empathy: questions 2, 3 and 14.

**Leaders' Answers Regarding Empathy**

To speak to the idea of compassion, I asked the participating leaders two questions. Question 2 asked about leaders' understanding of what it takes the employees to drive safely. Question 3 asked leaders about their primary concerns when employees call them to report their involvement in a motor vehicle accident. To speak to the influence of good working relationships between leaders and employees on safe driving performance, I used question 14 in both interview guides.

In the answers they provided to question 2, leaders of the organizations I consulted indicated a few measures they have to estimate what it takes for their drivers to drive safely on the road. They cited participation in training programs, interactive feedback between them and drivers, and drive cam reports as a few of the parameters. Some of the specific answers include the following:

> **MAST Question 2**:  In general, your employees drive a company vehicle every day, right? How do you estimate what it takes those drivers to stay safe on the road?

*MAST-1-1:* In general, I know by using the company indicator of motor vehicle accidents and collisions. More or less, the number of motor vehicle accidents the report indicates for a given period gives us an indication of how much good or bad driving habits and performance our drivers displayed on the road for that period.

*MAST-1-2:* By being able to identify how much training that particular employee has received.

*MAST-2-1:* I know what it takes them to stay safe on the road by the amount of safety meetings we have with the employees to make sure they understand not only what the laws are but the company policies. In sum, I estimate what it takes my drivers to stay safe on the road through the education they received.

*MAST-2-2:* We estimate what it takes our drivers to drive safely by the type and number of trainings they received from our training staff or our vendors.

*MAST-2-3:* I do not need to estimate what it takes them to drive safely on the road; their driving records will reflect how carefully they drive.

*MAST-3-1:* In our organization, we do that using one of our road traffic performance measures that we call RTC—Road Traffic Collisions.

*MAST-3-2:* By how clearly we set the expectations. If they understand our expectations clearly, we know how they should be driving. My people do a lot of driving; they drive in the entire United States depending on the places they have to go to work. They can drive hundreds of miles every week. Typically, the people in those positions do pretty well; my people do pretty well. Thank goodness, that does not seem to be an issue for me.

*MAST-3-3:* We estimate what it takes our drivers to be safe on the road by the amount of information we share with them for each job they have to do. For example, we often tell them to be cognizant of the fact they are driving a weapon, and that what

they do can be dangerous to themselves and to others if not done properly. We ask

them to be alert and to pay attention to their surroundings.

*MAST-4-2:* We track that by the amount of Safe Driver or Defensive Driver training

sessions they have attended for a given period.

*MAST-5-2:* I let them know to take mutual responsibility of driving safely. Both the

driver and the passenger must stay alert on the task of driving a vehicle. They must be

like pilot and co-pilot in an airplane cockpit; they both have to watch for one another

at all time until they reach their destination. Therefore, for our employees to stay safe

on the road, more or less both people in the cab of the truck must be alert on the

driving task at all times.

*MAST-5-3:* We evaluate what it takes our drivers to stay safe on the road by

proactively and regularly reviewing the reports from the DriveCam device we placed

in the cab of all of our company vehicles. When we examine those reports, we check

for unsafe driving behaviors and limit their recurrence by talking to the driver

personally, and sharing the same message with the rest of the group.

*MAST-5-4:* We estimate that by setting clear expectations. Let me explain that to you.

The expectation I would have for the people who report directly to me is that they

employ all of the defensive driving techniques for which they received training

through the defensive driving course administered by the National Safety Council.

For the people I don't oversee directly, I set clear expectations with their supervisors

that driving safe is a high priority because it is a risk point for the workers to injure

themselves and the public. In just continuing to set the expectations that driving safe

is not an option—it is a condition of employment—somewhat, we hold them accountable while driving a company car. Communicating clearly what those expectations are as far as corporate goals—for example, no more than four preventable motor vehicle accidents per year for a department or a group. In order to make that goal, we all have to be going in the same direction. We set clear expectations for our employees. We let our drivers know that we have corporate goals to which their safe driving contributes. We also tell our employees that we will hold them accountable for driving errors that lead to preventable motor vehicle accidents. That's how we take control of how safely they will drive company cars.

Leaders who coach with compassion care for others around them and don't see them as a burden and responsibility because their human interrelations and interactions with the people around them are based on those people's interests as opposed to their own (Brown, Brown, & Penner, 2012). Armstrong (2011), stated that, compassion is that intrinsic driver that leads someone to treat others as he or she would like to be treated. To explore how compassionate the participating leaders were to their employees, I inquired about their instinctive response to a call from an employee who is reporting to have been in a motor vehicle accident. The majority of the leaders reported that the first and automatic interjection would be to know whether the employee was hurt or in need of medical attention. However, one leader, MAST-1-2 (the second answer given below), indicated that the very first thing he would want to know is whether the accident was reported accurately, before inquiring if the employee was OK.

**MAST Question 3**:   What comes to your mind first when you hear one of your

employees got into a motor vehicle accident?

*MAST-1-1:* First, I would ask if they are OK, if the public is OK, or has anybody

sustained any injuries. Second, I would ask if it is an at-fault accident—in other

words, if the accident was our fault or the other driver's fault. Lastly, I would ask for

the condition of the vehicle, where it is, how we will be able to retrieve that car to

repair it if possible.

*MAST-1-2:* The very first thing I need to know is that they report the accident

accurately. Once that is out of the way, I will ask if the employee sustained any

injuries. It is always about the people because, as important as a motor vehicle crash

is, our employees are more valuable than the other assets.

*MAST-1-3:* The absolute first question I ask is if they are OK. Were there any

injuries? I say we can fix the cars and the vehicles. The ultimate priority is how the

employee is. I want to know if they are doing well first. Do they need medical

attention? Did they call our dispatchers, the police and ambulance if necessary? In

addition, we want them to inform me as quickly as practicable so we can get a

supervisor there, to take pictures, make sure the employee is OK. I do not care about

the car as much as I care about the employees. I want to make sure they are OK first;

subsequently, I want to investigate the causes of the accident because I want to avoid

it in the future, so people do not get hurt again.

*MAST-2-1:* My first thought is "Is the employee OK?" My second thought is "Was a member of the public involved? Was anybody else hurt in [the] accident?" I respond that way probably because of my concerns for my employees.

*MAST-2-2:* The only question I really have time to ask in those circumstances is "Are they OK?" To me, it is the most important question. I want to know if they OK or not. I want to know about their physical well-being above all else. Then we will do an investigation to find out what happened. However, the first thing is, are they all right? Are they hurt?

*MAST-2-3:* I would always want to know first if the employee involved in a motor vehicle accident is OK because our employees are our most valuable asset.

*MAST-3-1:* First is, I would ask if the employee is OK; then, what happened. I think the most important things we have are the people that work for us. In all organizations where there is a staff, the human side of this thing is always paramount. Otherwise, I think, the workplace would be just some cold drone that is just repeating some rhetoric from management, if you do not show the concerns that you have for your employees.

*MAST-3-2:* The very first one would be, "Are you OK?" That is primarily because they are the most important. "Are you OK? Are the people that you are involved in the incident with OK?" Then I would ask them what happened. In addition, to the best of their ability, how it happened. Was it their fault or was it somebody else's fault? Those are the key questions I would ask right off the bat because our people are more important than anything else is.

*MAST-3-3:* The first question I would ask them is if they are OK. Once I find out they are OK, I would ask them if they notified the police. Asking them if they are OK is my primary concern. I want to know whether there were any injuries because I care about the people that work in there.

*MAST-4-2:* First off, we want to make sure the employees involved in an accident are OK. We want to make sure they are not personally injured. Obviously, if there is injury, we would like the ambulatory services and the emergency first response to respond in calling 911. Given the fact that they are not injured, and they are OK, the next thing we would do is to make sure they are calmed down, and they are in a safe situation.

*MAST-4-3:* Well, the first questions would be "Are you OK? Are you injured?" and "Do you need medical assistance?" I do that because I need to know my employees are safe and they are OK, because it is important for me to know that.

*MAST-5-1:* The first questions would be "Is anybody injured?" and "Do they need medical attention?" That is the first thing I would do because personal safety is always number one! After the personal safety, we start to look into the accident and ask what happened, how it happened, what caused it to happen, what we can do to prevent it.

*MAST-5-2:* One of the first two questions would be "Are you safe? Did anybody get hurt?" That is the main thing. Then after that, I would want to know what preceded the accident. Even though the cam recorder in our vehicle records everything, I would want to know what the passenger and the driver were doing before and during the

accident to know if the co-pilot was assisting the pilot. I do that because I care about them. They are part of my team; they are part of my family. Anybody who works for me is my family.

*MAST-5-3:* I care for my employees' well-being. If one of my employees reports to me that the crew has been involved in a motor vehicle accident, the first questions I would ask would be "What happened? Is anybody injured? Where are you? Were there any other vehicles involved?" After, I would ask for other specifics, such as property damage.

*MAST-5-4:* In general, when they first report an accident, they are a little shaken up. I do not generally go through the formal fact-finding interview process. However, I would ask them if they need medical attention, where they are, and what they were doing when the accident occurred. I also want to make sure they have an accident report filled out by the police if they can.

I explored how group effort can facilitate safe driving performance in an organization. I asked the leaders and union-represented employees their opinions about any likely effects of good working relationships between leaders and their employees on safe driving performance improvement in organizations. Question 14 shown below helped in that investigation.

The participating leaders indicated that they believe good working relationships with the employees can make the drivers more accountable for damages to assigned vehicles. They also reported that a good working relationship could reduce stress among employees; it can help employees take better care of the vehicles and equipment assigned

to them through the development of a sense of ownership. Moreover, the leaders

indicated that good working relationships between the employees and them increase

workforce efficacy, improve overall communication effectiveness, and improve

teamwork.

Below are the answers the leaders whom I interviewed provided for question 14.

**MAST Question 14**:  In what way, if at all, do you think good working

relationships between leaders and drivers can influence

their safe driving performance?

*MAST-1-1:* Overall, I would say a good working relationship is very important. The

big factor is, more so than a relationship, is people's desire to be respectful of the

equipment they operate. If people are respectful of the equipment they operate, it

instills a sense of pride of ownership in them. They would look upon the vehicle as

something they need to or would want to keep in good condition and care.

Approaching human performance that way can be difficult because it involves

understanding people's mindset and internal wiring. However, just as vitally

important is accountability, or ability to hold people accountable for the conditions of

their vehicles and the manner in which they operate them. I do not think we are doing

a great job of that; I think there is more we can do in terms of holding people

accountable for the conditions of the vehicles.

*MAST-1-2:* I absolutely think a good working relationship is important in the

workplace. If you hate your boss, and if you are angry with your boss, you are going

to lose focus. Injuries and crashes will happen because you are not thinking about

safety. A safe workplace is a healthy workplace; a happy workplace is a productive workplace.

*MAST-1-3:* I would say yes because, when you have a good manager, and you have a good relationship with your boss, you tend to want to please that person. Moreover, if you know the expectations, you will want to meet those expectations in order to make your boss happy. I try to make sure that everybody knows that I truly care about them and their safety; that I am not out to catch them doing bad things. I want them to come to work, do a good job, and go home safe to their families. My employees are not afraid to tell me anything. They trust me as an individual; they trust my judgment, and I trust theirs too. I have a very good relationship with my employees. I send every one of them a card on their birthday. I also send them a Christmas card, and I bake gigantic batches of cookies every year.

*MAST-2-1:* A good working relationship builds good communication. I am very open with my people. I treat them with respect; they treat me with respect back. I don't micromanage how they work. I check up on them; I make sure they have the material they need, the information they need. And I leave them alone. I treat them with respect; they treat me the same way back.

*MAST-2-2:* You have to have a good relationship with your employees to have a mutual trust with them. If they do not trust you, they are not going to tell you certain things that might be important for you to know; they are going to hide stuff from you. Therefore, if you have that relationship with them, one-on-one relationship, they will feel that they can tell you everything; you will feel that you can be honest with them.

I would never ask my workers to do anything that I would not do myself. The truth is, when you start pushing people to do tasks they are uncomfortable doing, they become angry. When they are upset, they will have a little animosity toward you and they will not trust you.

*MAST-2-3:* I absolutely, 100%, think a good working relationship between a leader and his employees can help improve safe driving in organizations! If you are mad at your boss, or you and your supervisor are in a tumultuous relationship, you are going to be angry. When you are angry, you do not drive well, and you may be more aggressive on the road. I think the two have a direct correlation.

*MAST-3-1:* I absolutely think a good working relationship between leaders and employees can improve safe driving performance in organizations! I think having that personal relationship helps with all aspects of safety and safety behaviors of the employees, especially when nobody is looking. It helps not only set the expectations to the employees; it also helps develop that relationship of understanding and belongingness, a sense of ownership and responsibility. You know, to be true with you, driving safety is probably one of the areas where an employee can either destroy a company or make a company. If they are driving like a maniac, they may make an unsafe driving decision that leads to a motor vehicle accident, which can cost the company a million dollars. It is very important to instill and develop that culture of good working relationship between leaders and employees in any organizations.

*MAST-3-2:* I absolutely think a good working relationship between a boss and an employee can improve the performance of that employee at all levels, including

driving! I think not having a good relationship creates stress because people are more apt to take chances when they are under stress. Therefore, having that good relationship, I think, is crucial. You don't have to be best friends. It just means they know you got their back; they have your back. Because the fear thing only works so long. By that, I mean it is not healthy to ask people to do something because I am an authority. They need to be doing something because we agree that is the right thing to do. We can get that through good working relationships.

*MAST-3-3:* If I have a good relationship with the employees who work for me, I think we would be able to communicate more openly and more effectively. Therefore, if there is an issue that arises, whether it is about driving or not, I can have open and honest discussions with my employees. We can have that conversation because they will be comfortable to share with me any information that I might need to address that issue.

*MAST-4-1:* I think that any time you have a good relationship with an employee or a co-worker, it becomes easier to communicate expectations. A good working relationship makes it also a simpler task to have expectations carried out, whether it is safe driving behaviors or employee behavior in general. I think good rapport affects individuals' overall attitude.

*MAST-4-2:* I believe good relationships have an immediate and correlating effect on the success of any safety program, whether it is driving or personal safety. If you do not have a working relationship, it is all about following the rules; it is all about following work procedures. Therefore, employees will conclude that the only reason

leaders have rules and regulations is so they can catch them doing something wrong.

Another good thing a good relationship between leaders and employees does is it

assists in holding people accountable for their actions. I think accountability goes

hand in hand with a vibrant working relationship.

*MAST-4-3:* If I have a good relationship with my employees, they become

comfortable. Happy employees are safe and productive employees because they feel

wanted. They know I appreciate what they are doing. Therefore, they are going to go

the extra mile to stay safe, productive, and to do whatever I ask them to do. They are

going to focus on the task at hand; they will trust me. Moreover, if they have any

issues, they will come to me with them because we would have open conversations

about them. I think open communications between leaders and employees are the key

to success in anything.

*MAST-5-1:* To have a good working relationship has also its pros and cons. You are

not good because you forgive this person for the things that he has done wrong. You

still have to make sure your people are on the right path, and that they are doing

things right all the time, including driving, because it is part of our function. We can

have some relationship with the employees. However, we have to make sure that we

can draw that fine line where we can still enforce with them that they have to do the

right thing all the time, whether or not they like it.

*MAST-5-2:* Absolutely, because drivers take out their emotion on the vehicle they are

also driving. Therefore, if he is upset with a supervisor or a partner, he loses focus on

the driving and he can get aggressive, which he will inevitably use on the gas and
brake pedals. That person will not pull out of my yard like that.

*MAST-5-3:* If I have a good relationship with my employees, they will know that I
care for them. Therefore, when I tell them to drive safely, they will know it is not just
to avoid damaging company property; they will understand rather it is essentially for
their safety.

*MAST-5-4:* I absolutely think a good relationship can help, not just only for safe
driving. I think it would work with all performance. I think if you can get people to
like you, you can build strong relationships with them. Pleasing you becomes another
reason they want to do the right thing all the time, even when you are not there. Good
relationship with people creates positive work environment; people want to do the
right thing not just for them, but for the people that they work with and the people
they work for.

## Union-Represented Employees' Answers Regarding Empathy

Using the same procedure I followed earlier with the leaders, I investigated union-
represented employees' perceptions of their leaders' empathy and its potential influence
on drivers' safe operating performance. Therefore, question 2 from the workers' interview
guide addressed how the respondents deal with the requirements for driving a company
vehicle safely. Question 3 invited respondents to offer their views on leaders' expression
of their understanding of what it takes them to stay alert while driving a company car.
Question 14 asked the respondents about their perceived importance of good working

relationships with their leaders on their safe driving performance. I offer the answers to each of those interview questions in these next several pages.

First is the information that deals with the interactions I had with the research participants around interview question 2. In providing answers to question 2, shown below, most of the union-represented employees reported that driving a company vehicle could be a very dangerous task for them to perform. They revealed that the assignment to do it and the environment in which to do that job are often the two primary conditions that increase their chances to be involved in a motor vehicle accident. The majority of the participating union-represented employees stated that their supervisors gave them adequate basic safe driving training and awareness training to increase their confidence about driving safely for the company. However, two workers, UNION-1-1 and UNION-3-3, indicated that the job of driving for the organization does not expose drivers to any risks that are different from the ones they face when driving their personal vehicle. Below are the specifics in a few of the answers they provided.

> **UNION Question 2**: Do the driving requirements of your job expose you to environments of high risk for motor vehicle accidents? (If yes, how do you manage to stay safe on the road then? If no, why do you think so?)

*UNION-1-1:* No, I do not feel any particular exposure because the company has safe and defensive driving training programs from which we benefit a lot.

*UNION-1-2:* Oh yes, even when I am driving my personal small vehicle, it is possible, despite all the precautions I take, for me to get involved in an accident. That

is why I always try to think that I am the best driver on the road; all the other drivers are crazy to me. Therefore, when I get out there, I try to be very careful not to stay even too close to the car in front of me. I am always aware of my surroundings.

*UNION-1-3:* Yes, definitely! We do a lot of driving in urban areas; we do a lot of driving on major highways, and many times it is during rush hour. However, what I have learned through the years of driving is that I am driving not only myself, but I am driving for everyone else on the road. I learned this through not only the 24 years of driving for this organization, but also from many previous years of driving elsewhere. In other words, I am watching out for everybody else. I am watching out for what they are doing; I try to anticipate their next move, and pretty much, I am watching for anything I can while I am driving. There is a so big probability for a vehicle to pull out unexpectedly that I always try to make eye contact with people, and just watch everything on the road. So far, this method has been very successful.

*UNION-2-1:* Oh yes, there are many risks that I deal with when I drive a company car. For example, the vehicle I drive may vary in size, shape, and configuration. One day I may drive a simple pick-up truck, another day I may have to drive a much larger vehicle with a trailer attachment. Therefore, I have to be aware of what vehicle I am going to operate, and the particular hazards associated with operating them.

*UNION-2-2:* I would say the more you drive, the higher your risk. In addition, we drive all day from job to job; we also work long hours too. I manage to stay safe on the road by staying alert, by paying attention, and by trying to minimize backing up. Many times we are alone. The kind of trucks we drive, we cannot look back through

the window or anything; we only have the mirrors as guides. Therefore, we have to go slow; sometimes we have to get out of the vehicle and look around. If we have a partner with us, we use that person as spotter.

*UNION-3-1:* Yes, absolutely! The dangers are even more so there for us because we are evolving in the contracting world where every assignment can be in a different geographic area within the United States. In addition, we help other electric utility companies as mutual aid and respond to many natural disasters, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, ice storms, and other winter storms. Very often, we are in unfamiliar territories. Therefore, to stay safe, the name of the game is keeping concentration.

*UNION-3-2:* Actually, every time you are behind the wheel and on the road, you are running the risk of being in an accident. The only thing to do is just to keep your eyes open and practice defensive driving; that is what I do to stay safe on the road.

*UNION-3-3:* No, I do not feel the driving requirements of my job expose me to environments of high risk for motor vehicle accidents. To me, it is just normal. What I do to stay safe on the road at work no different from what I would do for any other jobs or while driving on personal time. I just drive defensively.

*UNION-5-1:* There are many risks on the road. However, to stay safe, I just use the defensive driving techniques I learned here. I drive slowly. I do not rely on the other employee in the vehicle to help me drive safe, even though we are supposed to have four eyes on the road. In addition, I use help to back the vehicle when I need to, but that is it.

*UNION-5-2:* Without a doubt! Continually, every time I get behind the steering wheel of a car, I deal with the possibility of getting in a motor vehicle accident while at work. However, I am a safe driver; I am careful. I make sure the car I drive is in good operating condition. I make sure I adjust all the mirrors in the truck. In addition, I familiarize myself with driving in big cities, and be aware of all distracting situations. I don't rush to get anywhere. I obey the traffic signals and deal with the traffic flow. In other words, I just make sure I am always aware of my surroundings. Awareness of just what is going on and how the other person is driving is a big thing.

*UNION-5-3:* There is always a chance when on the road for something to happen. The only thing to do is just slow down; pay a little more attention; be aware of the traffic patterns, and move with the pace of traffic. Ultimately, be ready to react whenever necessary to stay out of trouble.

Next, I present the information I collected through the inquiry about the specific actions the respondents observed their leaders had taken to show they know what it takes to stay alert on the road. In responding to question 3, most of the union-represented employees disclosed that their leaders empathized in most instances where they or their colleagues expressed their concerns about safe occupational driving necessities. However, a few union-represented employees also said that their supervisors or managers do not understand the logistics of what it takes them to stay alert on the road. For the most part, the workers said that their supervisors and or managers had shown conclusively that they understood what the employees went through to be safe and professional drivers for the company.

In effect, several of the employees with whom I spoke indicated that most of their leaders had progressed through the ranks to their leadership occupations; therefore, they communicate clearly their expectations. Other employees reported that their supervisors showed understanding even when they have been in a motor vehicle accident. Even more said that the trust-based relationship they have with their leaders makes them autonomous and the owners of their driving tasks. The respondents also told me that their supervisors and managers conduct frequent safety meetings with them to address safe driving topics to show they know what it takes employees to be reliable and professional drivers. The union-represented employees expressed their opinions in response to question 3, shown below, as follow.

**UNION Question 3**:  How do your leaders show they understand what it takes to be a safe occupational driver?

*UNION-1-1:* They understand because, for the most part, they progressed to their supervisory position from a lineman position. They give us useful help when we are in the field. For example, they increase crew size to ensure that we perform certain tasks, such as hauling very long poles, safely. They also show understanding when we get in a not-at-fault motor vehicle accident.

*UNION-1-2:* Sometimes, they give me the impression that they do not know what is going on out there. When we get into an accident, even when we are not at fault, too often they come up to us as if we went out there looking for trouble. Even when another vehicle rear-ends ours, it is as if we did not do enough to avoid the accident.

*UNION-1-3:* I think they do understand what it takes to be safe on the road. I think they know that it is a difficult task to drive safely on the roads here in our electric service territory because they bring this topic up many times in safety discussions. Just about every day, our leaders have a safety stand-down with the people of my group on the accidents that happened throughout the company, and a lot of the safety focus is on driving.

*UNION-2-1:* I personally feel that the supervisors put out the necessary recommendations for the workforce. I do not think that all the supervisors understand what we are dealing with in the change we constantly make in the vehicles we drive in one workweek. However, I do know that they are promoting safety; they talk about it regularly at safety meetings.

*UNION-2-3:* I think they want the vehicle accidents to go down; I am not sure they understand how to get there. I think they do not understand, logistically, what we are going through and what it takes to drive utility vehicles safely in our congested urban work areas.

*UNION-3-1:* Yes. Our leaders constantly go over DOT regulations, winter safety driving tips, and the rules of the organization regarding driving, especially distracted driving policy.

*UNION-3-2:* Absolutely, they have all been through the same situation, using the same vehicles and the same roads when they were in similar positions before being a supervisor. In addition, they give safe driving tips using company publications.

*UNION-3-3:* I think they understand what we are doing. We have safety instructors;

we have safety classes, defensive driving courses, and stuff like that. We are sure they

want us to be safe. I never felt like my supervisors want to put us in bad positions.

*UNION-5-1:* The leaders of my organization know what it takes us to stay safe on the

road. They show it by trusting us and not calling us to ask us if we are to the job site

yet, even when we have to detour from the planned route. They give us latitude and a

lot of freedom. More than anything else, they trust us. No one ever asked me where I

am. For example, right now I am here talking to you while I have a boss waiting for

me. He probably will call me in the next 15 minutes; nevertheless, I am here while he

is waiting.

*UNION-5-2:* To a degree, they do because they always remind us of what we need to

be aware of, and what the procedures are for driving safely.

*UNION-5-3:* I would say they do. Communication here is good. Usually, even if it is

someone who is just your peer, he can still be a leader as long as he knows how to

relay a message for us to pay attention to what we are doing. Our leaders keep the

safe messages going among all of us.

Finally, I present the information collected for the last of the three interview

questions that addressed leaders' empathy in relation to improving safe driving

performance in an organization. In reviewing the answers the responding union-

represented employees provided, I noticed only very few of them reported that the quality

of their working relationship with leaders has no bearing on their safe driving

performance at work. Most of the union-represented employees indicated that a good

working relationship with leaders helps them stay alert on the road. A good working relationship with leaders reduces the distractions of unpleasant and stressful interactions with their supervisors or managers. In addition, the union-represented employees said that when the working relationship is good with their leaders, it increases their willingness to accept directives and even reprimands from their leaders.

Here is how they expressed their views on the potential influence of good working relations between employees and their leaders on safe driving performance improvement in an organization.

**UNION Question 14**: In what way, if at all, do you think good working relationships between leaders and drivers can influence their safe driving performance?

*UNION-1-1:* To me it does not really matter to me how tight the relationship between my supervisor and me. I will still drive safe because, after all, when I am on the road, I do not drive safe for them; I drive for myself. The relationship right now is good between my supervisor and me. My safe driving performance would still be the same if our relationship were unpleasant. I do not think a healthier relationship between my leaders and I would affect or change in any way my current safe driving performance.

*UNION-1-2:* I do not think so. A supervisor never comes to me personally to congratulate me for my driving improvement. I still drive safely anyway. I am not asking for a lot; even if the supervisor said "Have a nice day" once, it would make me feel good a little bit. As a human being, you want somebody to acknowledge your efforts.

*UNION-1-3:* You know, years ago, I would probably have said no; however, now I think I would say yes. I think if you have a good rapport or a good relationship with your manager or your immediate supervisor, that just puts you in a different frame of mind. You are more open to everything that your leaders keep putting out there in the name of security. For example, all of the safety videos they regularly show, and safety topics they keep bringing to our attention. If there is a sound working relationship between your supervisor and you, you are just more open to absorbing what they contain, and follow the suggestions they offer. Not so much the laws, but you are more receptive to the ideas when you are in a healthy relationship with your manager or your supervisor. I think this is a definite yes for me; I think having a solid working relationship with a supervisor or a manager has a positive consequence.

*UNION-2-1:* Yes, a good relationship with a supervisor does affect safe driving performance of an employee. I will just give an example. It is common in our job to go out to a particular vehicle you do not use every day and find the fender ripped off, and nobody returned it to Maintenance so we can have it repaired. They did not tell a supervisor that they were in an incident because they were frightened to talk to that manager—not to tarnish their records and to avoid the ordeals that come with reporting that accident. I have never had a problem with that; I believe in honesty because stuff happens. I always felt very comfortable with my managers, enough to tell them something happened. I would indicate that I am sorry, and that would be the end of it. I know there would be no ramifications for that accident. They would not punish me although something unfortunate happened.

*UNION-2-2:* I think that attitude is everything. If you do not have a good relationship with your supervisor, it can distract you; it can take your mind off what you are doing; it can send you out with the wrong attitude. I think that attitude has a lot to do with driving. In addition, good communication holds good relationships together. When leaders communicate with and treat employees the way they would want the employees to treat them, they send those employees out with a better attitude and state of mind.

*UNION-2-3:* Good relationship with supervisors helps employees maintain good concentration on the road; less distracted. I think yes, good working relationship matters a lot!

*UNION-3-1:* I think if you do not have a good working relationship with your supervisors or your managers that can put many distractions in your mind. Therefore, instead of concentrating on the task, whether it is driving or not, you are thinking about the frustrations you have with your supervisors. Good working relationship with supervisors creates a healthy work environment, which I think helps unquestionably in driving safely.

*UNION-3-2:* Well, I am a firm believer that a positive reinforcement brings positive results. Yes, I feel that when leaders give positive feedback, this never had adverse effects on the performance of their employees. In addition, positive reinforcement creates good relationships between a boss and the employees; it creates a positive work environment. When there is a positive work atmosphere, the mindset is positive, and the employees are going to try to do whatever job better.

*UNION-3-3:* Yes, I believe that a good working relationship would certainly have a positive effect on an employee's safe driving performance on the road. It will have an effect on the entire performance of that employee because I think if you have a positive influence on your employees, they are going to have a positive reaction on everything they do, including driving.

*UNION-5-1:* There is a direct correlation to that; there sure is. If you have a healthy working relationship with your boss, and there is trust in that relationship, you will do excellent work, and there will be a paycheck exchange once a week for that work. You do not want to damage that relationship.

*UNION-5-2:* Oh surely, if the relationship between a leader and the employees is a stressful and tense relationship, it is going to affect the employees' driving in the form of mental distraction. I think if you have a good relationship with your supervisor and you feel that your supervisor is impartial, this could influence what you are doing, including driving.

*UNION-5-3:* Yes, I think that a good working relationship between supervisors or managers and employees can help improve safe driving in organizations. It would inevitably improve communication. As a result, everyone may be able to learn something, and every time you can do that, it is always better for everyone.

**Summary**

Chapter 4 included data analysis from the 28 research participants I interviewed for the study from five U.S. electric utility companies. The demographic information I collected about the research participants included occupational responsibilities, time in

position, number of reports, and the Bargaining Unit representing the union workers. In this chapter, I reported the results from the data gathered, organized, coded, and analyzed through manual techniques and NVivo version 10 from the in-depth recorded interview sessions I had with each research participant.

The in-depth interviews I used allowed for abundance and depth in the way I interpreted the information I collected. I grouped the results into six fixed sections, namely four elements of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) and two aspects of emotional intelligence (empowerment and empathy) within the context of improvement of safe driving performance in an organization.

Using the frame offered by Maxwell (2013), Patton (2014), and Leedy and Ormrod (2010) for interview-guided qualitative research to conduct the analysis of the data collected for the study, I found the following results in the answers provided by the research participants:

- Incentive programs or conditional rewards are inefficient mean to inspire occupational drivers to increase their safe driving performance; individual recognition for exceptional driving performance, such as, 'thank you' can help motivate drivers to be safe on the road.

- Individual and group acknowledgements can help occupational drivers to be safer on the road.

- Being able to support oneself and the family members, such as spouse and kids, is one of the reasons why occupational drivers drive safe at work.

- Autonomy, experience on the job, and suitable training can help regulate efficiently how reliably occupational drivers will drive safely at work.

- A lack of leaders' empathy and or understanding for employees, including occupational drivers, can lead the latter to feel in a transactional deal with the former and the organization, thereby, only do what it takes to keep the job.

Chapter 5 includes general discussion of the research, social change implications, conclusions, and areas for future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

## Introduction

Chapter 5 offers an overview of how and why I conducted this study. In this chapter, I summarize the two research questions that guided this study and how each of them contributed to the processes I followed to complete the study. I include my interpretation of the data and the conclusions of the study based on the results discussed in Chapter 4. I also present the implications of this study for social change. I materialize that contribution to social change by showing the ways in which emotional intelligence of transformational leaders can be vital in the improvement of safe driving in U.S. electric utility companies.

In Chapter 5, I present the recommendations for action that emerged from the study. There is also an indication of how the conclusions might address some of the issues around work-related motor vehicle accidents in the U.S. electric utility industry. I also provide recommendations for further investigations of key areas that may need more explorations to help improve safe occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. In the last section of this chapter, I show how I addressed the lack of personal experiences, biased ideas, and background in the study.

## Interpretations of the Research Findings

I conducted this qualitative interview-driven study to have a better understanding of the influence that transformational leadership may have on the improvement of safe driving within U.S. electric utility companies. To identify the five U.S. electric utility companies from which I selected the 28 electric utility workers who had contributed to

the study, I used purposive sampling and snowball sampling. The data used for the study were gleaned from recorded in-depth interviews with 28 electric utility employees, comprising 16 management personnel and 12 union-represented workers. The interviews averaged 45 minutes. I transcribed the interviews verbatim, then categorized, coded, and analyzed the data collected from the interviews using manual techniques and NVivo. I completed the data analysis using the qualitative data analysis techniques proposed by Leedy and Ormrod (2010), Maxwell (2013), and Patton (2014).

The two research questions that guided this investigation were the following:

- How does transformational leadership influence safe driving in organizations?

- How does leaders' emotional intelligence influence safe driving in organizations?

The results for the Research Question 1 essentially came from the responses of the participating leaders and union-represented employees considering the four elements of transformational leadership. Two questions from the interview guide for leaders and union workers addressed each of the four elements of transformational leadership. Eight interview questions for each group contributed to the texture of the results for the Research Question 1. The 16 participating leaders used different arguments and explanations to indicate how they felt transformational leadership can certainly help in improving safe driving in their organizations. Many leaders opposed and/or rejected the value of a few vital parameters that the interview questions addressed, such as incentive programs and individual recognition for safe driving. However, the majority of the

research participants recognized that idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration are fundamental to sustain safe driving improvement in an organization.

**Idealized Influence and Safe Occupational Driving Improvement**

Sustained safe driving performance improvement is the vision all leaders with a vehicle fleet aspire to instill in their group (Evans, 2004). However, Kotter (2001) argued, "Achieving a vision requires motivating and inspiring—keeping people moving in the right direction, despite major obstacles to change, by appealing to basic but often untapped human needs, values, and emotions" (p. 86). The results that addressed the first construct of transformational leadership, idealized influence, revealed a vital connectivity between leaders' dependable interface with employees and safe occupational driving performance improvement. Researchers such as Barton, Bergeron, Marchand, Tardif, and Wilde (2001) have found that

> Transport fleets implement incentive programs to achieve one or more of the following general objectives: to improve safety within the fleet; to enhance productivity and efficiency; to improve employee retention; to identify training needs related to safety and productivity; to intensify the safety and productivity culture within the firm. (p. 2)

As indicated above, recognizing safe drivers through incentive programs have the potential to improve overall safe driving performance in the workplace. In addition, such programs may also boost employees' productivity and efficiency; increase their desire to stay with their organization. Moreover, employees will be comfortable expressing their

worries about the factors that have been preventing them to perform to their maximum potential. Therefore, with the implementation of the suitable incentive programs, leaders of organization may have the opportunity to identify training needs related to safety and productivity, thereby, intensifying the safety and productivity culture within their organization.

The respondents indicated that they had no direct influence on safe driving performance; yet, all of the leaders considered group recognition for general safety vital. Most leaders and workers said that there are no rewards for exceptional driving or outstanding safe driving improvement. While this finding is consistent with Fang, and Gerhart, (2012) who indicated that pay for individual performance may undermine employees' intrinsic interest, thereby having little or no positive net influence on their performance; Wang, Oh, Courtright, and Colbert, (2011) indicated that transformational leadership enhances the effects of contingent reward when forecasting individual-level contextual performance and team-level performance. As a result, while there are many advantages for leaders of organization to use incentive programs to inspire performance improvement, it is often temporary and reward-conditioned response on the part of the employees; therefore it is important for leaders to sort the effects of an incentive program during the evaluation of its effectiveness (Gerhart & Fang, 2014).

**Inspirational Motivation and Safe Occupational Driving Improvement**

Leaders of organizations must align employees to organizational goals (Goleman, 1998). However, safety motivation, according to Neal and Griffin (2006), refers to

An individual's willingness to exert effort to enact safety behaviors and the

valence associated with those behaviors. Individuals should be motivated to

comply with safe working practices and to participate in safety activities if they

perceive that there is a positive safety climate in the workplace. (p. 947)

In the context of this study, all research participants exhibited the will to put forth

the effort necessary to create a work environment or display behaviors that will promote

safe driving. In that regards, leaders and workers said that an inspirational motivation

plays a significant role in their safe driving performance on company time. The leaders

stated that they did all it took to make sure that their workers were safe; they also

reported that their decisions and actions certainly helped their employees to stay alert on

the road. The union-represented employees also noted that many factors inspired them to

remain careful drivers at work. Therefore, inspirational motivation was an influential

factor that could add to the improvement of safe occupational driving.

**Intellectual Stimulation and Safe Occupational Driving Improvement**

Other researchers have found that to achieve organizational goals, most leaders

have always striven to maximize the performance of their employees independently of

the size or structure of their organizations (García-Morales et al., 2012). The research

participants recognized that they could reach safe occupational driving goals with

appropriate savoir faire and precise knowledge of what is needed for their achievement.

Almost all the participating leaders and union workers agreed that knowledge and skills

are vital to sustaining safe driving achievements in an organization. They stated that the

manner in which people get such knowledge does not matter; it could be through

experience or in the form of formal training sessions or awareness programs. As a result, the leaders with whom I spoke reported that they had many types of safe driving training opportunities for their employees. The union workers also reported that the information they received in terms of formal and awareness training helped them stay alert and aware of their surroundings while driving for the company.

**Individualized Consideration and Safe Occupational Driving Improvement**

Researchers have always supported the idea that when leaders recognize their employees individually for their performance, it helps the latter excel in anything they do for the organization. For example, Stajkovic and Luthans (2001) noted

Regarding social recognition, the more workers receive it, the more likely they were to foresee it as suggestive of some forthcoming desired tangible outcome. Thus, although not resulting in an instant material benefit, social recognition was likely perceived as a latent variable potentially indicating, in this setting, a pay raise, a transfer to a better job, or a transfer to a more desired shift. Cognitively bringing the anticipated future into the present by forethought in turn motivated workers to further pursue behaviors that received such social support. (p. 587)

In other words, according to Stajkovic and Luthans (2001) the expectations of reward for outstanding performance may create a state of mind where employees will do their best on the job based on their career objectives. In this work setting, employees feel they can achieve their goals if they perform exceptionally. As a result, employees with a vision of specific career targets with their organization will excel if their performance will contribute to reaching that goal.

The participating leaders showed that no form of individual recognition program or practice for outstanding safe driving is available in any of the five U.S. electric utility companies that participated in the study. However, participating leaders indicated that they had such programs for groups with exceptional overall safety performance; they admitted to not having recognition programs specifically for safe driving. This lack of personal appreciation for safe drivers was pervasive in the responses obtained because the leaders felt that it was unnecessary; they felt that safe driving was an expectation that comes with the job. However, the majority of participating union workers stated that improved recognition would indeed increase their alertness on the road despite not being the primary reason for them to drive safely. To a large extent, this feature of transformational leaders was revealed to be a significant factor of influence for safe driving performance improvement in an organization.

**Emotional Intelligence and Safe Driving Occupational Improvement**

The analysis of the data described in Chapter 4 also allowed understanding that leaders' style could be a determining factor in how they will interact with employees. For example, the results about how emotional intelligence of transformational leaders could affect safe professional driving indicated that a leader's style contributes largely in defining employees' work environment and power delegation to employees. Chapter 4 also revealed that both leaders and union-represented employees believed firmly that it was vital for professional drivers to be autonomous in any decisions they have to make to stay safe on the road. Further, the two groups consistently agreed that a strong relationship between leaders and employees could facilitate successful accomplishment

of any task, including safe driving. The findings in those two sections were consistent with researchers' results in studies of the contribution of leaders to organizational security.

While empowerment of employees appeared to play a significant role in improving drivers' performance, and both leaders and union workers agreed to put forth all effort to share decision making authority, empathy seemed not to be a crucial concern for participating leaders I interviewed. For example, only *MAST-5-2* seemed to understand that for drivers to stay safe and focused on the road, they must have put forth tedious effort, such as a lot of long hours of learning and practice to operate the combination trucks safely; they must also invest personal interest, creativity, and initiative, as well as possess a lot of integrity, extreme concern for the public, a strong commitment to safe driving," and so on. None of the other participating leaders' answers seemed to display empathy; they were more about business facts and figures, and operational and financial targets to reach. As suggested by researchers regarding primary characteristics of leaders' empathy, among the answers provided by most leaders I interviewed there was no display of accurate detection and understanding of, decision of leaders to entertain a two-way emotional connection to inspire occupational drivers, or to understand their feelings (Humphrey 2013, 103); they were mostly about business.

For instance, Conchie and Donald (2009) found that when leaders build strong social bonds with followers, they develop mutual trust that leads to a higher involvement in safety practices. Conchie (2013) noted that better engagement in safety behaviors adds significantly to the reduction of accidents in organizations. Moreover, all research

participants said that leaders' sensitivity towards the members of their group helps improve the performance of the group. When leaders empathize with employees, they can implicitly stimulate superior performance in their followers (Cherniss, 2010).

### Summary of Interpretations of Research Findings

Specific to the answers obtained from all 28 research participants, the evidence from Chapter 4 showed that transformational leadership could be very accommodating in the improvement of safe driving performance in organizations. It was clear that the characteristics of transformational leaders can contribute significantly to the betterment of communication, the individualization of performance, and consequently to the expansion of workers' commitment to organizational goals. Additionally, both leaders and union-represented employees said that safe driving is necessary for both the organization and the employees.

Transformational leadership features promote mutual collaboration between leaders and employees, which could help in accomplishing any organizational safe driving goals. Moreover, the results regarding the potential influence of leaders' emotional intelligence on safe driving improvement in an organization showed evidence that leaders' empathy can improve safe driving performance in U.S. electric utility organizations.

The resulting data suggested that transformational leadership could lead to a safer occupational driving performance in the U.S. electric utility industry. The frame used to analyze the data collected for this study came from a combination of motivation theory (Maslow, 1943, 1999) and transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985).

The ideas from Maslow (1943, 1999) used in this study revolved around the link among human psychology, motivation, and performance achievement.

Those ideas helped put in perspective how emotional intelligence can increase transformational leaders' ability to identify the key motivating factors that would improve U.S. electric utility drivers' safe driving behaviors accurately. Burns's ideas evolved around the core elements of transformational leaders; I used them to understand the way they may affect work environment and followers' performance improvement in driving company vehicles.

## Implications for Social Change

The literature on the topic of safety leadership is continually increasing. Many researchers (Barling et al., 2002; Conchie 2013; Conchie & Donald 2009; Conchie et al., 2011; Conchie et al., 2012; De Koster et al., 2011; Inness et al., 2010; May et al., 2011) have explored how transformational leaders can condition the behaviors and performance of  followers in relation to organizational safety. This study undeniably adds to that body of knowledge; however, conceivably there are many other factors that this study did not address that may have critical influence on safe occupational driving.

This study explored the importance of incentive for safe driving through the idealized influence constructs of transformational leadership and revealed a direct yet latent relationship between the two elements in the U.S. electric utility industry. In addition, it is always great to have a work setting where employees feel comfortable with their supervisors and/or managers in working toward the achievement of any

organizational goals. Such a relationship emerges when leaders nurture employees'

effective commitment to the organization through transformation and trust (Bass, 1985).

It is always great for co-workers to live in harmony, with empathy, and with

enough knowledge and understanding of their surroundings to live and perform as a

group. Improving safe occupational driving through transformational leadership could

indeed bring about positive social change as other U.S. electric utility leaders may apply

similar approaches to improve safe driving performance in their organizations. More

sustained achievement could result from a much safer workforce; this in return could

make for a safer society, which this leadership style may help promote.

### Recommendations for Action

The hope is that many leaders from the 200 electric utility industry companies in

the United States will believe that the findings of this study present valuable information

that could eventually help in the improvement of safe, professional driving in their

organizations. In addition, the hope is also that leaders in the U.S. electric utility industry

find the results of this study useful to improve and/or maintain a sustained level of

reliable and professional driving performance in their organization.

Moreover, the new information regarding empowerment and empathy has

significant psychological value to union workers. Therefore, managers and or supervisors

may consider such factors as vital grounds for future safety-related decision making.

Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) noted that leaders should allow followers the opportunity

to use their creativity to contribute actively to decisions that influence their future and the

success of their company. Perhaps the results and conclusions of this study will increase

that emphasis in a meaningful way for U.S. electric utility managers and/or supervisors and for union workers when their goal is to improve safe, professional driving performance.

## Recommendations for Further Study

The population for this study came from a much-dispersed group, from Greensburg in Pennsylvania to Kansas City in Missouri. However, the information collected may not represent a globalized view of the influence of transformational leadership on safe driving performance in the U.S. electric utility industry. Another aspect related to the research methodology is the fact that qualitative researcher's bias and inaccurate interpretations of qualitative data collected may be a source of misrepresentation of the reality. Therefore, a quantitative study could offer a more direct representation of the potential influence or impact of this leadership style on safe occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry.

## Reflection on the Researcher's Experience

Conducting this study was an enjoyable experience. The hurdles in the selection of the research participants and scheduling of interview meetings were different and remarkable. Both the participating leaders and union-represented employees expressed deep passion about safety on the job and on the road. The task of analyzing and interpreting the data collected for this study presented a significant challenge not to express personal connections with the research participants during the interviews. In addition, my involvement as Training and Development Specialist for an electric utility

company made it even harder to remain neutral in the interactions with the research participants.

At times, it was also very difficult to have interviews done because of the uncertainties of the electrical field of work. Once, I had to drive more than two hours, and I had to reschedule the interview meetings I had that day. I found out too late that there had been a rainstorm the night before and that the potential participating union workers were performing emergency assignments. During the transcription of the interviews, it was a bit difficult to make out the content of certain sections of a research participant's answer. It took up to ten rewinds to finally get the sentences right.

Future studies on the topic of safe occupational driving are necessary; there is a broad undiscovered knowledge that could offer many opportunities to the U.S. electric utility industry. I hope that the dissemination of this study through the people in the profession, or perhaps other methods or channels, will lead to more prospective research initiatives. I also hope that other researchers find other aspects of the subject that they can investigate because they read the findings and recommendations of this study.

## Summary and Conclusion

This interview-driven qualitative study explored how transformational leaders may inspire occupational drivers to improve their safe driving behavior and increase their awareness of external factors conducive to motor vehicle accidents. This study allowed me to have an understanding on how transformational leaders can add to the progress of safe driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. I found that many of the interviewed leaders have not been recognizing their employees for their outstanding safe driving

performance; union-represented employees stated that, more than the instant gratification of a contingent reward, individual recognition, such as, thank you, would make them more aware of their safe driving behavior.

In addition, the majority of the research participants noted that knowledge, whether in the form of appropriate training or time in position, must be paired with autonomy for occupational drivers to be efficient if driving safely. The combination of four key features of transformational leadership, leaders' empathy and drivers' empowerment have the potential to improve safe driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. These findings emerged from a comprehensive investigation of the likely influence of transformational leaders in the conception and implementation of safety cultures based on empathy was done through a combination of snowball and purposive sampling approaches.

To address the specifics of each of the two groups of management and union-represented U.S. electric utility employees, two 14-item interview questionnaires were used. The 14 interview questions addressed to each of the two groups of U.S. electric utility workers inquired about perceptions on how transformational leaders who used the two aspects of emotional intelligence could help improving safe driving in organizations. The participating leaders and union workers came from different backgrounds and had an extensive range of occupation within their respective companies. Moreover, the study was able to shed some light on the extent to which transformational leaders could help improving safe driving in U.S. electric utility organizations.

A dichotomic view emerged during the analysis of the data collected. Most union workers said that friendly rapport with leaders had no bearing on their safe driving performance. Nonetheless, they confessed unanimously that it is paramount to feel noted and recognized at work for exceptional performance. Moreover, those research participants also reported that their performance would be steadier if their supervisors and/or managers valued their marginal efforts and inputs, or if supervisors and/or managers showed that the employees' contributions are significant to the overall performance and success of the group.

Subordinates have a voice that leaders must give a chance to emerge by empowering them, giving them liberty to use creativity in decision making processes, and ensuring  their integration in decision making processes that are meaningful to the organization. As Clarke (2010); and Harms and Credé (2010) indicated, given this wide variety of positive outcomes associated with transformational leadership, the development of transformational leaders in organizations should be a priority. U.S. electric utility companies may be able to use this leadership style and emotional intelligence to develop strategies that empower and grow followers to contribute mutually to improve safe driving in the U.S. electric utility industry.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire for Union-Represented Employees

1. Please tell me about your occupation, how long you have been in this classification, and if you drive a company vehicle.

2. Do the driving requirements of your job expose you to environments of high risk for motor vehicle accidents? (If yes, how do you manage to stay safe on the road then? If no, why do you think so?)

3. How do your leaders show they understand what it takes to be a safe occupational driver?

4. Tell me about the last decision that you had to make without the approval of your supervisor or manager.

5. Let's say you have an assignment to do, and you have to drive to the job site to get it done; in what circumstances can you tell your boss you will not be able to perform that task that day?

6. Describe for me a time where your leader made you feel proud to be a safe driver.

7. How does driving safely at work help both your family and your organization?

8. What makes you want to stay safe on the road when you are driving at work (or commuting with a company vehicle)?

9. What kind of driver would you like your colleagues and your supervisors to remember you as after you retire and why?

10. Please describe for me the kind of work conditions that would make you want to learn more about how to drive safely at work.

11. What safe driving skills development and enhancement training programs are

   available for you as a driver?

12. Please describe to me how your effort to drive safely contributes to the

   performance of your group.

13. Has your safe driving performance been acknowledged publicly among your

   peers? (If yes, how did such public recognition inspire you to stay safe on the

   road?)

14. In what way, if at all, do you think good relationships between leaders and drivers

   can influence their safe driving performance?

   .

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Management Personnel

1. Please tell me about your occupation, how long you have been in this classification, how many people you oversee, and if you drive a company vehicle.

2. In general, your employees drive a company vehicle every day, right? How do you estimate what it takes those drivers to stay safe on the road?

3. What comes to your mind first when you hear one of your employees got into a motor vehicle accident?

4. When it comes to driving, what types of decisions do you allow your employees to make without asking a supervisor or a manager?

5. Please describe an instance where one of your employees did not complete an assignment because they felt the driving conditions were unsafe.

6. What incentive programs are there in your organization to motivate employees to drive safely?

7. How do you make employees with outstanding safe driving performance feel proud of their achievements?

8. How do you inspire your employees to stay focused on their driving assignments even when things may not be going well in their personal life?

9. How do you help your drivers to overcome the constant pressure of safe driving requirements?

10. Please tell me what kind of work environment is available for your drivers to learn more about how to drive safely for the organization.

11. What safe driving skills development and enhancement training programs are available for your drivers?

12. How often do you let your drivers know one-on-one that you sincerely appreciate their effort to drive safely for your organization?

13. How do you make it known to the group that an employee has an outstanding safe driving performance?

14. In what way, if at all, do you think good relationships between leaders and drivers can influence their safe driving performance?

Appendix C: Notification of Approval to Conduct Research

From: **IRB** <IRB@waldenu.edu>
Date: Mon, Jul 28, 2014 at 11:09 AM
Subject: Notification of Approval to Conduct Research - Mackington Joseph
To: "Mackington Joseph (mackington.joseph@waldenu.edu)"
<mackington.joseph@waldenu.edu>
Cc: "John Latham (john.latham@waldenu.edu)" <john.latham@waldenu.edu>, IRB
<IRB@waldenu.edu>

Dear Mr. Joseph,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "Exploring the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Safe Occupational Driving in the American Electric Utility Industry."

Your approval # is 07-24-14-0181362. You will need to reference this number in your dissertation and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail is the IRB approved consent form. Please note, if this is already in an on-line format, you will need to update that consent document to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on July 23, 2015. One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

Your IRB approval is contingent upon your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the IRB application document that has been submitted as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university. Your IRB approval is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, your IRB approval is suspended. Absolutely NO participant recruitment or data collection may occur while a student is not actively enrolled.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within 1 week of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes prior to receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB's approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research.

When you submitted your IRB application, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within 1 week of their occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained at the IRB section of the Walden web site or by emailing irb@waldenu.edu: http://researchcenter.waldenu.edu/Application-and-General-Materials.htm

Researchers are expected to keep detailed records of their research activities (i.e., participant log sheets, completed consent forms, etc.) for the same period of time they retain the original data. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Please note that this letter indicates that the IRB has approved your research. You may not begin the research phase of your dissertation, however, until you have received the **Notification of Approval to Conduct Research** e-mail. Once you have received this notification by email, you may begin your data collection.

Both students and faculty are invited to provide feedback on this IRB experience at the link below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkJMUx43pZegKlmdiQ_3d_3d

Sincerely,
Libby Munson
Research Ethics Support Specialist
Office of Research Ethics and Compliance
Email: irb@waldenu.edu
Fax: 626-605-0472

Office address for Walden University:
100 Washington Avenue South
Suite 900
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Information about the Walden University Institutional Review Board, including instructions for application, may be found at this link: http://researchcenter.waldenu.edu/Office-of-Research-Ethics-and-Compliance-IRB.htm

Appendix D: Cooperation Letters

September 5, 2014

Mackington Joseph
1476 Pennington Road
Ewing, New Jersey 08618

Dear Mackington,

Pursuant to our recent discussions, I am pleased to accept your request for data collection to support your doctoral study, "Exploring the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Safe Occupational Driving in the American Electric Utility Industry." It is my understanding that data collection will consist of interview-derived information from approximately six individuals within the organization. Further, it is my understanding that all collected information will be held in strict confidence and not attributed to by name in any published material.

I will be working with you directly during the data collection process and am your sole point of contact for coordinating interviews or otherwise requesting information.

I look forward to working with you.

Truly,

Director
Safety, Industrial Hygiene, and Fire Prevention
, Inc.

Mr. Mackington Joseph
1476 Pennington Road
Ewing, New Jersey, 08618

Letter of Cooperation for Future Data Collection

Dear Mr. Joseph,

Mr. ▮▮▮▮▮▮, Regional President of ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮, has agreed to your request for data collection to support your doctoral research; "Exploring the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Safe Occupational Driving in the American Electric Utility Industry" here at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ We look forward to working with you in the data collection process. Additionally, we will be anxious to review the results of your study along with potential recommendations to continuously improve our overall safe driving culture!

Once you have obtained approval from the IRB please feel free to contact me to schedule the various interviews identified in your data collection process.

Sincerely,
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

GM, Regional Operations Support

Signature

July 11, 2014

Mr. Joseph:

This email on J⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛'s behalf is written permission to use ⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛ as one of the 5 electric utilities that will comprise your study.

Please reach out to me for the next steps.

John D. O'Connell

July 10, 2014

Mr. Joseph Mackington
Training & Development Specialist – Engineering
Edison Training & Development Center
234 Pierson Avenue
Edison, NJ   08837-3122

Dear Mr. Mackington:

I am in receipt of your e-mail request to use F                        s Company as one of the five U.S. electric utility companies that you would like to utilize in your doctoral study.

Please accept this "Letter of Cooperation" granting you the permission to collect your data, as well as contacting members of the             workforce to conduct your study.

Thank you for selecting             for your doctoral study.

Very truly yours,
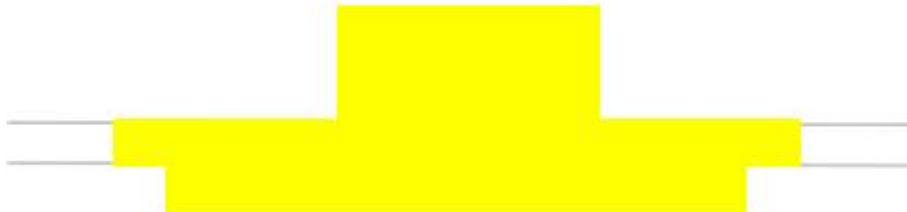
Friday, August 30, 2014

Mackington Joseph
1476 Pennington Road
Ewing, New Jersey, 08618

Dear Mr. Joseph:

I am writing you on behalf of ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ agreeing to your request for data collection related to your doctoral study entitled: "Exploring the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Safe Occupational Driving in the American Electric Utility Industry."

Please, accept this "Letter of Cooperation" granting you permission to collect data with the volunteered members of ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ workforce to support your study.

Thank you for selecting ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. We look forward to reviewing the results of your study.

Sincerely,

▮▮▮▮▮▮ MPH, CSP, CUSA
Vice President Safety, Environment and DOT Compliance

Appendix E: Informed Consent Form

## CONSENT FORM

My name is Mackington Joseph. I am a doctoral student in the School of Management at Walden University's Ph.D. in Management program. I am writing my doctoral dissertation, which topic is "Exploring the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Safe Occupational Driving in the American Electric Utility Industry". I am inviting you to participate in this study to help me achieve such academic goals because (a) you work for a U.S. electric utility company, (b) you have driven a company owned vehicle at some point in your career, and (c) you voluntarily agreed to contribute to this study. For accurate data analysis, the interviews will be recorded. The findings of this study will be used only for the intended academic purpose. However, I will share a 1-2 page summary with all participants.

This form is part of the process called "informed consent" required by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Its purpose is to allow you to understand my study before deciding to participate in it. I will review each section of the consent form with you, and give you ample review time to make sure you understand all of the modalities of the research. It is until after you indicated you understood all aspects of this consent form that you can sign it, and we will begin the interview.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**
Occupational motor vehicle accidents hurt people at all levels of management and union-represented personnel; they also cause significant increases in fringe benefit costs, property damage, workplace disruption, and wage-risk premiums. The purpose of this study is to explore how the organizational culture and rapport established by transformational leadership can help in limiting work-related motor vehicle accidents in the U.S. electric utility industry considering particularly the emotional intelligence of the leaders.

**DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES:**
There are no potential conflicts of interest in conducting or participating in this research. If you agree to participate in this study, your contribution will be essentially in the data collection stage of this study with your cooperation in an approximately 30-minute interview.

**NATURE OF THE QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED**
The questionnaire for the interview will include 13 questions, which among them will include the following three key questions:
- Please, describe for me, the kind of work conditions that would make you want to learn more about how to drive safely at work?
- Have your safe driving performance been acknowledged publicly among your peers? (If yes, how would such public recognition inspire you to stay safe on the road?)
- When it comes to driving, what types of decisions your employees are allowed to make without consulting a supervisor or a manager?

**PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES: VOLUNTARY BASIS**
This study is entirely voluntary. You may or may not decide to participate in it. Furthermore, if you agree to participate now, you can withdraw from the study any time should you choose not to continue.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS OF BEING IN THE STUDY:**
Being in this study will not pose any risk to your person safety or wellbeing. It is possible that you may experience some anxiety about psycho-social, professional, or legal risks that might be associated with participating in this study. Allow me to ensure you that I will offset any those concerns or anxiety by (a) not asking you any personal questions, and (b) allowing you to have the shop steward to be in the

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

The major benefit of participating in this study is contributing directly to a unique qualitative approach of the potential role transformational leadership may play in improving safe occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. Also, your contribution to this study may help (a) raise general awareness on the importance of good relationship and shared decision-making authority between leaders and employees in safe occupational driving management, and (b) cut risks related to occupational driving accidents, as well as direct and indirect collateral expenses to employers and employees.

**PAYMENT:**
There will be no compensation for participating in my research. However, I would be more than happy to share with you the results.

**PRIVACY:**
Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Your name or any other personal information or affiliation will not appear in any documentation before or after the conclusion of this study. Data will be kept secure by numerical coding of personal information in password protected computer files and used only for analytical purposes. They will be securely kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

**CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS:**
You can ask any questions you may have now or later by calling the researcher's cell phone at 1 (609) 310-9670; or via email at Mackington.Joseph@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott, Director of IRB at Walden University (phone #1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210); or by contacting the Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) at IRB@waldenu.edu.

Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

2 of 2

*From MAST-1-1*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

The major benefit of participating in this study is contributing directly to a unique qualitative approach of the potential role transformational leadership may play in improving safe occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. Also, your contribution to this study may help (a) raise general awareness on the importance of good relationship and shared decision-making authority between leaders and employees in safe occupational driving management, and (b) cut risks related to occupational driving accidents, as well as direct and indirect collateral expenses to employers and employees.

## PAYMENT:
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Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

## STATEMENT OF CONSENT:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit _MANAGER - TRANSMISSION MAT_

Date of consent _July 31, 2014_

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature _07/31/2014_

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'
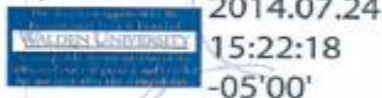
*From MAST-1-2*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

The major benefit of participating in this study is contributing directly to a unique qualitative approach of the potential role transformational leadership may play in improving safe occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. Also, your contribution to this study may help (a) raise general awareness on the importance of good relationship and shared decision-making authority between leaders and employees in safe occupational driving management, and (b) cut risks related to occupational driving accidents, as well as direct and indirect collateral expenses to employers and employees.

**PAYMENT:**
There will be no compensation for participating in my research. However, I would be more than happy to share with you the results.

**PRIVACY:**
Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Your name or any other personal information or affiliation will not appear in any documentation before or after the conclusion of this study. Data will be kept secure by numerical coding of personal information in password protected computer files and used only for analytical purposes. They will be securely kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

**CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS:**
You can ask any questions you may have now or later by calling the researcher's cell phone at 1 (609) 310-9670; or via email at Mackington.Joseph@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott, Director of IRB at Walden University (phone #1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210); or by contacting the Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) at IRB@waldenu.edu.

Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    *Distribution Manager – Overhead Electric Construction*

Date of consent    *8/14/14*

Participant's Signature    *Karen R. Emery*

Researcher's Signature

*2 of 2*

WALDEN UNIVERSITY   2014.07.24 15:22:18 -05'00'

*From MAST-1-3*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

The major benefit of participating in this study is contributing directly to a unique qualitative approach of the potential role transformational leadership may play in improving safe occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. Also, your contribution to this study may help (a) raise general awareness on the importance of good relationship and shared decision-making authority between leaders and employees in safe occupational driving management, and (b) cut risks related to occupational driving accidents, as well as direct and indirect collateral expenses to employers and employees.

**PAYMENT:**
There will be no compensation for participating in my research. However, I would be more than happy to share with you the results.

**PRIVACY:**
Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Your name or any other personal information or affiliation will not appear in any documentation before or after the conclusion of this study. Data will be kept secure by numerical coding of personal information in password protected computer files and used only for analytical purposes. They will be securely kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

**CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS:**
You can ask any questions you may have now or later by calling the researcher's cell phone at 1 (609) 310-9670; or via email at Mackington.Joseph@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott, Director of IRB at Walden University (phone #1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210); or by contacting the Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) at IRB@waldenu.edu.

Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    TRAINING SUPERVISOR

Date of consent    8-20-14

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    08/20/2014

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
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*From MAST-2-1*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

The major benefit of participating in this study is contributing directly to a unique qualitative approach of the potential role transformational leadership may play in improving safe occupational driving in the U.S. electric utility industry. Also, your contribution to this study may help (a) raise general awareness on the importance of good relationship and shared decision-making authority between leaders and employees in safe occupational driving management, and (b) cut risks related to occupational driving accidents, as well as direct and indirect collateral expenses to employers and employees.

**PAYMENT:**
There will be no compensation for participating in my research. However, I would be more than happy to share with you the results.

**PRIVACY:**
Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Your name or any other personal information or affiliation will not appear in any documentation before or after the conclusion of this study. Data will be kept secure by numerical coding of personal information in password protected computer files and used only for analytical purposes. They will be securely kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

**CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS:**
You can ask any questions you may have now or later by calling the researcher's cell phone at 1 (609) 310-9670; or via email at Mackington.Joseph@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott, Director of IRB at Walden University (phone #1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210); or by contacting the Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) at IRB@waldenu.edu.

Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    *Area Supervisor Field Engineering*

Date of consent    *8/20/14*

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    *08/20/2014*

*From MAST-2-2*                    2 of 2      WALDEN UNIVERSITY      2014.07.24
15:22:18
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**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit ___Labor Relations Manager___

Date of consent ___08 - 20 - 2014___

Participant's Signature ___Katherine a. elnyarry___

Researcher's Signature ___

*From MAST-2-2*

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
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**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit *Vice President of Safety*

Date of consent *9/26/14*

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature *09/26/2014*

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
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*From MAST-3-1*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

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| | |
|---|---|
| **Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit** | *Director of Operations (hwt)* |
| **Date of consent** | 9-26-14 |
| **Participant's Signature** | |
| **Researcher's Signature** | 09/29/2014 |

2014.07.24
15:22:18

2 of 2    WALDEN UNIVERSITY

*From MAST-3-2*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit     PAR/Safety Director

Date of consent     9-30-14

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature     10/02/2014

2 of 2

WALDEN UNIVERSITY     2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

*From MAST-3-3*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit _____ *FEU Safety Supv.* _____

Date of consent _____ 9/5/2014 _____

Participant's Signature _____

Researcher's Signature _____

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
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*From MAST-4-1*

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**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit     *GENERAL MANAGER*

Date of consent     *8/27/14*

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature     *08/29/2014*

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

*From MAST-4-2*

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STATEMENT OF CONSENT:

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    REGIONAL SUPERVISOR METER READING

Date of consent    9-2-14

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    09/09/2014

2 of 2    2014.07.24 15:22:18 -05'00'

*From MAST-4-3*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    *SAFETY SUPERVISION*

Date of consent    *10.8.2014*

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    *10/08/2014*

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

*From MAST-5-1*

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit ___Operation Supervis___

Date of consent ___oct 2, 2014___

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature ___10/08/2014___

2 of 2

*From MAST-5-2*

2014.07.24 15:22:18 -05'00'

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    Field Tech Specialist

Date of consent    10/8/14

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    10/08/2014

2 of 2

2014.07.24
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*From MAST-5-3*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit _Section, Mgr EHS Ops S&TO_

Date of consent _10/8/2014_

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature _10/08/2014_

2 of 2

WALDEN UNIVERSITY
2014.07.24
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-05'00'

*From MAST-5-4*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.
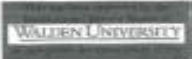
**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit _____ LINEMAN / IBEW

Date of consent _____ 8/4/14

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature _____ 08/04/2014

2 of 2

WALDEN UNIVERSITY 2014.07.24 15:22:18

*From UNION-1-1*

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**PRIVACY:**
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Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit   DIVISION mechanic IBEW 94

Date of consent                8 - 8 - 14

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

2014.07.24
15:22:18

2 of 2

*From UNION-1-2*

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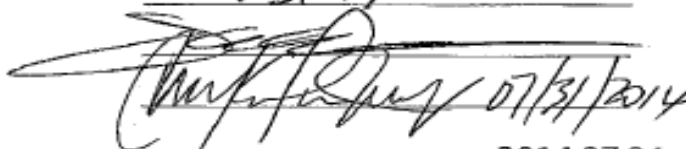
Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    SR. ENG. TECH. / OPEIU

Date of consent    7-31-14

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    07/31/2014

2 of 2    WALDEN UNIVERSITY    2014.07.24 15:22:18 -05'00'

*From UNION-1-3*

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Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

## STATEMENT OF CONSENT:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    Lineman Local 1049 IBEW

Date of consent    08/20/2014

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    8/20/2014

*From UNION-2-1*

2 of 2    WALDEN UNIVERSITY    2014.07.24 15:22:18 -05'00'

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Walden University's approval number for this study is **07-24-14-0181362** and it expires on **July 23, 2015.**

I will give you a copy of this form to keep.

**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    Working foreman A   Local 1049

Date of consent    08/20/2014

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    08/20/2014

2 of 2

WALDEN UNIVERSITY   2014.07.24 15:22:18 -05'00'

*From UNION-2-2*

interview room if that will make you more comfortable, and (c) assuring you that your participation in this study, to the best of my knowledge, will not expose you to any of such risks.

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**STATEMENT OF CONSENT:**

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit  *Safety Advocate/Lineman / IBEW 1049*

Date of consent  *8/20/14*

Participant's Signature  *Wayne Stitt*

Researcher's Signature  *[signature]  08/20/2014*

2 of 2

*From UNION-2-3*

WALDEN UNIVERSITY  2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

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Walden University's approval number for this study is 07-24-14-0181362 and it expires on July 23, 2015.

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit     *Lineman / IBEW Lo 53*

Date of consent     *10/7/14*

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature     *10/07/2014*

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

*From UNION-3-1*

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit ___Lineman   IBEW Local 53___

Date of consent ___10/10/14___

Participant's Signature ___

Researcher's Signature ___ 10/13/2014___

2 of 2

*From UNION-3-2*

2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    _Lineman  Lo# 53_

Date of consent    _10 - 10 - 2014_

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    _10/13/2014_

2 of 2    WALDEN UNIVERSITY    2014.07.24 15:22:18 -05'00'

*From UNION-3-3*

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit    DISTRIBUTION SPLICER – UAWA 1-2

Date of consent    10-8-2014

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature    10/08/2014

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

*From UNION-5-2*

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit   *SPLICER  LOCl-2  UAWA*

Date of consent   *10/8/14*

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature   *10/08/2014*

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
–05'00'

*From UNION-5-3*

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Participant's Occupation/Bargaining Unit _Splicer Local 1-2_

Date of consent _9/8/14_

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature _10/08/2010_

2 of 2

2014.07.24
15:22:18
-05'00'

_From UNION-5-4_

Appendix F: Protecting Human Research Participants Certificate



**Certificate of Completion**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Mackington Joseph** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 12/27/2010

Certification Number: 587925

Appendix G: Cooperation Letter Request

Mackington Joseph
1476 Pennington Road
Ewing, New Jersey, 08618
Today's date

To Whom It May Concern
ABC Electric Utility Company
Somewhere in the United States
City, State, Zip Code

**Letter of Cooperation Request for Future Data Collection**

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Mackington Joseph; I am a doctoral student in in the School of Management at Walden University specializing in Leadership and Organizational Change. The purpose of this letter is to request your permission to use your company as one of the five American electric utility companies that will comprise the population of my study, which is entitled *"Exploring the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Safe Occupational Driving in the American Electric Utility Industry."*

With your consent to cooperate, and the approval of the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) later this year, I will request the participation of six (6) potential participants at your company for data collection. Those six (6) employees will include three (3) members of your Management personnel and three (3) Union represented employees. The participants will provide informed consent and will be free to choose whether to participate.

My study will explore how transformational leaders influence the improvement of safe driving behavior of occupational drivers in the American electric utility industry. The employee participants must be occupational drivers; they must drive a company-owned vehicle to do work-related activities including driving to get to work or to go home from work. The interviews will be conducted on site; I will not be inquiring about personal or confidential information.

As soon I obtain the approval of the IRB, I will coordinate the exact times of data collection with you in order to minimize disruption to your activities, and your workforce. If you agree for your company to be part of this study, I would appreciate if you address a letter of cooperation to me at the address indicated above or via email at Mackington.Joseph@Waldenu.edu. If you need to validate my request, please contact my Dissertation Chair at John.Latham@Waldenu.edu; or at 1-719-331-4675.

I thank you for your consideration, and would be pleased to share the results of this study with you if you are interested.

Sincerely,
Mackington Joseph, MSM, PhD Candidate

_____

Curriculum Vitae

## Mackington Joseph

**EDUCATION:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2010 – Present | **Walden University** <br> PhD Candidate, Management |
| 2008 - 2009 | **Thomas Edison State College** <br> MSM, Management, *GPA: 3.867* |
| 2006 – 2007 | **Thomas Edison State College** <br> BSAST, Electronics Engineering Technology, *GPA: 3.50* |
| 2006 – 2007 | **Mercer County Community College** <br> AS, Mathematics, *GPA: 3.65* |
| 2003 - 2004 | **Mercer County Community College** <br> AAS, Energy Utility Technology, *GPA: 3.78* |
| 2001 - 2003 | **Mercer County Community College** <br> AAS, Electronics Engineering Technology, *GPA: 3.78* |
| 1994 - 1998 | **Law and Economics Sciences Faculty of Haiti** <br> BS, Economics, *GPA: 3.65* |

**MOST RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2010 – 2011 | **PSEG Southern Division Headquarters, Moorestown, NJ** <br> Electric Distribution Supervisor |
| 2008 – Present | **PSEG, Edison Training and Development Center** <br> Training and Development Specialist – Engineering |
| 2004 – 2011 | **Mercer County Community College** <br> Senior Adjunct Professor |

"Any man who can drive safely while kissing a pretty girl is simply not giving the kiss the attention it deserves." Albert Einstein