



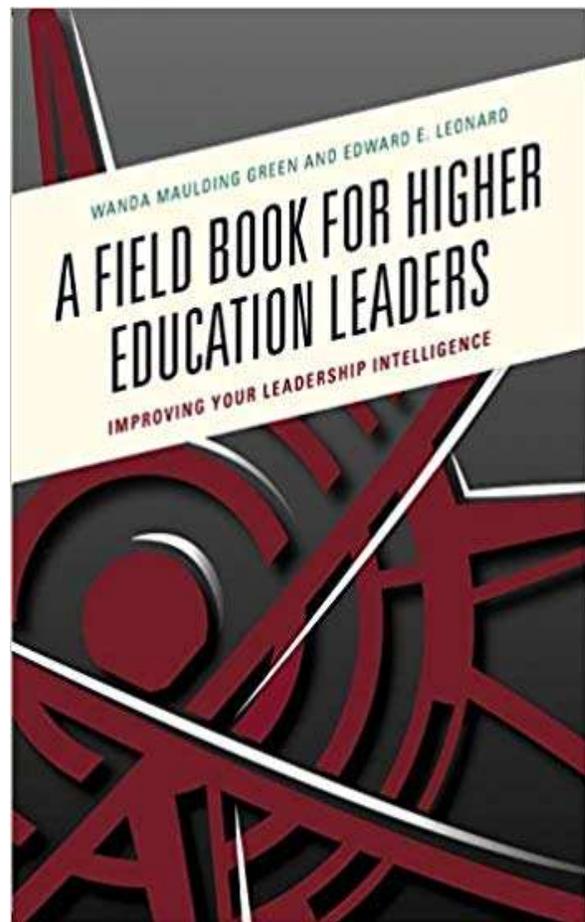
**Maulding Green, W. S., & Leonard, E. E. (2018). *A field book for higher education leaders: Improving your leadership intelligence*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.**

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Looking for a book to casually slide under your new academic leader's door? *A Field Book for Higher Education Leaders: Improving Your Leadership Intelligence* is a pragmatic take on the academy-old quandary of improving the leadership skills of academic leaders, and at 128 pages, it fits under almost any door. Preparing new academic leaders for their role in higher education is a growing area of concern (Gmelch & Buller, 2015; Kiel, 2015). Many practitioners do not aspire to be leaders in higher education, and with the decline in tenure-track faculty positions, the pipeline for leadership is smaller than it once was (Advisory Board, 2011). When appointed, requested, or simply "voluntold" to serve, first-time leaders often find themselves woefully unprepared and under-resourced. In this text, Wanda Maulding Green and Edward Leonard challenge academic leaders to understand, measure, and improve their leadership intelligence through 33 short case scenarios on leadership and management dilemmas in higher education. Despite a limited scope of roles, lack of granularity in



the examples, and some mixed messaging on the underlying theory, the book is a much-needed primer on acquiring the necessary skills and judgment to be an effective mid-level leader in academia. Best of all, it is practical, easy to digest, and a stimulating tool for deep learning, particularly in a group setting.

Maulding-Green and Leonard's Leadership Intelligence (LSI) model derives from a larger companion volume, *Leadership Intelligence: Navigating to Your True North* (2016), which advances a five-pillar leadership framework: credibility, competence, inspirational ability, shared vision, and emotional intelligence. Like many leadership models in vogue (e.g., Kouzes and Posner's *The Leadership Challenge* (2017) and Straw, Davis, Scullard, and Kukkonen's *The Work of Leaders* (2013), a test accompanies the book. Maulding-Green and Leonard keep their test short and modest: a 10-minute online assessment that asks readers to rate themselves on the five pillars and then have a trusted colleague do the same. While somewhat simplistic in format, the test is painless and non-threatening enough for even a busy director or department chair to complete.

Leadership theory and frameworks abound in management literature. In fact, LSI is already fighting an uphill battle for acronym recognition with the *Leadership Skills Inventory* (Anderson, Ford, & Hamilton, 1998), the *Leadership Style Indicator* (Mehra, 2013), and the *Life Styles Inventory* (Cooke & Lafferty, 1981). Within higher education, the most current literature centers on the role of prominent campus leaders and their visible initiatives in strategic planning, reorganizing the workforce, or handling crises in public view. Such is the case with Pierce's (2012) *On Being Presidential: A Guide for College and University Leaders* or Martin and Samel's (2015) *The Provost's Handbook: The Role of the Chief Academic Officer*. Few resources are penned for leaders negotiating the ethical and social dilemmas of routine administration. Two of the most notable exceptions include Buller's (2012) *The*

*Essential Department Chair*, and Behling's (2014) update to *The Resource Handbook for Academic Deans* which each address a specific leader role in academia. Still, Maulding-Green and Leonard's focus on leadership intelligence seems to break free by reaching further down and across the institution to expand the definition of a mid-level leader. Using a hands-on approach, the authors open new avenues of leadership capacity worthy of exploration such as communication style, decision-making, confidence, empowerment, empathy, and leader burnout.

The *Field Book* uses a method of teaching known as situational judgment tests (SJTs), where scenarios are presented first for the reader to determine a best response before the authors reveal theirs. The case format evokes a business school style of learning. The timing is appropriate, as in recent years some countries have reconceptualized higher education leadership as primarily a management function and relocated academic programs into schools of business (Altbach, 2014). The scenarios range from short and pithy, such as responding to an upset colleague, making a rule exemption, or handling negative feedback, to more complex challenges like discontinuing a popular class or dealing with a politically charged promotion application. The positions depicted are actual roles held previously by Maulding-Green and Leonard: Director of Student Life, Department Chair, and Head of Accreditation. The limited range of roles may leave some readers wishing for more diversity in the examples. Deans, vice presidents, provosts, chancellors, and presidents have specialized leadership challenges and may find the work of Behling (2014), Pierce (2012), or Martin and Samel (2015) a better match for their needs. Yet, much of the content can be generalized across higher education leaders as it deals with common management dilemmas.

At times, the text reads more like a handbook on human relations than a leadership guide. In one scenario, you have

been appointed as the new department chair and you learn a certain tenured professor is conspiring to undermine you in an upcoming faculty meeting. In another, a young staff member has shared a medical diagnosis as part of a job performance discussion about her tardiness. What should you do? How do you craft your response? On what values will you stand? Some scenarios can be difficult to grasp, as Maulding-Green and Leonard send sparse signals on which issues merit your greatest attention. The brevity is deliberate. The authors admit that they want to push readers to grapple with overlapping issues and value systems without steering them into a singular conclusion. The authors' own best responses are given as a guide, not a statement of doctrine. A reader seeking absolute clarity may struggle with the limited nature of the explanations, yet such open-endedness adds to the potential richness of discussion at a leadership development program or workshop training.

These scenarios and the authors' broader LSI framework draw on the management theory of *adaptive capacity* developed by Bennis and Thomas (2002). Adaptive capacity is a measure of how quickly a leader can respond to change and demonstrate resilience in the face of shifting circumstances. By putting the reader through the paces of the SJTs, Maulding-Green and Leonard endorse Bennis and Thomas's view that leadership principles can be learned through repeated practice and application. They state their broad agreement

with the theory of *imprinting*, that learning occurs when learners are at peak moments of susceptibility to change (Marquis & Tilcsik, 2013). But the authors also tacitly put forward their own theory that leadership intelligence is first a genetic predisposition that allows some to thrive more naturally as leaders than others. Without further explanation of this seeming paradox, readers of this volume could be left with some confusion on which theory is more dominant, and whether the two views can be reconciled. Harmonizing these views would be rich ground for further research on adaptive capacity and its role in leadership development.

Maulding-Green and Leonard's latest work is a pragmatic contribution to the field of higher education leadership. While some quality of analysis suffers because of limits to space, breadth of reach, and intentional brevity of the authors, the work moves leadership capacity into new social and ethical directions and expands the definition of higher education leaders to those in less heralded, but equally crucial, roles. Working through each scenario is an honest foray into your leadership makeup. For individuals who complete the activities as designed, the *Field Book* will be a worthy, if uncomfortable, exercise. For those going through the scenarios in a facilitated group setting, be prepared for some animated debate with your colleagues. In either case, the reward of rigorous self-reflection will be satisfaction in seeing growth in your own thinking and personal leadership intelligence.

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