

SUSAN R. KOMIVES · WENDY WAGNER  
AND ASSOCIATES

# LEADERSHIP

— *for a* —

# BETTER WORLD

SECOND EDITION

Understanding the Social Change Model  
of Leadership Development

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

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# Leadership for a Better World



SECOND EDITION

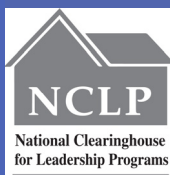
# Leadership for a Better World

Understanding the Social Change  
Model of Leadership Development

Susan R. Komives, Wendy Wagner, and Associates

**JOSSEY-BASS**<sup>™</sup>

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*Dedicated to*  
Helen S. Astin  
1932–2015

Activist, thinker, leader, scholar, friend  
Cocreator of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development



## Foreword

If you were to ask academics to list their most important learning goals for students, they would most likely include outcomes such as knowledge acquisition, the development of critical thinking skills, and the like. However, what most academics probably don't realize is that the student quality most frequently mentioned in the official mission statements of their colleges and universities is *leadership*.

The process that created the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM) in many respects “modeled the model.” From the beginning it followed one of the basic precepts underlying the Social Change Model: that “leadership” is something carried out by a group rather than by an individual. Individuals can, of course, initiate. In fall 1993 my dear late wife and colleague Helen (Lena) Astin initiated the process when she dropped by my office to inform me that a young friend of ours, Goodwin Liu (another “initiator”), had brought to her attention a new federally funded program that might interest us. Known as the Dwight Eisenhower Leadership program, it provided funds for the creation of student leadership projects on college campuses. Because both Lena and I had previously conducted research on leadership, the project intrigued us. Our understanding of the leadership process suggested that what was really needed was a framework, or model, that could guide students in developing their leadership skills. We wanted the model to help instill in young persons a strong sense of social responsibility and a desire to become instruments of positive social change.

Because neither of us was particularly knowledgeable about matters relating to student leadership development, we naturally turned to the folks who do this for

a living: student affairs practitioners. Most American college campuses are home to student affairs professionals who are deeply involved in the process of facilitating student leadership development, so we felt that the ideal model would be one that capitalized on the knowledge and experience of some of these experts. Lena and I started calling our friends in the student affairs field, including several who were or had been presidents of NASPA and ACPA, the field's two leading national professional associations, to identify individuals who were regarded as experts in student leadership development. The first few experts we contacted were also helpful in identifying additional colleagues to be recruited for the group that eventually came to call itself the *working ensemble*. Our ensemble comprised 15 individuals, including 8 leadership experts from the field of student affairs, 4 UCLA doctoral students, the Astins, and Carole Leland, Lena's coauthor of their landmark study of 77 women leaders, *Women of Influence, Women of Vision*. Carole had been working for the Center for Creative Leadership in North Carolina, and Lena was a member of the board of the center. Other members of the original ensemble included one of this book's editors—Susan R. Komives—and two of its chapter authors: Dennis C. Roberts and Marguerite Bonous-Hammarth.

Our ensemble held seven 2-day meetings over a period of more than a year with the aim of forging a preliminary version of a Social Change Model of Leadership Development. The notion of "social change" was embraced by the ensemble in recognition of two principles: (1) that leadership, as opposed to mere "management," necessarily involves change and (2) that "social" change implies service to the others (i.e., "Citizenship"). Ensemble meetings, which were facilitated mainly by Lena, were lively and sometimes contentious, but nearly all participants remained focused on the goal of developing a workable model ("Collaboration," "Commitment," "Common Purpose"). To ensure that the ensemble could capitalize on the collective wisdom of the entire group, Lena actively encouraged each participant to be authentic and to share his or her viewpoints openly ("Congruence").

By its third meeting our working ensemble had come to realize that the model had to be value-based, and to that end we began to create a list of basic values. Members would propose a particular value (e.g., Collaboration) to be added to the list, and we would all debate its pros and cons. One of the key considerations in these discussions was that the individual values be consistent, complementary, comprehensive, and nonredundant. Somewhat tongue-in-cheek, we labeled the preliminary list of values "The Seven Cs."

A preliminary version of the model was presented to a diverse group of outside reviewers whom we invited to attend a 3-day retreat held in fall 1994 at the Airlie House Conference Center in Virginia. Retreat participants included our working ensemble, 9 undergraduate students from diverse institutions, and 19 representatives from national associations, higher education institutions, and governmental agencies. The Airlie House retreat proved to be a crucial (if not initially painful) moment for Lena and me in the development of the model. After the first day and a half of nonstop analysis and criticism, several retreat guests had concluded that our preliminary model was “too nice,” that our high-sounding values didn’t reflect the rough-and-tumble realities of real-life group change efforts, especially efforts that aimed to effect significant social change. Any such effort, our critics insisted, inevitably involves differences of opinion, debate, and argumentation.

Lena and I didn’t get much sleep that second night, and we ended up calling an unscheduled breakfast meeting of our ensemble early the next morning. After considerable discussion, the ensemble agreed that we would add a new C to the model: Controversy With Civility. This value constituted an acknowledgment of two realities about any group change effort: that differences in opinion are inevitable and potentially useful and that such differences must be aired openly but with respect and courtesy.

A second problem had to do with the fact that on the final day we were hoping to present a revised model to the attendees. However, because it seemed to us that a simple list of fundamental values fell short of a fully integrated model, we were searching for some way to present the values in a more holistic fashion. Then, early on the final day, it dawned on us that the Seven Cs naturally arranged themselves into three levels of aggregation: individual, group, and civic (community) values. So in the final presentation that last day we were able to diagram the revised model by arranging the Seven Cs into three groups (symbolized by circles). In particular, this visual rearrangement made it easier to show the reciprocal relationships among the values (symbolized by directional arrows connecting the circles). I think this visual representation of the model has helped to facilitate its real-world application.

Following the Airlie House retreat we were able to get further useful feedback about the model by presenting it at several national meetings and trying it out with several student groups at UCLA. Lena mentored a group of seven undergraduates who approached her because they had heard about the model from several of UCLA’s student affairs staff members. After applying the model for nearly 3 months as part

of an independent study project, these remarkable students ended up bringing the entire 10th-grade class from a local inner city school to the UCLA campus for a full day of exposure and orientation to the campus life of a research university. This entirely student-conceived and -executed project was implemented without a hitch, and it was a great success. To hear the seven students later recount how they applied the model to the design and execution of such an ambitious community service project was an amazing and inspiring experience for Lena and me.

By early 1996 we had completed the final revision (version III) of the model in the form of a guidebook, *A Social Change Model of Leadership Development Guidebook*. The guidebook has since been distributed to hundreds of college campuses by the University of Maryland's National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs.

Once the formal work on projects such as the SCM has been completed, more often than not the final report languishes on academic bookshelves or dies a quick death in college libraries. Happily, the SCM project has been able to avoid such a fate, largely because of the efforts of Susan R. Komives and her students and colleagues, who have worked virtually nonstop since the 1990s to further refine the model and promote its use on college campuses across the country. I also like to think that the model's intrinsic appeal and validity had something to do with its widespread popularity, but there is little question in my mind that without Susan's efforts it never would have been so widely accepted and used. This second edition of *Leadership for a Better World* represents still another milestone in the evolution of the Social Change Model, and I for one would like to congratulate and express my deepest admiration and appreciation to Susan, Wendy Wagner, and their colleagues for producing this comprehensive and very readable book.

*Alexander W. (Sandy) Astin*  
Los Angeles, California



# Preface

Leadership is much more an art, a belief, a condition of the heart, than a set of things to do.  
The visible signs of artful leadership are expressed, ultimately, in its practice.

—MAX DE PREE

Welcome to a challenging and wonderful journey—a journey about the commitments needed to make this world a better place, a journey exploring how you and the people in the groups you belong to can work together for meaningful change, and, ultimately, a journey into yourself. Dennis Roberts (2007), a member of the team that developed the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM) and author of Chapter 1 in this book, calls this the “journey of deeper leadership” (p. 203).

## THE SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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Contemporary times require a collaborative approach to leadership that can bring the talent of all members of a group to their shared purposes. The Social Change Model of Leadership Development approaches “*leadership as a purposeful, collaborative, values-based process that results in positive social change*” (emphasis added; Komives, Wagner, & Associates, 2009, p. xiii; Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996).

## Assumptions About This Approach to Leadership

This approach to leadership is built on several key assumptions:

- ✦ Leadership is concerned with effecting change on behalf of others and society.
- ✦ Leadership is collaborative.
- ✦ Leadership is a process rather than a position.
- ✦ Leadership should be value-based.
- ✦ All students (not just those who hold formal leadership positions) are potential leaders.
- ✦ Service is a powerful vehicle for developing students' leadership skills.

In short, the approach proposed here differs in certain basic ways from traditional approaches that view leaders only as those who happen to hold formal leadership positions and that regard leadership as a value-neutral process involving positional “leaders” and “followers” (HERI, 1996, p. 10).

## Goals of the Social Change Model

The SCM focuses on two primary goals:

1. To enhance student learning and development; more specifically, to develop in each student participant greater:
  - ✦ **Self-knowledge:** understanding one's talents, values, and interests, especially as these relate to the student's capacity to provide effective leadership
  - ✦ **Leadership competence:** the capacity to mobilize oneself and others to serve and work collaboratively
2. To facilitate positive social change at the institution or in the community. That is, undertake actions that will help the institution/community to function more effectively and humanely (HERI, 1996, p. 19)

## Introducing the Seven Cs

The SCM includes seven values, referred to throughout the book as the *Seven Cs*, that synergistically become leadership for social change. All seven values work



together to accomplish the transcendent C of Change. These values are grouped into three interacting clusters or dimensions: individual, group, and society or community. Individual values include Consciousness of Self, Congruence, and Commitment. Group values include Collaboration, Common Purpose, and Controversy With Civility. The societal or community dimension is presented as Citizenship. A premise of the model is that individuals can develop leadership capacity, groups can develop their leadership process, and communities can develop their capacity to engage groups and individuals in community goals. Although the book is approached to help the individual reader explore personal leadership capacity as an individual, in groups, and within communities, readers are encouraged to explore how groups and communities share leadership and how their process can be more intentional and effective.

### The Ensemble

The SCM was developed by a team of leadership educators and scholars who have worked extensively with college students. As described further in the foreword and in Chapter 1, the project was funded by an Eisenhower Grant from the U.S. Office of Education in 1993–1996. The team realized early in the process that, similar to a good jazz ensemble, every member's contributions was essential, energy could flow among members of the group, and the whole was greater than the sum of its parts. This team named themselves *the working ensemble* to reinforce the value of the whole.

The ensemble was concerned that college students needed to value collective action for social change and to learn to work with others in socially responsible ways. The ensemble was further concerned that old paradigms of leadership emphasized only the role of the positional leader and not the relational, collaborative process of leadership among participants. Grounded in the belief that leadership capacity can be developed by anyone, the ensemble developed this values-based model that focused on how individuals can work effectively with others toward shared social concerns.

The model developed during a two-year process, including a weekend retreat with leadership educators and students from a diverse range of colleges and universities.

## THE SCM BOOK PROJECT

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The primary publication of the ensemble was a guidebook (HERI, 1996) designed for the use of leadership educators. This guidebook is available from the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP; [www.nclp.umd.edu](http://www.nclp.umd.edu)). The guidebook was often used as a textbook for students, but it needed to be updated and reframed for undergraduate college students who might be studying leadership and seeking to develop their own effective leadership perspective and practices. Subsequently, professor Susan R. Komives, a member of the original ensemble and scholarship editor for the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, challenged her graduate class of leadership educators in the College Student Personnel Program at the University of Maryland to research what college students needed to learn about leadership and to design and write a book that could be used as a text to teach about the Social Change Model. Leadership educator and former coordinator of the NCLP Wendy Wagner joined Komives to write and edit the first edition of this book, which was widely used in academic leadership courses and in cocurricular leadership programs.

Most of the original authors returned to update their chapters for this second edition joined by three original members of the ensemble, Alexander W. Astin writing the foreword, and Dennis C. Roberts and Marguerite Bonous-Hammarth authoring chapters. Sherry Early, former chair of the NASPA Student Leadership Knowledge Community, also joined the project. Social Change Model Leadership educators in Susan R. Komives's last class before her Maryland retirement developed rubrics for each of the Seven Cs in the SCM that are used in this second edition.

Kristan Cilente Skendall and Daniel Ostick led the development of a facilitator's guide for the SCM. Designed as an instructor's companion to this book, it is also intended to be used by leadership educators using the SCM in cocurricular and other settings. It is available from Jossey-Bass Publishers.

### Purpose of the SCM Book

Nearly every college or university acknowledges that its graduates can, will, and, indeed, must be active leaders in their professions, their communities, and their world. Colleges expect their graduates to make this a better world. College students consistently affirm that they want their lives to matter and to make a difference (Komives,

Lucas, & McMahon, 2013). College seniors seek jobs in which they can do well and do good (Levine & Cureton, 1998).

This book is a call to action and a framework for developing your capacity to work with other people as you engage in leadership to address shared purposes. The book encourages raising awareness of social issues that need attention and ways of being with each other that promote effectively addressing those issues.

Alexander Astin (2001), co-facilitator of the ensemble who developed the SCM and author of the foreword to this edition, observes that

American higher education has traditionally defined a “student leader” either as someone who occupies a formal student office (e.g., student body vice-president or editor of the student paper) or as someone who has achieved visibility on the campus by virtue of athletic or some other form of achievement. This rather narrow approach not only relegates most students to the role of “non-leader,” but also creates an implicit “leader-follower” hierarchy, which, in the minds of most students, greatly limits their notions of who can or should “lead.” The great power of the non-hierarchical approach to student leadership that characterizes this book is that it expands the number of potential “student leaders” to include virtually all students, while simultaneously transforming the process by means of which leadership is exercised on campus. (p. x)

In this book, the term *leader* is used without regard to a specific role in a group—whether as a positional leader or a participant engaging in the leadership process as a group member. We believe—and research supports—that leadership can be learned and that the capacity to engage in leadership with others can be developed (Dugan & Komives, 2007). This journey into deeper leadership is facilitated by action (practicing leadership and engaging with others) and by reflection (thinking about your experiences and making meaning about your observations). This action and reflection cycle is the heart of experiential learning (Dewey, 1923; Kolb, 1981). This cycle expands the individual’s capacity to learn more effective ways of thinking about and engaging in leadership.

An old Hindu proverb says, “There is nothing noble about being superior to some other [person]. The true nobility is in being superior to your previous self.” Psychologist Carl Rogers’s (1961) concept in *On Becoming a Person* validates the exploration of one’s own experiences as the most potent source of knowledge for personal development:

Experience is, for me, the highest authority. The touchstone of validity is my own experience. No other person's ideas, and none of my own ideas, are as authoritative as my experience. It is to experience that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me. Neither the Bible nor the prophets—neither Freud nor research—neither the revelations of God nor man—can take precedence over my own direct experience. (p. 23)

The processes of becoming something—becoming collaborative, becoming congruent, becoming a change agent—moves one from an uninformed consciousness about that awareness to a more informed consciousness able to examine the previous way of being in this process of becoming (Kegan, 1994).

In *On Becoming a Leader*, former university president and noted leadership scholar Warren Bennis (1989) wrote, “To become a leader, then you must become yourself, become the maker of your own life” (p. 40). Each of the chapters of this book asks you to reflect on how you are becoming the specific leadership dimension being presented. Think about the journey toward becoming more conscious of your effectiveness with that leadership value. Indeed, developing each of these leadership values, attitudes, and skills is a journey—the “becoming” process.

## Focus of the Book

The ensemble and authors of this book focus on social change and socially responsible actions that readers can take to make the world a better place for everyone. The book is composed of five parts. Part 1 sets the foundation by situating this model in the broader field of leadership studies, particularly those approaches that value collaborative leadership and present the SCM. Parts 2 through 4 present the three key dimensions of the model and the values they contain. Part 5 challenges you to think of yourself as a change agent and explore the change outcomes of leadership, particularly social change.

Part 1 includes Chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 describes the development of the model in the context of the broader field of leadership studies. Chapter 2 describes and provides an overview of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development.

Parts 2 through 4 delve into the seven values (the Seven Cs) of the model grouped into three dimensions. Although these values can be examined in any order,

we encourage reading them in the order presented. Part 2 presents the values on the individual level, which include the importance of having Consciousness of Self (Chapter 3), Congruence (Chapter 4), and Commitment (Chapter 5) in order to be effective in working with others to make change happen. Part 3 focuses on the group dimension of social change, specifically Collaboration (Chapter 6), Common Purpose (Chapter 7), and Controversy With Civility (Chapter 8). In Part 4, the dimension of society/community explores the value of Citizenship along with how communities work for change.

Part 5 emphasizes that the SCM is all about change. Chapter 10 looks at change as a concept: how individuals and groups can lead for change, and why change may be resisted. Chapter 11 explores the common social problems that people share and some of the processes used to address them. We encourage the reader to think deeply and personally about issues that need shared attention and how people can work collaboratively toward those changes. Chapter 12 examines how to apply the SCM. The epilogue ends the book by encouraging the reader to become a person who will have the courage to make this a better world. Additional resources on the SCM are also included at the end of the book.

## Personal Reflection

Encouraging personal reflection is an essential aspect of this book. As Carl Rogers (1961) affirmed, one is always “becoming,” and the journey into effective leadership is a process of enhancing, improving, informing, and becoming. Deeper learning in leadership (Roberts, 2007) only happens through experiential learning and personal reflection. Each chapter in the book encourages the reader to reflect on the material through discussion questions and actions and reflections. The discussion questions focus your thinking on how the material relates to your experience and may be used in a class conversation to explore those topics.

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Special thanks to coprincipal investigators of the project, the late Helen S. Astin (professor emeritus, University of California, Los Angeles) and Alexander W. Astin (professor emeritus, University of California, Los Angeles), and ensemble members Marguerite Bonous-Hammarth (director of assessment, research, and evaluation, University of California, Irvine), Tony Chambers (associate professor emeritus at the University of Toronto), Len Goldberg (retired vice president for student affairs, University of Richmond), the late Cynthia S. Johnson (professor emeritus, California State University, Long Beach), Susan R. Komives (professor emerita, University of Maryland), Emily Langdon (coordinator of assessment, research, and evaluation, University of California, Merced), Carole Leland (Center for Creative Leadership, San Diego), Nance Lucas (executive director for the Center for the Advancement of Well-Being and associate professor, New Century College, George Mason University), Raechele L. Pope (associate professor, University of Buffalo), Dennis C. Roberts (consultant and former assistant vice president for

education faculty and student services, Qatar Foundation, Education City), and Kathy M. Shellogg (consultant). Their affiliations at the time of developing the SCM appear in the 1996 guidebook. Hosted by the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP), most of this group convened for a reunion of the ensemble in summer 2007 and affirmed the promise and role of this model in student leadership development.

Special thanks to the NCLP, which has promoted best practices in college student leadership development for 30 years. Check out this fine organization at [www.nclp.umd.edu](http://www.nclp.umd.edu). We appreciate the support of longtime NCLP director, Craig Slack.

Wendy and Susan also thank the researchers on the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership team (especially principal investigator John P. Dugan) for the research on the SCM that is advancing the practice and teaching of leadership for college students. The ongoing research and findings of that study are available at [www.nclp.umd.edu](http://www.nclp.umd.edu) and [leadershipstudy.net](http://leadershipstudy.net). Special thanks to Bailey Albrecht who worked with her advisor, Paige Haber-Curran, to solicit and edit the many student stories shared in this edition. Bailey managed this process for us as a graduate assistant in the Leadership Institute and a master's student at Texas State University.

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# About the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs

The National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP) provides a central clearinghouse of leadership materials, resources, and assistance to leadership educators. NCLP members receive publications, web access to resources, consultation assistance, and networking opportunities with other professionals engaged in leadership education with a focus on college students.

The NCLP supports cutting-edge research on leadership development and the dissemination of knowledge through a member listserv, website, institutes, symposia, virtual seminars, and high-quality publications.

The diversity of leadership programs in higher education and the dynamic nature of the subject challenge student affairs educators and faculty members continually to create and refine programs, training techniques, and contemporary models to fit the changing context of leadership education. The NCLP exists to help meet that challenge.

The NCLP is very proud of the impact of the first edition of *Leadership for a Better World: Understanding the Social Change Model of Leadership Development* and how it complemented other NCLP resources related to the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM). The second edition will extend this work, incorporating evidence from the body of research on the SCM. Among the NCLP resources on the SCM is the socially responsible leadership scale (SRLS), an instrument designed to measure students' SCM leadership capacities. NCLP also sponsors the

Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, an international research project measuring college students' leadership development using the SRLS.

Visit <http://www.nclp.umd.edu> for more information on the NCLP and other educational material on the Social Change Model.

Craig Slack  
NCLP director



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