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Adaptive Advising A Student Centered Approach

Laurie Lentzc Roy

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Adaptive Advising
A Student Centered Approach

A Thesis

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
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LAURIE LENTZ ROY

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Abstract

This mixed methods research is focused on commonalities between the practice of academic advising and the concepts of adaptive leadership. The data provide supervisor and advisor perspectives on hiring practices, leadership, and views on how adaptability relates to advising and leadership. As a result of data analysis, the Theory of Adaptive Advising is proposed that incorporates elements of adaptive leadership into the advising practice.

Keywords: professional advisor, adaptive advising, adaptive leadership, student centered approach, advising models

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Adaptive Advising: A Student Centered Approach

Chapter One: The Research Problem

Charlie Nutt, Executive Director of The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), refers to the professional advisor as the GPS for students (Doody, 2015). Charlie uses this analogy because it is common for a college student to get off track and move in a direction that puts their goals out of reach. The advisor works with the student to recalculate plans and develop strategies to help the student navigate toward the desired goal. Likewise, an adaptive leader can be thought of in the same way. When a leader sees their team moving away from the desired outcome, a recalculation is required to get the system moving in the right direction. This research is an opportunity to develop a new advising theory by incorporating some of the concepts in adaptive leadership into the advising practice. The proposed theory in this study is referred to as adaptive advising.

Personal advising mission

Before beginning the exploration process of adaptive advising, it is important to understand who I am as an advisor. My mission as an advisor is to help students see and realize their imagined future. There are countless paths that a student can take. My role isn't to tell them which path to take but to educate and empower them so that they can find their own way and feel confident about the choices they make.

My mission as an advisor is to engage in positive interactions with students. I want the student to leave my office with more knowledge than they had when they came in, and to feel more confident and at ease after our meeting. This doesn't mean they are getting good news all the time and it doesn't mean that I don't have tough conversations. I am open and honest, and I

speak and listen with compassion and empathy. There are two things that I feel are crucial in building and sustaining a trusting relationship. First, accept and appreciate every student for who they are in the moment and without judgment. Second, remember that no interaction with a student is routine. Show the same excitement and energy that was shown in the first meeting with the student.

The appointment or interaction is not about me; it is about the student and their experience. Entering college is a major life event for the student as well as the family, and I want them to know that they are my priority.

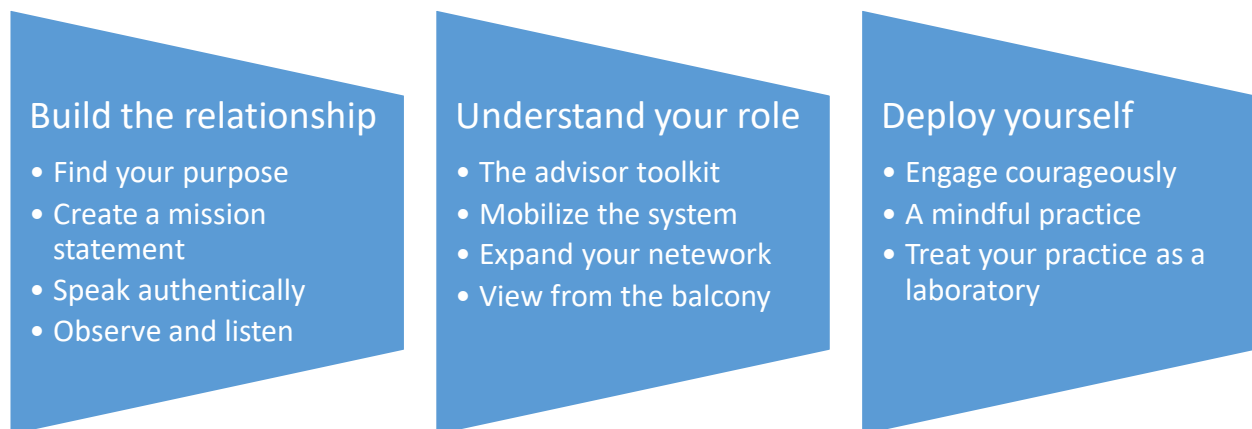
Purpose and Significance of the Study

The concept of the Adaptive Advising Theory stems from my work as a professional advisor at the University of Southern Maine. In a master's level leadership course I learned about adaptive leadership and quickly realized how applicable these concepts are to my own advising practice. There are numerous models of academic advising. Each model approaches the student through a slightly different lens and all are effective if used appropriately. Advisors are not practicing one technique at a time because it is impossible to predict which technique will work best for a specific student. In addition, the technique used to help one student, may not work with another student who is experiencing the same challenge. In order to adapt to the student, an effective advising practice will utilize multiple advising models over the course of one meeting. Likewise, in a practice of leadership, adaptive leaders utilize different leadership styles depending on followers and situations. For example, when delegating tasks to followers in a busy setting, the adaptive leader might display an autocratic leadership style. In a different situation, the same leader may want to motivate and empower followers by displaying a transformative leadership style.

Individually, leaders and advisors may be naturally drawn to a specific model in their respective fields. For instance, a leader may prefer an autocratic leadership style, and the advisor may prefer to use techniques of prescriptive advising. However, both practices benefit from utilizing styles and approaches outside of one's own preferred method. From this writer's perspective, the advisor's ability to effectively adapt to the needs of the student will strengthen the relationship with the student. A skilled advisor accepts the student for who they are and where they are in their life at that moment. If an advisor enters a student meeting with a preplanned agenda, it forces the student to adapt to the advisor. My own view is that a preplanned agenda may be effective for completing tasks, but it is not student centered and does not aid in building a trusting and productive relationship.

Likewise, adaptive leaders have the same level of acceptance for their followers. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) discuss a balance in reaching people above and below the neck. An adaptive leader needs to understand the emotions of the follower and how they process information in order to foster a productive relationship; the interaction starts where the follower is, not where the leader is. Figure 1.1 outlines this concept in addition to other elements of adaptive leadership that will be used to build the foundation of adaptive advising.

Figure 1.1. Adaptive advising



The purpose of this research is to develop the Theory of Adaptive Advising by incorporating concepts used in adaptive leadership. To do so, this research provides an analysis of concepts used in adaptive leadership along with insight into how the same concepts can be integrated into an advising practice. Heifetz et al. (2009) define adaptive leadership as an approach to “making progress on the most important challenges you face in your piece and part of the world” (p.3). The researchers who wrote about adaptive leadership also provide concepts, tools, and tactics aimed to help motivate and move people toward a collective purpose and their work will serve as a solid foundation in the proposed Theory of Adaptive Advising.

This study aims to enhance the advising practice by exploring advising through the lens of an adaptive leader. Thomas (2008) states, “Learning in any domain, leadership included, is not likely to occur without a desire to learn and the willingness and discipline to practice, practice, practice” (p.65). In addition, they share that repeated experience and practice “enhances skills at reading situations (like chessboards) quickly and accurately” (p.51). An advisor who is adept at this skill can change lives. Each interaction an advisor has with a student is an opportunity to make a difference in the students’ life. However small that difference may appear on the surface, a collection of those small influences leaves the student feeling valued, supported and heard.

Methods summary

This study builds the adaptive advising theory based on analysis of data collected through a convergent mixed methods approach. In order to better understand hiring practices, leadership, and advising theory from the supervisor perspective, information is collected through an interview with the director of advising at a state university. Quantitative data is obtained through a confidential online survey that was sent to 38 participants. The sample is comprised of active

professional advisors, former professional advisors who have moved on to other departments, TRIO advisors, and administrative support staff who work in the advising department. Analysis of survey data provides insight on the practical aspects of advising in areas of advising techniques, leadership, and adaptability.

Research Hypothesis

- 1) Whether supervisors and advisors are familiar with adaptive leadership or not, some views on leadership will align with adaptive leadership.
- 2) Concepts of adaptive leadership will complement an existing advising practice.
- 3) Leadership skills and the ability to adapt are important qualities that managers seek when hiring new advisors.

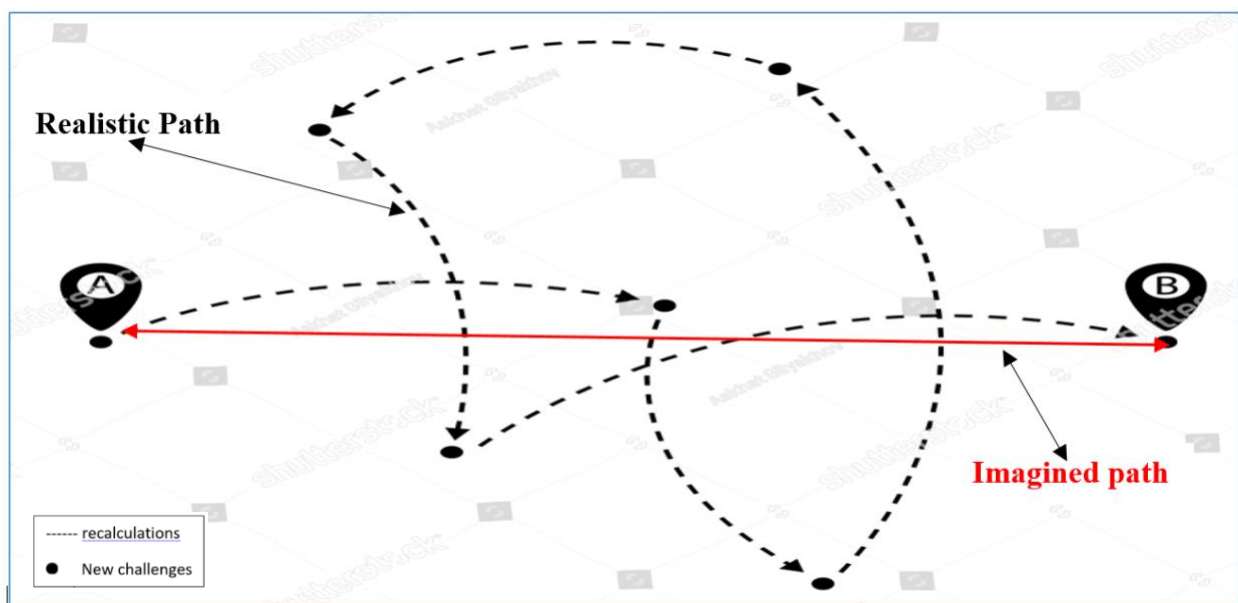
Chapter Two: Literature Review

College students learn to adapt to numerous aspects of college life. For instance, students adapt to living on campus, new class schedules, different teaching styles, and different professor expectations. Change, and adapting to it, is an important and unavoidable part of life. However, what happens when adapting seems like an impossible task to the student? A meeting with their professional advisor can and should help put the students mind at ease. When life is out of balance for the student, they often need help learning how to manage and cope with challenges they are experiencing. The byproduct that develops from this uncomfortable feeling is disequilibrium. Heifetz et al. (2009) refer to the skill required from advisor/leader to aid the stressed and overwhelmed student/follower as improvisational expertise. The authors write that the goal is not to eliminate disequilibrium, but to teach the student/follower to tolerate the uncomfortable feeling. The advisor/leader can support the student/follower by showing them how to view the challenge as an opportunity for growth. Heifetz et al. (2009) also suggest to

think of the uncomfortable feeling as a temperature gauge. If unmanaged, the heat rises and becomes too much for the student/follower to tolerate. The authors further explain that the goal should be to keep the temperature within the productive zone of disequilibrium. In other words, maintain enough heat to realize the challenge, but not so much heat that the student cannot function.

Charlie Nutt refers to the professional advisor as the GPS for students (Doody, 2015). However, the GPS analogy provides a simplistic view of the action of advising, the reality of advising follows a more complex path (figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Imagined path vs. realistic path



Point A is where the advisor meets the student, and point B is the desired goal. By making recalculations in response to the student’s experience of disequilibrium, their temperature remains in a productive zone. The professional advisor guides the student to a completely different, yet still productive path. Though the path may be changed, it will create balance for the student so they may move forward and achieve their goals. This style of strategic thinking can also be said of an adaptive leader. Puccio, Mance, and Murdock (2011) state that “a

leader who thinks strategically builds bridges and highways to get from the present to the future” (p. 155). Similar to a leader, the advisor helps identify and bring clarity to many possibilities in order to guide the student toward the most promising ones.

Professional advisors and adaptive leaders are parallel roles in many ways. Each require the practitioner to see the individual as the center of a puzzle that needs to be assembled. This writer’s view is that the advisors already hold many pieces to the puzzle. However, by adding pieces from adaptive leadership, the support system around the student becomes stronger, more diverse, and balanced. This theory is adaptive advising: a student centered approach.

A Brief History of Advising

Folsom, Yoder, and Joslin (2015) describe how academic advising has changed drastically over the years by identifying four distinct eras. The first era (1636-1870), did not warrant the need for a distinct advisor role. There were very limited curricular options and educators viewed the mind as a tool to be sharpened. The second era (1870-1971) was a time when colleges added more programs and included electives. This provided a need for prescriptive advising to aid in course selection and was typically done by faculty. The third era (1972-2002) finally viewed the student as an individual. Advising models emerged and the view shifted from prescriptive advising to an approach that helped students develop skills and address challenges. The current era of advising has proven transformational with the establishment of NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising. Professional Advising is now recognized as a profession.

Build the Relationship

Building the relationship between the advisor and student is a vital. According to Crookson, (1972) the relationship between an advisor and student is the most critical component

of the academic advising experience. Higgins (2017) shares that it is not only the relationship, but also designing and implementing advising practices that help foster and sustain the relationship. The author also refers to professional advisors as the transformational leaders in the student/advisor relationship and states, “Although the advisor may be the leader, there are two individuals within the advising relationship: both need to be engaged in order to effect a partnership” (para. 2). The engaged partnership also enhances the student learning experience and progression toward graduation (Campbell and Nutt, 2008). A strong emphasis on the relationship is a key element of a student centered approach.

Advisors and adaptive leaders have several characteristics in common such as honesty, trustworthiness, compassion, responsiveness, emotional intelligence, integrity, and empathy. Adaptive leaders put these characteristics into action by applying unique practices. Some of the leadership techniques in this research have been modified to complement and strengthen an existing advising practice. They are: find your purpose, create a personal advising mission statement, speak authentically, and observe and listen.

Find your purpose. Find your purpose as it relates to your advising practice. Advisors have a responsibility to develop their advising practice in a way that supports the institutional mission, but it is also important to support personal values and truth. Palmer (2000) teaches us how to listen to life. He uses a poem by William Stafford that begins “Some time when the river is ice ask me mistakes I have made. Ask me whether what I have done is my life” (p.1). The meaning is to live your truth and let your values guide you. In other words, rather than shape your life around what others value, make sure you shape life around your values. A person who does this has found their true and authentic purpose. Hughes, Ginnet, and Curphy (2012) share that the behavior of authentic leaders is consistent with their values and beliefs. In addition, the

authors state that authenticity is not something that a leader has or doesn't have, it is something that is continually pursued. The authenticity of a leader drives the discovery process in finding purpose. McKee, Boyatzis, and Johnston (2008) recommend developing a personally inspiring vision to bring ones own hopes and vision to fruition. Likewise, advisors can create a personal advising mission statement to renew and share their passion for the work.

Create a mission statement. Developing a personal mission statement takes time and requires reflection. Below are guidelines to help create a personal advising mission statement.

Lalwani (2018) offers the following headings:

1. Determine your passion and abilities
2. Determine your principles and values
3. Determine your goals

Questions are added under each heading to serve as a guide to help determine what is important in the individual practice. It is important to note that the personal advising mission statement should align with the institutional and departmental values, mission, and goals.

1) Determine your passion and abilities:

- a) How do I define my role and as advisor? Why am I an advisor?
- b) What are my strengths?
- c) How do I make a difference in the lives of students and colleagues?
- d) Do my students and colleagues know that they are important to me?

2) Determine your principles and values:

- a) What impact do you want to have on students and the people you work with?
- b) When thinking about advising, what are you most passionate about? What about advising creates spark and excitement?

- c) What are your core values? In other words what are the principles that guide your behavior?
- 3) Determine your goals:
- a) Why are you writing a mission statement?
 - b) What is your ultimate goal?
 - c) What results do you hope to see?

Speak authentically. Adaptive leaders speak authentically. In other words, they speak from the heart. According to Heiftz et al. (2009), speaking from the heart requires being in touch with your values, beliefs, and emotions. Many times, humans operate on auto-pilot. For example, a student walks into advising for their scheduled appointment, and while looking at the computer screen, the advisor asks, “How are you today?” Without thinking or making eye contact, the student responds, “Good, how are you?” This is nothing more than an emotionless exchange of words that has no meaning. Heiftz et al., (2009) share that adaptive leaders engage others by speaking from the heart to express what they are feeling. In addition, the authors also share that adaptive leaders listen from the heart to gain an understanding of what others are feeling. For instance, think about the excitement a student feels when they arrive at college for the very first time. By sharing that same level of excitement and energy, the advisor is connecting with the student in a very unique and special way.

Observe and listen. Effective communication is critical in developing and sustaining relationships (Wood, 2004). Through active listening and careful observation the adaptive advisor is able to detect possible challenges that may be hiding just below the surface. Most interactions with the student do not require detective work to determine if the student is

experiencing a challenge. However, being present and in the moment with the student is required with every interaction.

Thich (2013) states that practicing mindfulness teaches us how to be present and shares an exercise to improve the skill of mindfulness. The author suggests washing the dishes just to wash the dishes. What Thich (2013) really means by this is to focus on the task at hand by being conscious of thoughts, actions, and surroundings. From personal experience, the researcher shares that it is easy to lose focus while washing dishes by thinking about the stress of the day or an upcoming event. However, by practicing mindfulness, focusing on the task at hand becomes more natural and seamless. When participating in a conversation, listen to the words of the person speaking without thinking about how to respond. Heifetz et al., (2009) recommends listening with curiosity and compassion, without judgment, and to allow for silence. Silence can be an awkward feeling, but it is an invitation for the student to participate in the conversation.

Being observant can provide cues that the current conversation isn't depicting what is really going on. Heifetz et al., (2009) refers to the art of listening as the "song beneath the words" (p.76). Is there tension in the student's voice? Does the choice of language match the situation? What is the body language telling you?

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to understand, read, and interpret the emotions of others while also recognizing and managing your own emotion. Hughes et al., (2012) expands on this skill-set by sharing two additional elements of emotional intelligence. These are the ability to understand the cause of the emotions, and the ability to generate emotion to foster thought and action. In summary, the expanded EI requires the ability to perceive, manage, use, and understand emotions. These are powerful skills that help shape and strengthen the Theory of Adaptive Advising.

The role of advisor goes well beyond providing information (Doody, 2015). Practical aspects of guiding the student require a well-equipped tool kit, a solid understanding of the institution and its resources, and the ability to observe and interpret student behavior objectively. Developing advising skills requires time, effort, and practice. The same can be said for leadership skills. Thomas (2008) points out that people tend to focus on outcomes and don't recognize the activities that made those outcomes possible.

One of the activities that Thomas (2008) is referring to is preparation. As an advisor, one can prepare by taking advantage of professional development and training opportunities. Expand advising knowledge by exploring literature and become an expert on advising approaches, theories, and best practices. Utilize resources provided by organizations, like NACADA, that are dedicated to supporting those who provide academic advising.

Understand Your Role

The advisor tool kit. The tools an advisor works with include advising models and techniques. The more knowledge and practice an advisor has in their tool kit the better. To strengthen and maintain a student centered practice, the advisor needs to understand and use multiple advising approaches. Charlie Nutt states that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to advising, and that it is up to the advisor to use the approach that works for the student (Doody, 2015).

Crookston (1972) points out that the developmental advising model seizes the opportunity to provide the student with more than an answer. It is an opportunity to teach the student and for the advisor to also learn through this process. Developmental advising models are student centered approaches that entail accepting the student for who they are in the moment (Higgins, 2017). In order to accept a student in the moment, the advisor has to be prepared to be

unprepared. In other words, an advisor can't assume that a meeting with a student will be routine. The more skills or tools an advisor can acquire in their practice, the more diverse their abilities will be in working with students, not only on a student's best day, but their worst day too.

According to Hughey and Pettay (2013), the motivational approach to advising encourages a change in behavior by helping the student resolve uncertainty about change. For example, rather than ask why a student is not motivated, ask what the student finds motivating. Engaging in reflective conversations is an advising approach that promotes self-authorship. Magolda and King (2008) explain that the goal is to help students learn from how they interpret experiences and how they might use this insight in the future.

Intrusive or proactive advising is the concept of providing the student with information before they request it. Varney (2012) provides an example of implementing an early alert system to identify students at risk and states that early intervention aids in retention. Prescriptive advising is best used for technical challenges. Lowenstein (2009) uses an example of a student that needs to know how many elective credits they need. The prescription in this situation is providing the student with a direct answer outlining the number of credits.

Strengths Based Advising is described by Schreiner and Anderson (2005) as a holistic approach that shifts problems to possibilities. The focus is on student motivation and helps the student realize and use their strengths to be successful. The strengths in this type of advising is that it relies on naturally occurring patterns of talent that we all possess (Clifton, Anderson and Schreiner, 2006). The Clifton StrengthsFinder is an assessment that measures the presence of talent in 34 areas called themes. The results of the assessment highlight and expand on the top five themes. For example, my top five themes are empathy, relator, achiever, positivity, and

learner. Three of my themes, empathy, relator and positivity, are talents that are key in the domain of relationship building so it is no surprise that I found my calling in building relationships with students as a professional advisor. Helping the student discover, develop, and apply their naturally given talents can help them realize their full potential as a student and a leader.

Mobilize the system. The system refers to the network of institutional resources available to students. In order to mobilize the system, advisors need to know how the system works, the role of each department, and how to bring the system together while keeping the student at the center. Students aren't always aware of the campus resources. In fact, some students may not realize they are in need of resources. By knowing the system and effectively communicating with the student, a determination can be made if additional resources are needed. Cuseo (2002) reports that students who seek and utilize campus support services show improvement in academic performance and academic self-efficacy. Advisors who know how to leverage the network of institutional resources are better equipped to help students with ongoing challenges and problems.

Expand your network. In order to better serve the student, it is important to rely on others in the system. Heifetz et al. (2009) state "Each person and group contains a piece of the larger picture that is the organizational system" (p. 209). Network with other advisors and people from other departments to build a circle of contacts to consult when questions arise that are out of your scope of authority. A strong network strengthens the advisors ability to adapt to the needs of students, colleagues, and the institution.

View from the balcony. Heifetz et al. (2009) suggest adaptive leaders step onto the balcony to acquire a clear view of the moving pieces on the dance floor. The adaptive advisor

observes and interprets student behavior objectively to gain a better understanding of the challenge. On the surface, the solution may appear to be very simple. Heifetz et al. (2009) refers to what the adaptive leader sees on the surface as the dance floor. For example, the dance floor view may be the student asking the advisor who they need to speak with about their bill. The adaptive advisor steps onto the balcony and looks beyond the question. The advisor is observing body language, listening to the tone of voice, sensing the energy in the office, and interpreting the choice of words being used. Next, a determination is made on which advising approach or approaches will be most effective. Does the student need to pay their bill? Or, does the student need to talk with someone because income has changed and they can't pay their bill? Thomas (2008) shares that leaders need to ask questions as often as they give answers. Likewise, the adaptive advisor should also spend time asking questions. "Advisors should spend time on understanding the student's problem not only so they can have clarity, but also for the student to feel listened to, valued, and connected" (Ross, 2017, para. 4). Once the challenge is identified, the student and advisor work together to discuss goals and align appropriate resources that will lead to a positive outcome.

Deploy Yourself

Deploying yourself requires a deliberate effort to manage your advising practice while staying connected to your purpose. Heifetz et al. (2009) shares that for an adaptive leader, purpose provides inspiration and direction for their actions. The authors also recommend translating your purpose so others can understand its meaning. Advisors can help others understand by including meaningful items in their office. Print and frame the advising mission statement and display inspirational pictures and quotes as tangible ways to translate your

purpose. Deploying yourself requires sharing a part of you that allows others to feel the passion you have for your practice.

Engage courageously. Adaptive advising requires building the relationship by connecting with the student on an emotional level. In regards to the adaptive leader, “To connect with them authentically and powerfully, between the neck and the navel, you must come from that place in yourself as well.” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 232). To aid this process, the advisor should focus on establishing trust and building the relationship with the student. It is also essential for the advisor to accept and appreciate every student for who they are in the moment without judgment.

A mindful advising practice. Stay in the present and remember that no interaction with the student is routine. Each interaction is an opportunity to make a difference in the students’ life. However small that difference may appear on the surface, a collection of those small influences leaves the student feeling valued, supported and heard.

Keep an open mind when communicating with the student. The advisor can and should have multiple interpretations of what is being heard or observed. Heifetz et al. (2009) shares that having multiple interpretations is a way to prevent our natural tendency to act on what we think is the one and only correct answer. The authors offer a reminder that this can be a difficult task but it creates the ability to see things from multiple perspectives.

Take time to reflect to make sure your actions align with the words that are being used. If a promise is made to a student, follow-through is essential. If an advisor tells a student that they will check in on a particular day, it is priority to make that happen. The advisor strengthens the student relationship through communication and follow through. (Ohrablo, 2014)

Treat your practice as a laboratory. Heifetz et al. (2009) share that adaptive leadership is an “improvisational art” (p. 277) and leading adaptive change is an experiment. Leading in this way offers freedom to try something new and different and helps discover which approaches work best. The adaptive advising practice benefits from the same experimental mind-set. Experimenting with different advising models and approaches enhances the advisors ability to adapt to student needs. In addition, experimental practice provides the experience needed to strengthen adaptive capacity.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature supports the need for advisors to be skilled improvisational experts by understanding advising models and how to best use them based on what the student needs at any given moment. Consequently, there is a need to help advisors strengthen their practice, and learn how to adapt to the student and address needs while maintaining and fostering a positive relationship. This research proposal is aimed to respond to this need by developing a theory that integrates concepts of adaptive leadership into the advising practice thereby strengthening the advisor’s adaptive capacity. Thomas (2008) states that adaptive capacity opens up possibilities by learning about yourself and the world, and what it takes to adapt to and foster change.

Chapter Three: Research Method

This research seeks to build the adaptive advising theory through the analysis of data collected through a convergent mixed methods approach. The mixed methods approach is needed in order to acquire data from multiple perspectives. The interview is with an expert in the field who leads an advising department. The data from the interview participant provides a leadership perspective on advising theories and models, the qualities they look for in new hires, and their thoughts on adaptive leadership. Advisor perspective on the practice of academic

advising and adaptive approaches is gained from administering an online survey. The following questions guide research on integrating elements of adaptive leadership into academic advising practice:

- 1) Advisors adapt to students needs by using a variety of advising models and approaches. Are there additional views and practices shared by supervisors and advisors that align with adaptive leadership?
- 2) Will the concepts of adaptive leadership compliment an existing advising practice?
- 3) Are leadership skills and the ability to adapt important qualities that managers seek when hiring new advisors?

Limitations of Research

Data results obtained are limited to one university and include one interview participant and 26 survey participants. The lack of diversity and viewpoints in the results limits the scope of research. The study would benefit from increasing the number of schools and participants, and expanding the geographic area to obtain a wider range of populations and viewpoints.

Personal bias may exist from the Principal Investigator's role as an advisor.

Delimiters

Participants are all actively employed at the same university and are comprised of professional advisors, former professional advisors who have moved to other departments, TRIO advisors, and administrative support staff who work in the advising department.

Member Checking

To ensure the validity and accuracy of the transcripts, the interview participant was sent an electronic copy of their transcript and asked to check for accuracy. Triangulation was

employed to demonstrate the accuracy of findings from both the qualitative and quantitative sources (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

Site and Participants

The chosen research site was a state university in the northern region of New England. During the Fall 2019 semester there were approximately 8,400 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in 54 undergraduate and 24 graduate programs found within four academic colleges and a School of Law. The research site is the state's only public metropolitan university and is the second largest institution within a seven university state system. The university is comprised of three campuses located in the central and southern part of the state.

The research site employs a partnership advising approach between professional advisors and faculty advisors. Although professional advisors and faculty perform academic advising for the undergraduate student population at the research site, only professional advising staff were asked to participate. The intent of using this sample is to gain perspective on the advising practice through the lens of those whose primary role is or was professional advisor.

There were 38 advisors asked to participate in the quantitative research. The sample is comprised of active professional advisors, former professional advisors who have moved to other departments, TRIO advisors, and administrative support staff who work in the advising department. There was one advising expert in a leadership role asked to participate in the qualitative research.

Recruitment and Access

After receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the research site, recruitment took place to identify those at the institution who met the study's criteria followed by an electronic request for participation (Appendix B). The request outlined the purpose of the

study, criteria for participation, researcher contact information, and provided notice that a survey would be sent via email and that their participation was confidential and voluntary.

The interview participant was recruited with a verbal request to participate. The request outlined the purpose of the study, criteria for participation, researcher contact information, and that participation was confidential and voluntary. The participant and principal investigator mutually agreed to a day, time and location for the interview to take place.

Data Collection

For this study, quantitative data is collected through a 10 question survey focused on gaining perspectives on the advising practice through the lens of the advisor. A copy of the survey questions can be found in Appendix C. The survey was created and data managed using a password protected survey website. No personal identifiers were collected in the survey and email addresses used are stored on a password protected computer managed by the institution. Qualitative data is collected through an in-depth semi-structured interview that focuses on hiring practices and advising theory from the supervisor perspective. The researcher first introduced the study and reviewed the consent form with the participant (Appendix D). After gaining the participants' signature, the researcher began to audio tape the interview using computer software. The utilization of the software provided a transcription of the interview without involving a third party. The interview was 60 minutes in duration, providing adequate time to gather data. Open-ended questions were used to gain insight from the participant based on their experiences. A copy of the interview questions can be found in Appendix E.

Data Storage

After the interview, the digital recording was uploaded to a password protected computer and saved to a secure drive managed by the institution. Handwritten notes are stored in a locked

filing cabinet at the researcher's home. The audio recording was transcribed using software and is stored on a secure drive managed by the institution.

The transcription was electronically sent to the interview participant for their review and to check for accuracy. All audio tapes, transcriptions, and correspondence with participants are stored electronically in a password secured computer. A hard copy is locked in a personal filing cabinet at the researcher's home. Electronic and physical data destruction is planned for once five years have passed from the study completion date.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

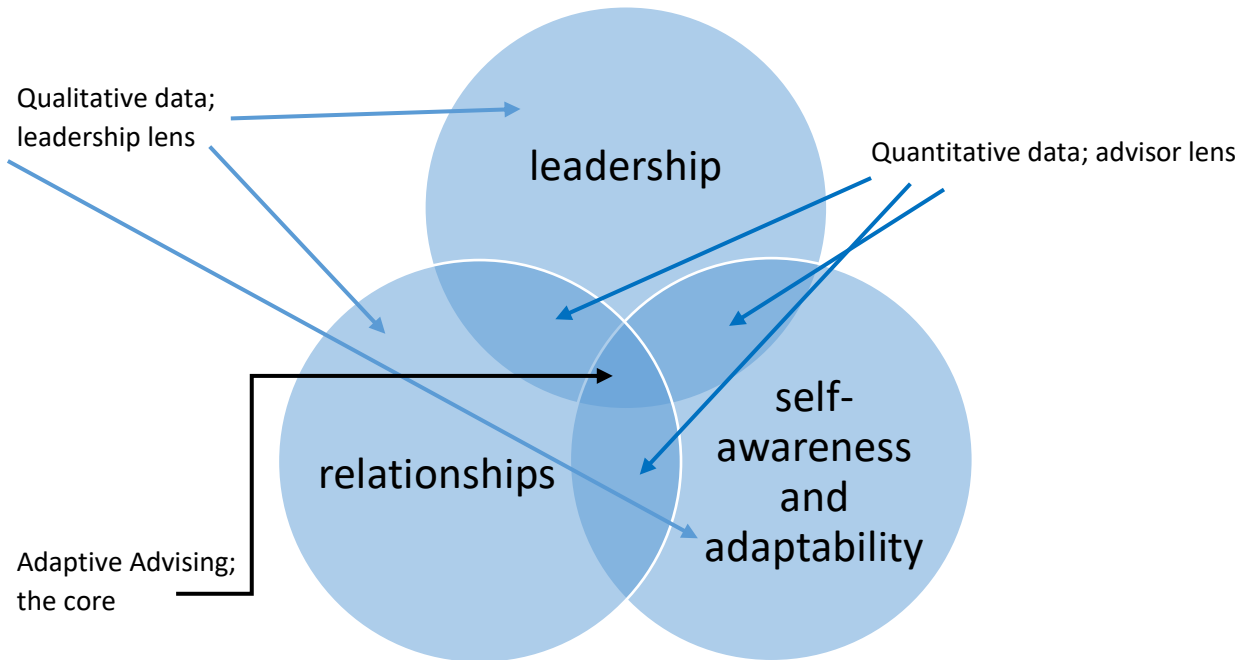
The purpose of this research aimed to develop the Theory of Adaptive Advising by incorporating concepts of adaptive leadership into the advising practice. A mixed methods approach provides an in-depth analysis of how an advising practice can be enhanced by integrating concepts of adaptive leadership.

An interview with a Director of Advising provides perspective through a leadership lens on hiring practices, qualities they look for in new hires, and leadership itself. Through a survey, advisors provide insight on their strengths, advising practice, and views on adaptability. Chapter four discusses the findings as it relates to the Theory of Adaptive Advising.

The interview participant was asked questions in two separate areas. These area focused on (1) practices used in hiring new advisors, and (2) the practice of advising as it relates to advising techniques and approaches and also to adaptive leadership. Survey participants were asked questions in three separate areas. These areas focused on (1) strengths, (2) leadership, and (3) adaptability. Analysis of the data resulted in the emergence of three primary themes: (1) leadership, (2) relationships, and (3) self-awareness and adaptability. Figure 4.1 provides a visual of how the data sources overlap. At the core is adaptive advising. The vision of the

Theory of Adaptive Advising is to expand the center segment, resulting in a larger area of overlap in the themes between the supervisor and advisor.

Figure 4.1. Overlap in Themes



Analysis of the research expands on the themes that emerged; leadership, relationships, and self-awareness and adaptability.

Leadership

The interview participant was asked about qualities and skills they look for when hiring a new advisor. Leadership was identified as the primary quality. Likewise, the survey data reflects that all participants “agree” or “highly agree” that leadership is a skill required in the role of advisor. The interview participant expanded on hiring practices by sharing additional qualities that they associate with leadership. It was shared that the advisor needs to be able to work independently, and also be a leader in their interaction with students, colleagues, and the institution. The interview participant shared, “The other thing that I look for is a level of what I call hunger. It shows that the person really wants the job and for the right reason. It’s the human

aspect of them that is really important.” Through asking questions the interview participant is able to detect if the applicant is truly passionate about advising. “I need to see a glimmer or a sense that advising is a calling for the person. I see it in the physical being, but also in how they answer questions.”

It is also important for the advisor to not be focused on self. Interactions are not about the advisor and should have a student-centered focus. The applicant needs to show authenticity and that they are comfortable with themselves. “There is a sense of vulnerability that is displayed during the interview; that they have a sense of integrity, honesty, and that they are present. Knowledge can be taught, but they have to have the qualities.”

An additional two-part question asked the interview participant to rank the importance of experience, education, and emotional intelligence. The participant needed to rank their importance in relation to hiring an advisor and also in relation to hiring the head of a department. When discussing the advisor, emotional intelligence was priority. “Education...experience, you can get. You build emotional intelligence over a lifetime.” Advising is about bringing yourself into the position, and being able to use that self-awareness in building relationships.

The interview participant shared that applicants with a master’s degree are preferred, but those with a bachelor’s degree have been hired. This is where a connection to hunger is made.

The interview participant stated:

There is an elevated level of thinking, self-awareness, and dedication that one acquires with a master’s degree. However, an applicant with a bachelor degree, a desire for learning, and a drive to continue their education has the hunger and passion that the interview participant seeks. Experience is a bonus. Advising is a profession, but a relatively new profession that, from the outside, may look glamorous and exciting. A

person with experience has a better understanding of the challenges and complexities of advising. Advisors juggle their work with people, policies, procedures, and the institutional structure. In addition, they must also keep the student at the center, and that is complicated.

The second part of the question had a different order of priorities. Emotional intelligence is important. “In order to interact with people on that level, you have to know yourself. You have to be grounded and in tune with others and your interaction with others.” Education is also important:

Working in high education, the degree matters, and there is a level of respect that comes with that from the overall institution. There is also a level of knowledge and thinking that is acquired with a higher level of education. Experience, on the other hand, if you don’t have that experience layer, you can’t just jump into a leadership role.

The interview participant provided additional concepts of leadership as they relate to their role in advising. The first concept the participant shared is that the people you lead are what makes progress possible:

Leadership is relational. When you lead, you are not leading a square box of a department. You are leading a group of people and it doesn’t matter how large or small it is. It is not about moving a box or a department forward, but what is in the box. It is all relational. You can get the work done. You can create strategic plans. You can have goals and all that kind of stuff, but without the core of the people, it is not going to happen.

The second concept is that a leader needs to know their people in order to find the gaps. Getting to know the people the participant leads makes it possible to identify gaps within the

department. When looking through resumes and interviewing applicants, there is a focus on finding the right person who can fill a void. However, the interview participant explained how a resume review goes beyond filling a void within a department:

How is the applicant going to fit with the community? How is the applicant going to lead and be part of a leadership team? How is the applicant going to learn and grow and help us move forward? Will the applicant be able to demonstrate this ability through student interaction? The right person will be part of a leadership team that supports the institutional mission and vision. Total buy in strengthens the department and the institution.

The third concept is contributing to the greater good of the profession. When an advisor is hired, there is an expectation that they will leave the department for something better and for the greater good. In the past few years, three advisors have moved on to leadership roles within the institution:

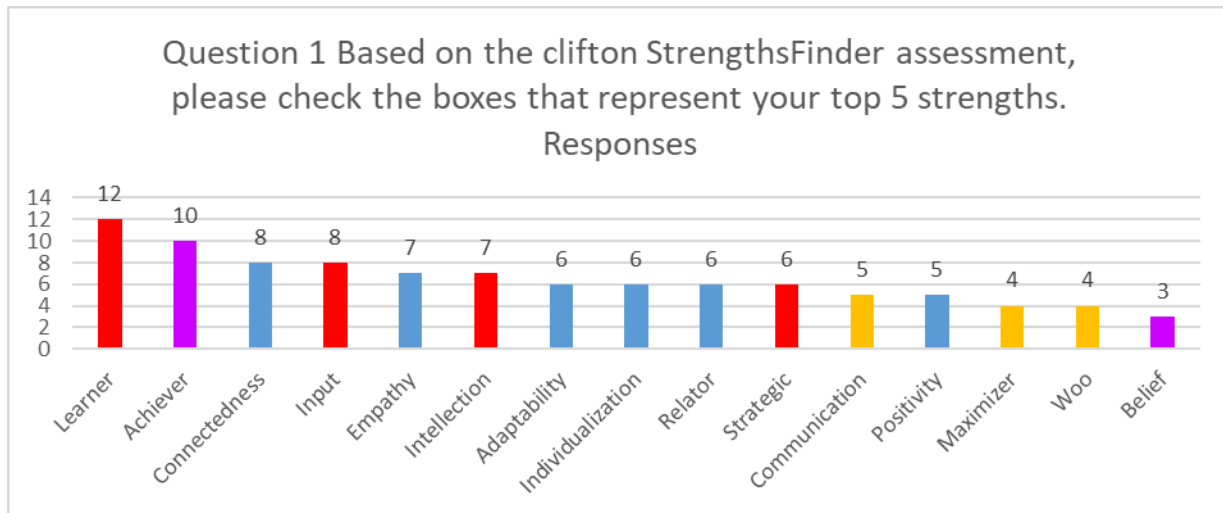
Advisors are hired to contribute to the students' academic experience as well as being grounded in advising and student success. They have an understanding that advising is about student learning. Now, those former advisors are in different areas and they will always have their experience in advising ingrained in them. It is my hope that these leaders look back at their experiences with me as their supervisor and continue that kind of behavior so that they are influencing their own hires through that lens of leadership.

Relationships

The theme of relationships emerged with the results of the first survey question. Participants were asked to list their top five strengths based on the results of the Clifton StrengthsFinder Assessment. The top strengths are natural strengths and support the roles that

individuals have in their professional careers. Graph 4.1 displays the results of the top 15 strengths along with the number of advisors who correspond with that strength.

Graph 4.1. Top 15 Advisor Strengths



A full list of the Clifton Strengths along with a description of each strength is provided in Appendix F. The strengths are grouped in four domains which are identified by a specific color. The domains are grouped based on how the themes help people work together to accomplish goals (Gallop, 2000). Table 4.1 displays the four domains, shows how the survey results for the top 15 strengths are disbursed amongst the domains, and provides the number of times the strength was selected by survey participants.

Table 4.1. Advisor Strengths in Relation to StrengthFinder Domains

Strategic Thinking	Relationship Building	Influencing	Executing
Learner (12)	Connectedness (8)	Communication (5)	Achiever (10)
Input (8)	Empathy (7)	Maximizer (4)	Belief (3)
Intellection (7)	Adaptability (6)	Woo (4)	
Strategic (6)	Individualization (6)		
	Relator (6)		
	Positivity (5)		

The majority of responses fall into two themes; relationship building and strategic thinking. The data shows that 26 participants answered the question and that there are a total of 129 answers selected for the 34 strengths. The top 15 strengths for the 26 participants have a total of 97 answers. Therefore, the top 15 strengths represent 75% of the overall total answers. The top 15 strengths broken down by domain equates to strategic thinking representing 34%, relationship building 39%, influencing 13%, and executing also at 13%.

The results provide clear evidence that relationship building and strategic thinking are dominant themes. Those dominant in relationship building have naturally occurring strengths that aid in building and nurturing relationships. Those dominant in strategic thinking have naturally occurring strengths geared toward processing and analyzing information to aid in decision making (Gallup, 2000).

The top domain of relationship building is supported by the qualitative data. The interview participant provides an applied understanding of relationship building through two lenses, (1) leadership and (2) advising.

Leadership lens. Hiring with leadership qualities in mind, the interview participant shared the complexities of leading a department of leaders:

Having a community of leaders that I supervise sometimes drives me crazy. But during that crazy feeling, I am so excited because it makes my heart sing. They are challenging me in a way that brings out my own vulnerability, but also sometimes makes me fall and scrape my knees. It's like they are in the ring with me and they are helping the institution grow. But I have to be ok in my own skin to be able to do that. If I'm not feeling ok with myself, if I can't be authentic, leading becomes fear based.

The interview participant has established a high level of trust within the advising department. The participant doesn't view the departmental structure of advising as a hierarchy. The interview participant takes responsibility for keeping the department moving forward and that everyone has a commitment to help each other.

The interview participant also shared what can happen if an advisor is hired who isn't a leader. "It is problematic because if they aren't a leader, they don't feel as though they are peers with their colleagues." The participant added that the same thing happens with new advisers that don't have a master's degree. "They are surrounded by leaders who have a master's degree and see themselves 'without' and that can be really tough for a new advisor; it affects individual performance and the team."

Advising lens. In addition to leading an advising department, the interview participant also has her own advising practice. The interview participant was asked if they could see parallels between an adaptive leader and advising. The discussion that followed conveyed a strong correlation between a student centered advisor and an adaptive leader:

Absolutely, without a doubt there are parallels. An advisor can't be an imposter of oneself. They have to be authentic to open up that door of trust and create a connection. A student needs to see an advisor as who they are as a person, so that they can develop a professional trust filled relationship. There is a partnership between the two. The student has an academic learning experience in higher education, but there is also the learning that the professional advisor provides. At the very core, authenticity is so important.

The student/advisor relationship is fostered through active communication and adapting to the student. Survey data show that all 26 participants agree or strongly agree that (1) their advising practice is student centered, (2) they adapt their advising practice based on student

needs, and (3) they use a variety of advising approaches within the same appointment based on what the student needs. The interview stated, “As advisors, every time you interact with a student, whether it is in our office or in a hallway, you have to be ready to adapt to that person. How am I going to help the student get to where they want to be? In some instances, how am I going to help the student discover where they want to be?” A student experiences fear when they don’t know what their goals are, or when they may know the goals, but are unsure how to achieve them. “How do we help students when they walk into our office? How do we help them feel okay with feeling vulnerable?”

The discussion continued with the participant remembering specific teachers throughout her education that helped alleviate that fear by understanding her vulnerability and letting her know that is okay. “Don’t we have a responsibility to our students to be vulnerable as advisors? To just be okay with entering into this ring or this sphere with the student. To be in a personal space with another human being and to help them achieve their goals.” The participant and the advisors they supervise ask each other for help regularly. Rather than be fearful of not knowing the answer to a question, the advisors have comfort in knowing they can rely on each other.

In addition to establishing trust, building the relationship, and adapting to students, there is still a need to get the student to see the value in advising. In other words, if the student doesn’t see the importance of the relationship, they are not as inclined to follow through with appointments. While discussing a student centered advising approach, the interview participant provided insight on the value aspect of advising. The participant met with a brand new student for the very first time who presented himself as a ‘really cool dude’. The impression was given that he was there because he had to be, not because he wanted to be:

I was like, oh my goodness, I have a half hour. How am I going to build trust and help him see that advising is of value? Not that I am of value, but this thing we call advising is of value. If I can help the student see the value, they will be present and participate. The student didn't know me or trust me, but I showcased to him how the advising experience can be of value to him and his future. I knew that the student wanted to be part of the United Nations (UN). I don't know the hiring practices of the UN, but that was his goal. He wants to save money and works full-time. What little I know about him, not from what he said, but by how he presented the answers to my questions, he has a bit of a complicated life. By the end of the appointment we found 19 credits that he did not walk into the office with. That allows him to graduate a semester early and saves him thousands of dollars. It also allows him to look at advising in a different way. I needed to have him see that because he shared in discussion, I was able to determine that he was fluent in another language. It was like a dance that I was playing, but it wasn't about me. It was about the student, his learning, and his goals. Keeping the student in the center supports the institutional mission and values, and also supports the mission, values, and learning outcomes of the advising department. Was I the facilitator of that learning? Yes, but it wasn't because I thought it was about me. It was because it was about the student, his learning, and his goals.

Self-Awareness and adaptability

The action of advising is an opportunity to influence the lives of students. This statement doesn't suggest that every interaction has a significant impact, nor does it imply that every impact is positive. However, the opportunity is always there, and that is powerful. Discussion of the data has provided insight on important elements of the advising practice from two lenses;

leadership and the role of advisor. How can a leader create an environment that instills the belief that every interaction with a student is the opportunity to make a difference? However small that difference may appear on the surface, a collection of those small impacts is the opportunity to change lives. The final theme that emerged from the data suggests that an advisor with self-awareness is the person who will consistently seize the opportunity to influence lives and make a difference, and is more likely to eventually become self-actualized. Self-awareness didn't emerge as clearly as leadership and relationships, but was an undertone throughout the interview.

Table 4.2. Qualities to consider in a new hire

Leadership	Work independently	Authenticity
Adaptability	Not focused on self	Vulnerability
Passionate	Advising is a calling	Being present
Human aspect	Work ethic	Integrity
Honesty	Knowledge	Dedication

The attributes listed in Table 4.2 were shared by the interview participant as important qualities to consider when hiring a new advisor. The attributes could be natural strengths or supported by a person's natural strengths. Others could be the result of education and/or experience. The interview participant also discussed the importance of being comfortable with who you are, being centered, and mindful.

Adaptive advising requires the advisor to adapt to the student based on the situation and what the student needs. To accept each student for who they are in that moment. The interview participant was asked, based on personal experience and the overall discussion with the interviewer, to share their thoughts on further research and examination of adaptive advising. "I

think that whoever is hiring advisors needs to know about the Theory of Adaptive Advising. Because they should be hiring for adaptability and for the acceptance of every human being as a human being.” The discussion transitioned into developing a training program for advisors based the theory. “I think that it would be really interesting to come up with some sort of training on how one can strengthen their quality of adaptability.” In addition to sharing the difficulty of training these soft skills, the interview participant stressed the importance of adaptability:

This is different. Adaptability is about a quality or strength of an advisor that you want them to understand, so they can do it. You want them to be consciously aware of what adaptability is; so that they can be mindful of it. And you want them to be consciously aware of how to adapt. We work with faculty all the time and you have to be adaptable to these different human beings, and their roles. And how to best write something so that you can help that person understand the need behind x, y, and z. Whether you are writing to or meeting with a faculty member or a student. The advisor must understand the concepts around the need to adapt and the ability to adapt in the moment. We have to be able to teach that and hone that skill.

In regards to what the interviewer is looking for in a new hire, one must look at the big picture to see the hidden theme. It is more than a list of qualities, or being centered, or mindful. It is more than a training program to teach and hone the skill of adaptability. Individually these are all important, but collectively they outline the fundamentals of self-awareness.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This mixed methods study was guided by three questions: (1) Advisors adapt to students needs by using a variety of advising models and approaches. Are there additional views and

practices shared by supervisors and advisors that align with adaptive leadership? (2) Will the concepts of adaptive leadership compliment an existing advising practice? (3) Are the ability to adapt and leadership skills important qualities that managers seek when hiring new advisors? The purpose of this study aimed to develop the Theory of Adaptive Advising by incorporating concepts of adaptive leadership into the advising practice.

The literature supports the need for multiple advising models and the need for advisors to be skilled in knowing which model to use based on what the student needs at any given moment. The literature also provides guidance on how several concepts in adaptive leadership can support and strengthen an advising practice. There is a need to help advisors learn how to use these concepts to better adapt to the student and address needs while maintaining and fostering a positive relationship. This research proposal is aimed to respond to this need by developing a theory that integrates concepts of adaptive leadership into the advising practice thereby strengthening the advisors adaptive capacity. Thomas (2008) states that adaptive capacity opens up possibilities by learning about yourself and the world, as well as what it takes to adapt to and foster change.

Future Research

The data results obtained for this research study are limited to one university and include one interview participant and 26 survey participants. The lack of diversity and viewpoints in the results limits the scope of research. The study would benefit from increasing the number of schools and participants, and expanding the geographic area to obtain a wider range of populations and viewpoints.

The leadership style of the interview participant aligns with many aspects of adaptive leadership. The proposed Theory of Adaptive Advising would hold more validity by increasing the number of interview participants and incorporating different leadership styles.

The field of academic advising would benefit from future research to develop and implement a training program to teach professionals how to incorporate adaptive advising into their practice. Based on feedback from the interview participant, hiring managers in advising departments would benefit from understanding the adaptive advising theory. After learning about adaptive advising, the interview participant shared that hiring managers need to be more conscious about asking questions regarding the applicants level of adaptability.

Recommendations for an adaptive advising training program would include guidance for leaders on how to assess self-awareness and adaptability, and how to strengthen improvisational expertise and adaptive capacity.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study aimed to develop the Theory of Adaptive Advising by incorporating concepts of adaptive leadership into the practice of academic advising. The researcher found a strong association between the elements of adaptive advising (Figure 1.1), and the desired qualities the interview participant seeks in a new hire (Table 4.2). Self-awareness is a vital part of achieving the desired outcome in both areas. An advisor who is self-aware has an understanding of who they are, what motivates them, and how their actions and reactions affect others. They understand how to adjust and adapt to others in the moment. They understand their weaknesses and learn how to motivate others in spite of those weaknesses.

Analysis of the interview data presents the essential qualities that are sought after when hiring a new advisor. Concepts of adaptive leadership united with the themes that emerged from

the data analysis construct an advising theory that supports the needs of the student, the advisor, and the institution.

In this study, the researcher approached advising through the lens of an adaptive leader. The action of advising is a difficult and complex role. On one side of the scale you have the student, and on the other side you have policies, procedures, institutional structure, and the overall demands of advising. Attending to all facets of the role is not an easy undertaking. Maintaining balance while keeping the student at the center and taking care of oneself is a challenge within the role of advising. The vision of the researcher is to help achieve and maintain balance for individual advisors, leaders, and departments by integrating the conceptual framework of adaptive advising into the practice of academic advising. The result is the Theory of Adaptive Advising; a student centered approach.

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Signature Page

ADAPTIVE ADVISING
A STUDENT CENTERED APPROACH
FINAL APPROVAL FORM

The University of Southern Maine
Leadership Studies Program

May 1, 2020

We hereby recommend that the thesis of Laurie J. Lentz entitled Adaptive Advising A Student Centered Approach be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Leadership Studies Program.



Advisor, Elizabeth Goryunova, Ph.D, MBA



Second Reader, Elizabeth Higgins

Accepted



Leadership and Organizational Studies Department Chair

Appendix A

Notice of IRB Review and Approval

**NOTICE OF EVALUATION-EXEMPT**

DATE: October 02, 2019
TO: Laurie Lentz Roy, Leadership Studies
 Elizabeth Goryunova, Leadership Studies
FROM: Casey Webster, Human Protections Administrator, Joint IRB
PROTOCOL TITLE: Adaptive Advising A Student Centered Approach
FUNDING SOURCE:
PROTOCOL NUMBER: 19-09-1320
 Approval Date: October 02, 2019

The Office of Research Integrity and Outreach (ORIO) has evaluated the project named above. This study has been granted an exemption from USM IRB review per Title 45 CFR Part 46. This designation is based on the assumption that the materials that you submitted to the IRB contain a complete and accurate description of all the ways in which human subjects are involved in your research.

This exemption is given with the following terms:

1. You will conduct the project according to the plans and protocol you submitted;
2. No further contact with the ORIO is necessary unless you make changes to your project or adverse events or injuries to subjects occur;
3. If you propose to make any changes to the project, you must submit the changes to the ORIO for review; you will not initiate any changes until they have been reviewed and approved by the ORIO;
4. If any adverse events or injuries to subjects occur, you will report these immediately to the ORIO;
5. As applicable, you will comply with the University of Maine Information Security Policy and Standards and/or the Muskie School of Public Service Securing Protected Information Policies and Procedures and any other applicable USM policies or procedures; and
6. You will close the project upon completion (or discontinuation).

The University appreciates your efforts to conduct research in compliance with the federal regulations that have been established to ensure the protection of human subjects in research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Casey Webster'.

Casey Webster

Appendix B

Electronic request sent to participants

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is Laurie Lentz. I am a graduate student at the University of Southern Maine working on a research study to propose a new theory in academic advising. I am asking you to participate in my research study by answering survey questions regarding advising practices. You are eligible to participate because of your past or present role as an advisor at the University of Southern Maine.

Friday, November 22, 2019, a survey will be sent to your maine.edu email address. There will be no compensation or cost associated with your participation. I will use the information to assess the need for the proposed advising theory. The time commitment to participate in the interview will be no more than 10 minutes.

Participation is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in the study or not. If you'd like to participate, you will submit answers to the survey. The survey is anonymous; no personal identifiers will be used in the survey responses.

If you have any more questions about this process or if you need to contact me about participation, I may be reached at laurie.lentz@maine.edu or 207-400-0672.

Thank you so much.

Appendix C

Quantitative research questions

- 1) Based on the Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment, please check the boxed that represent your top five strengths. (see full list in Appendix F)
- 2) What advising model do you feel best matches your advising style? Prescriptive, Developmental, Proactive, I use different models based on individual needs, Other (please specify)
- 3) My advising practice is student centered. Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
- 4) The role of advisor requires leadership skills.
Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
- 5) As an advisor it is important to stick to an agenda and stay focused on completing tasks.
Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
- 6) In your advising practice, describe how you balance student expectations with student accountability. Open ended
- 7) When advising student, I adapt my practice to meet the needs for that student for that particular meeting. Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
- 8) In my advising practice, I use a variety of advising approaches within the same appointment based on what the student needs. Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
- 9) As an advisor, my days are unpredictable. Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

10) In regards to your advising practice, what does adaptability mean to you? Open ended

Appendix D

University of Southern Maine
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Project Title: *Adaptive Advising, A student centered approach*

Principal Investigator(s): *Laurie Lentz Roy, Graduate Student in Leadership Studies, University of Southern Maine, laurie.lentz@maine.edu or 207-400-0672. Faculty Advisor, Elizabeth Goryunova Ph.D., Leadership Studies, University of Southern Maine, Elizabeth.goryunova@maine.edu*

Introduction:

General requirement language:

- Please read this form, you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose to participate, document your decision.
- You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether or not you want to participate. Your participation is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

- The purpose of this study is to propose a new theory in advising named adaptive advising. The results of this study will be used to determine if the proposal is a valid theory.
- The research will also determine if there is a need for adaptive advising.

Who will be in this study?

- You have been asked to participate in this study because of your leadership experience in the advising profession with expertise in hiring practices and advising theory. Participants in this study include two interview subjects. An

online survey will all be sent to approximately 50 advisors who are currently working in an active practice.

What will I be asked to do?

- Your participation will involve answering questions relating to academic advising, advising theory and hiring practices.
- Your participation will involve no more than two hours of time.
- There will be no reimbursement or compensation for participation in this project.
- If you agree to participate, the researcher will not collect any personal identifiers.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- This is a minimal risk research study. That means that the risks of participating are no more likely or serious than those you encounter in everyday activities

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The advising population could potentially benefit from the research and the data analysis. It is possible that the results could be used as a learning tool to improve advising practices and the student experience

What will it cost me?

- You will not incur any cost as a result of participation in the research.

How will my privacy be protected?

- Reasonable accommodations will be made to conduct interviews in a place that you identify as comfortable to protect your privacy.
- No personal identifiers will appear on the responses.
- Cumulative results will be published in a thesis and will contain no personal identifiers.

How will my data be kept confidential?

- All documents and audio recordings associated with this study will be stored in a secured drive on the University of Southern Maine's computer system.
- It is unlikely, but possible, that University of Southern Maine, state, or federal officials may require me to share the information you give me from the study to ensure that the research was conducted safely and appropriately.

- We will only share your information if law or policy requires us to do so.
- Online surveys will be conducted through Survey Monkey and will contain no person identifiers.
- In this study the results will only be disclosed cumulatively.
- A copy of your signed consent form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least 3 years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The consent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.

What are my rights as a research participant?

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University of Southern Maine.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate, there is no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the research there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

General requirement language:

- The researcher conducting this study is Laurie Lentz Roy. For questions or more information concerning this research you may contact her at (207)400-0672 or laurie.lentz@maine.edu. The faculty advisor for the research project, Elizabeth Goryunova Ph.D., can be reached via email at Elizabeth.goryunova@maine.edu.
- If you choose to participate in this research study and believe you may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Elizabeth Goryunova Ph.D. at Elizabeth.goryunova@maine.edu.

- If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may call the USM Research Compliance Administrator at (207) 228-8434 and/or email usmorio@maine.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?

- You will be given a copy of this consent form.

Participant's Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my participation as a research subject. I agree to take part in the research and do so voluntarily.

Participant's signature

Date

Printed name

Researcher's Statement

The participant named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher's signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix E

Qualitative research questions

- 1) What qualities do you look for when hiring a new advisor?
- 2) Are these the same qualities you expect to see in a leader?
- 3) Experience, education and emotional intelligence. Do you think that all three are equally important in an advisor? Or, is there one that is more important than the others. Why?
- 4) Is your answer the same if we were discussing a leader? Why?
- 5) When looking through resumes, what are you looking for?
- 6) What stands out to you that would spark your attention and make you want to meet the applicant?
- 7) What is the turnover like in advising?
- 8) What are your thoughts on advisors leaving to work in other departments?
- 9) Are the advisors you hire leaders?
- 10) Based on the explanation of adaptive leadership that I have provided, can you see the parallels between an adaptive leader and an advisor?
- 11) There are many different advising techniques an advisor can use when working with a student. Are there specific advising models/techniques that you favor over others?
- 12) How do you define student centered approach? Do advisors use a variety of advising models?
- 13) Is there an example you can share of an advisor needing to use multiple models in the same appointment?
- 14) In what ways do you see advisors adapting to their advisees?

15) Charlie Nutt describes advisors as the GPS for students. What does this mean to you?

16) Please share your thoughts on adaptive advising? Do you think there is a need to introduce this theory in advising?

17) Based on your experience and the topics we have discussed today, do you think adaptive advising is an area that warrants further research and examination? Are there particular aspects of adaptive advising that you would like to see expanded? What are they?

Appendix F

Clifton Strengths Themes

1. **Achiever:** People exceptionally talented in the Achiever theme work hard and possess a great deal of stamina. They take immense satisfaction in being busy and productive.
2. **Activator:** People exceptionally talented in the Activator theme can make things happen by turning thoughts into action. They want to do things now, rather than simply talk about them.
3. **Adaptability:** People exceptionally talented in the Adaptability theme prefer to go with the flow. They tend to be “now” people who take things as they come and discover the future one day at a time.
4. **Analytical:** People exceptionally talented in the Analytical theme search for reasons and causes. They have the ability to think about all of the factors that might affect a situation.
5. **Arranger:** People exceptionally talented in the Arranger theme can organize, but they also have a flexibility that complements this ability. They like to determine how all of the pieces and resources can be arranged for maximum productivity.
6. **Belief:** People exceptionally talented in the Belief theme have certain core values that are unchanging. Out of these values emerges a defined purpose for their lives.
7. **Command:** People exceptionally talented in the Command theme have presence. They can take control of a situation and make decisions.
8. **Communication:** People exceptionally talented in the Communication theme generally find it easy to put their thoughts into words. They are good conversationalists and presenters.

9. Competition: People exceptionally talented in the Competition theme measure their progress against the performance of others. They strive to win first place and revel in contests.
10. Connectedness: People exceptionally talented in the Connectedness theme have faith in the links among all things. They believe there are few coincidences and that almost every event has meaning.
11. Consistency: People exceptionally talented in the Consistency theme are keenly aware of the need to treat people the same. They crave stable routines and clear rules and procedures that everyone can follow.
12. Context: People exceptionally talented in the Context theme enjoy thinking about the past. They understand the present by researching its history.
13. Deliberative: People exceptionally talented in the Deliberative theme are best described by the serious care they take in making decisions or choices. They anticipate obstacles.
14. Developer: People exceptionally talented in the Developer theme recognize and cultivate the potential in others. They spot the signs of each small improvement and derive satisfaction from evidence of progress.
15. Discipline: People exceptionally talented in the Discipline theme enjoy routine and structure. Their world is best described by the order they create.
16. Empathy: People exceptionally talented in the Empathy theme can sense other people's feelings by imagining themselves in others' lives or situations.
17. Focus: People exceptionally talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act.

18. Futuristic: People exceptionally talented in the Futuristic theme are inspired by the future and what could be. They energize others with their visions of the future.
19. Harmony: People exceptionally talented in the Harmony theme look for consensus. They don't enjoy conflict; rather, they seek areas of agreement.
20. Ideation: People exceptionally talented in the Ideation theme are fascinated by ideas. They are able to find connections between seemingly disparate phenomena.
21. Includer: People exceptionally talented in the Includer theme accept others. They show awareness of those who feel left out and make an effort to include them.
22. Individualization: People exceptionally talented in the Individualization theme are intrigued with the unique qualities of each person. They have a gift for figuring out how different people can work together productively.
23. Input: People exceptionally talented in the Input theme have a need to collect and archive. They may accumulate information, ideas, artifacts or even relationships.
24. Intellection: People exceptionally talented in the Intellection theme are characterized by their intellectual activity. They are introspective and appreciate intellectual discussions.
25. Learner: People exceptionally talented in the Learner theme have a great desire to learn and want to continuously improve. The process of learning, rather than the outcome, excites them.
26. Maximizer: People exceptionally talented in the Maximizer theme focus on strengths as a way to stimulate personal and group excellence. They seek to transform something strong into something superb.
27. Positivity: People exceptionally talented in the Positivity theme have contagious enthusiasm. They are upbeat and can get others excited about what they are going to do.

28. Relator: People exceptionally talented in the Relator theme enjoy close relationships with others. They find deep satisfaction in working hard with friends to achieve a goal.
29. Responsibility: People exceptionally talented in the Responsibility theme take psychological ownership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty.
30. Restorative: People exceptionally talented in the Restorative theme are adept at dealing with problems. They are good at figuring out what is wrong and resolving it.
31. Self-Assurance: People exceptionally talented in the Self-Assurance theme feel confident in their ability to take risks and manage their own lives. They have an inner compass that gives them certainty in their decisions.
32. Significance: People exceptionally talented in the Significance theme want to make a big impact. They are independent and prioritize projects based on how much influence they will have on their organization or people around them.
33. Strategic: People exceptionally talented in the Strategic theme create alternative ways to proceed. Faced with any given scenario, they can quickly spot the relevant patterns and issues.
34. Woo: People exceptionally talented in the Woo theme love the challenge of meeting new people and winning them over. They derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection with someone.