

**Brief Comparison of Five Developmental Measures:  
the GLP, the MAP, the LDP, the SOI, and the WUSCT**  
primarily in terms of pragmatic and transformational validity and efficacy

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**Executive Summary**

*A brief comparison is offered among five related adult development measures – the Torbert/Herdman-Barker Global Leadership Profile (GLP), the Harthill Leadership Development Profile (LDP), the Cook-Greuter Mature Assessment for Professionals Profile (MAP), the Kegan Subject-Object Interview (SOI), and the Loevinger Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT). This comparison puts special emphasis on the criteria of pragmatic and transformational validity and efficacy – that is, on the relative usefulness of the different measures in leadership development and organizational change efforts. On these grounds, the MAP and the GLP are found to have the best claims to validity and usefulness. Finally, the fact that the GLP springs from the new Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry (CDAI) paradigm of science and that it scores only through the Early Alchemist action-logic, the latest action-logic that makes an empirically-demonstrated leadership difference, is presented as a unique advantage.*

What follows is a brief comparison among five related adult development measures – the Torbert/Herdman-Barker Global Leadership Profile (GLP), the Harthill Leadership Development Profile (LDP), the Cook-Greuter Mature Adult Profile (MAP), the Kegan Subject-Object Interview (SOI), and the Loevinger Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT). This comparison is, as you will see, not complete; rather, it puts special emphasis on the criteria of pragmatic and transformational validity and efficacy – that is, on the relative usefulness of the different measures in leadership development and organizational change efforts. Before making the comparisons, I offer a short history of my relationship to all these measures. After making the comparisons, I offer a short history of the reliability and validity testing of the sentence-completion adult development measures (the WUSCT, LDP, MAP, and GLP), which are all predominantly based on sentence stems from the WUSCT.

## **My Relationship to the Five Measures and Particularly to the Four Sentence Completion Measures (WUSCT, LDP, MAP, GLP)**

Before offering the actual comparison among the measures, it is important to clarify my relationship to these five approaches, so that the reader can appreciate both my close familiarity with all five as well as my possible bias, given my current engagement with the GLP. I have been a colleague and friend of Bob Kegan's since 1974 (long before he and his associates created the SOI), as well as a colleague and friend of Susanne Cook-Greuter's since 1980, and of the Harthill owners from 1992. I also corresponded repeatedly with Jane Loevinger, who created the WUSCT measure, in the early 1980s, as I and my associates adapted Loevinger's measure and language into the Leadership Development Profile, with the capacity to offer feedback to in-the-field leaders.

I began doing empirical field and laboratory research on the relationship between people's developmental action-logic and their organizational leadership actions and effects in 1980. I have published peer-reviewed quantitative, qualitative, and action research, alone and with many colleagues on these issues ever since (most recently my June, 2013, *Integral Review* summary article, <http://www.integral-review.org> which contains the most detailed statistical analysis of the action inquiry approach to leadership and organization development).

At the outset, I used Jane Loevinger's WUSCT in my adult development and organization transformation research, replacing four of the sentence stems with work-related stems that had been independently validated (her form had been originally created for teenage girls and had no work-related stems). I engaged the Loevinger-certified scorer, Susanne Cook-Greuter, to score the sentence completion forms. I already had developed a theory of adult development that highlighted an early action-logic (the Expert) that Loevinger did not mention except as a transition point, and that defined later action-logics very differently from Loevinger. Cook-Greuter also diverged from Loevinger in her understanding of the later action-logics, and she eventually established the reliability and validity of a different conception and different scoring categories for the later action-logics in her 1999 Harvard doctoral dissertation (with both Kegan and myself on her committee). During the 1990s and early 2000s Cook-Greuter and I allied with Harthill Consulting in the UK to make the LDP commercially available.

By 2005, Cook-Greuter separated from Harthill, allied with the Integral Institute, renamed her measure the MAP, with minor wording changes in some of the sentence stems from the LDP, becoming an ever more widely-known and respected scholar/practitioner in her own right. In 2010, the Harthill owners claimed the LDP intellectual property in its then current form as theirs exclusively, and I too separated from Harthill. In 2012, like Cook-Greuter in 2005, Elaine Herdman-Barker (a Cook-Greuter trained scorer, as well as executive coach and consultant) and I created a slightly-different version of the instrument – the GLP (with the Loevinger and other pre-Harthill

stems still making up 24 of the 30 GLP stems, and the GLP still scored by the same scorers as the LDP).

Along with the slightly-revised instrument itself, Herdman-Barker and I also developed: 1) an entirely new set of feedback materials for business and research clients; and 2) invited 28 additional scholar-practitioners (half women, half men) to form the Action Inquiry Fellowship. This fellowship is intended to guard the integrity and ongoing inquiry process around the paradigm, theory, research, and practice formally known as Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry (CDAI), which embraces and interweaves 1<sup>st</sup>-, 2<sup>nd</sup>-, and 3<sup>rd</sup>-person research and practice, including the GLP as our primary 3<sup>rd</sup>-person psychometric instrument. We attempt to test the validity and reliability of the GLP, not only in the field and statistically, but also through our efforts at timely action at our AI Fellows' twice-annual three-day retreats, our collaborative research and writing, our leadership development workshops, and our client engagements.

Thus, the reliability, validity, and field testing of the WUSCT, the LDP, the MAP, and the GLP have been cumulative since 1980, with new methods and practices emerging in recent years, as will be discussed in more detail below. First, however, I offer the following direct comparison among the five measures in terms of their validity and efficacy from a client's perspective.

### **Pragmatic and Validity Considerations in Choosing Among the Five Measures**

From the client's perspective, I first eliminate Kegan's SOI from further consideration – even though it is theoretically the most elegant and methodologically the most differentiated of the theories and measures. I nevertheless eliminate the SOI on pragmatic grounds because it is an interview of an hour or more, requiring further hours to analyze and score each interview. It is thus virtually impossible to administer, score, or debrief in any kind of bulk at any kind of reasonable price for large scale research, executive coaching, or consulting samples.

Nonetheless, for those trained in the SOI approach, it can be very useful for coaching executive clients and consulting to small executive teams. Moreover, Kegan-student Jennifer Garvey Berger and her partners have created the most deep-ranging global monthly conversations about developmental theory and practice through their Growth Edge Network calls. A recent [Helsing & Howell, 2014] *Journal of Management Inquiry* article illustrates both the SOI's research potential and its limitations. And Bob Kegan and Lisa Lahey's April 2014 *Harvard Business Review* article highlights two large, late-action-logic organizations that promote all their employees' development.

Next, I eliminate the Loevinger WUSCT from further consideration – even though it is the original instrument from which the GLP, the LDP, and the MAP have grown... and even though a majority of the stems in each of the three more recent versions are stems from, and validated by, the initial WUSCT research... and even though, as well, many of the psychometric validity tests (i.e. tests of predicted correlations in relation to other measures of psychological constructs) are tests using the WUSCT, to which the LDP, MAP, and GLP still refer back as partial grounds for their validity.

My two main reasons for eliminating the WUSCT from consideration are that: 1) it lacks all face validity for professionals and leaders seeking to use it for insight and increased leadership action efficacy, since it lacks sentence stems relating to the work world, as well as any history of, or client report for, offering any feedback to support leadership development; 2) it contains a great deal of evaluative language to which clients and h.r. departments object; and 3) as Cook-Greuter (1999) long ago showed, the WUSCT also lacks both a coherent theory of, and methodology for, scoring the relatively rare Inter-Independent leadership action-logics (i.e. those beyond the Dependent and Independent action-logics, namely the Transforming and Alchemical action-logics). This is a key point because, once organizations come to appreciate the rare competitive and cooperative advantages offered by senior executives measured as operating from the Inter-Independent action-logics (Transforming and early Alchemical), instruments capable of distinguishing such persons will gain recognition for their educational and practical values.

I turn next to the LDP as the chronologically first of the three measures and processes of feedback that share the most common heritage, that are most similar to one another, and that are most directly focused on leadership development. Although in earlier years the LDP generated some of the most well-known findings supporting the transformational efficacy of CDAI, the recent history of the LDP results in: 1) its having lost both research principals of the measure (Susanne Cook-Greuter and myself); 2) a consequent lack of current and going-forward research on validity or reliability; and 3) its lack of profile-by-profile reliability review or systematic testing against clients' self-estimates. This makes the LDP difficult to recommend.

By this process of elimination, I come to judge the MAP and the GLP as the two most practical and defensibly valid measures of leaders' developmental action-logics at present.

### **Comparing the MAP and the GLP**

Now I turn to the similarities and differences between the MAP and the GLP. I

would say that the similarities include:

- a) the fact that they both benefit from Torbert and Cook-Greuter's quarter century of work in tandem on validity and reliability studies of the LDP, with Cook-Greuter now leading the MAP work and Torbert the GLP work;
- b) the fact that both versions of the measure are scored by Cook-Greuter-trained scorers;
- c) the fact that they both benefit from Torbert's practical, theoretical, and empirical research into individual, organizational, and scientific developmental action-logics, which is responsible for much of the scientifically-tested external validity these measures can claim (i.e. their pertinence to questions of how leaders and organizations transform in the real world);
- d) the fact that both the MAP and the GLP have debriefers and executive coaches trained and authorized by Susanne Cook-Greuter (MAP) and Elaine Herdman-Barker (GLP);
- e) the fact that Cook-Greuter and her MAP-trained scorers, as well as Torbert, Herdman-Barker and other Action Inquiry Fellows, are all (relatively) advanced 1<sup>st</sup>-person action researchers (thus relatively aware of the way and degree that their actions and interpretations influence the clients with whom they are working).

Differences that I see between the GLP and the MAP include:

- a) the MAP report is somewhat more oriented toward psychological, theoretical, and methodological issues, whereas the GLP report is somewhat more oriented toward practicing leaders.
- b) certified MAP coaches receive nine days of workshop training, whereas authorized GLP coaches receive three days of workshop training;
- c) the MAP report is about three times longer than the GLP report;
- d) there are more recently published reliability and validity statistics on the GLP scorers than on the MAP scorers;
- e) reliability is checked on every single GLP score, as well as against client self-estimates (in a somewhat similar vein, the MAP scorers participate in regular calls to discuss interesting scoring and debriefing challenges and engage in ongoing training to maintain reliability levels);
- f) the GLP has renamed the 'Individualist' and 'Strategist' action-logics 'Redefining' and 'Transforming,' responding to concerns that the former names did not convey well the leadership advantages of those two action-logics;
- g) perhaps *the biggest technical and theoretical difference* between the two measures is that the MAP scoring system claims to be able to find differences that make a leadership difference beyond the Alchemist developmental action-logic; by contrast the GLP scoring system ends at "Early Alchemist" (see explanation below). In support of the GLP approach, I know of no refereed publication supporting the MAP claim. However, in support of future research on the MAP position (and also in support of further research on the newest developmental measure, Terri

O'Fallon's "stAGES") these measures may in the future yield significant new leadership findings.

(The reason I don't believe they will succeed in doing so is: 1) that they are not engaged in the necessary research so far as I can find out; and 2) that the CDAI theory and practice, from which the GLP springs, claims that movement to 'Fully Alchemical,' 'Ironic,' and 'Elder' action-logics cannot be reliably measured by a purely linguistic social science measure [e.g. all five {now six} of the measures under review]. This is because the latest developmental transformations engage fundamentally pre-and-post linguistic qualities of attention physically and emotionally embodied in timely action; these qualities generate a more embracing attention than languaged thought to what occurs in the present and the emerging future].)

h) perhaps the biggest practical difference between the MAP and the GLP occurs **after** you've taken the measure and debriefed the MAP or GLP report. While the debriefing and coaching with regard to both measures is excellent, the GLP follow-up includes the whole arena of CDAI practices tested in many organizations. The CDAI approach includes not only the personal developmental action-logics, but also the organizational development action-logics, the scientific action-logics, the three types of feedback, and eight different types of power that can be interwoven in action. Thus, CDAI explicitly integrates 1<sup>st</sup>-, 2<sup>nd</sup>-, and 3<sup>rd</sup>-person research in the midst of practice, providing researcher/practitioners with a complex set of perspectives and post-perspectival awareness relevant to taking timely action.

### **A Brief History of the Cumulative Reliability and Validity Testing of the Sentence Completion Measures**

This section offers an overview of the history of reliability and validity testing of the four sentence completion measures, all of which share about 80% of the same sentence stems.

In the 1960s, when I was learning social science at Yale, the most advanced and authoritative methodological wisdom by those working within the Empirical Positivist paradigm (Popper, Campbell and Stanley, etc.)... Was that, if you wanted to develop and use a new measure that relied on expert scoring (like the SOI, WUSCT, LDP, MAP, GLP, or stAGES), you first needed to develop high reliability among scorers (.80 at minimum; over .90 impressive). Otherwise, its scoring would be purely arbitrary and any attempts at correlating the measure in predictable ways with other psychological or sociological measures or real world outcomes could not help but be spurious, and would almost certainly not be statistically significant.

If you succeeded in the first task (achieving reliability), you would next establish “internal validity” or “psychometric validity” which, broadly but incompletely, means testing it against other measures that have already proven their worth in the social science community. Loevinger and her students’ work with the WUSCT addressed itself largely to these two issues of reliability and internal validity. Thus, for example, Loevinger trained scorers to high levels of reliability, and tested the WUSCT against many other measures, such as Rokeach’s Closed-Open Values measure, accurately predicting a high correlation between later developmental action-logics and Openness.

After that stage of internal and psychometric validity testing, according to methodological opinion, you explored the measure’s “external validity,” which, again broadly and again incompletely, means testing the measure against some predicted real-world outcomes. This is the type of testing my colleagues and I have been most interested in doing over the past 30+ years in relation to the LDP/MAP/GLP family of instruments. Statistically significant results of external validity testing not only provide new substantive social science knowledge, but also reinforce the validity of the instrument itself. For example, we have found very powerful correlations (accounting for more than half the variance in the outcomes) in terms of the organizational action-logic necessary before an organization systematically supports leadership development at work. Another finding that accounts for more than half the variance shows which leadership action-logics are necessary to reliably succeed in generating organizational transformation. More specifically, only those CEOs and lead consultants who have measured at the Transforming or early Alchemical action-logics reliably generate positive organizational transformation (leading to larger market share, profits, and reputation).

Once a measure has satisfied reliability, internal-validity, and external-validity criteria, it and/or its scorers need only satisfy external-validity tests henceforward, since no measure can repeatedly show statistically-significant, externally-valid results unless it is being scored reliably and actually measures the variable it claims to measure (internal validity). The external validity tests become increasingly persuasive as one uses additional methods and research designs (e.g. laboratory experiments, field action research, interviews, non-obtrusive measures, etc.), as has been the case in the external validity testing related to the LDP/GLP family of measures.

Once scorers of a measure have attained reliability as determined by traditional reliability tests (where both scorers score the same set of items and their level of agreement is assessed), the best way to maintain and increase reliability is to conduct a reliability test on the scoring of each measure, by having a second scorer review the first. For example, this kind of reliability test has been conducted by the GLP scorers on 805 measures, each of which could have been scored at 13 different levels (e.g. Early Diplomatic, Diplomatic, Late Diplomatic, etc.). The result showed a .96 Pearson correlation between the two scorers, with perfect agreement in 72% of the cases, with a 1/3 action-logic disagreement in 22% of the cases, and with only one case of a disagreement larger than one full action-logic. The cases of disagreement led to negotiated agreements prior to feedback to clients, and these agreements were presumably more accurate in most cases than the original score. Thus, this process not only served as a reliability test, but also made the results offered to clients more accurate.

Every single GLP score and commentary is reviewed by a senior developmental researcher prior to release to the client or research participant. Moreover, every client/research-participant who takes the GLP is introduced to a systematic self-assessment process of their own action-logic, prior to receiving feedback about their center-of-gravity action-logic from the GLP. To date, clients' estimates differ from the GLP in only 9% of the cases. In 2/3 of the cases of disagreement, discussion has led to client agreement with the GLP score; in the other 1/3 of the cases the GLP debriefer came to agree with the participants' self-estimate (usually because English was not the respondents' first language and affected their written performance [the GLP now permits participants to use Spanish, and the MAP can be taken in Spanish, German, French, Portuguese, or Russian]). This process of case-by-case exploration of reliability with research participants is, simultaneously, a new form of reliability testing and a new form of external validity testing.

A different kind of external validity test, both from the one just mentioned and from the earlier examples, is one where you theoretically predict a difference that should exist among the measures themselves, and then see whether it exists empirically. Using the foregoing 805 measures plus another 86 measures scored by a single scorer with occasional review, a cluster analysis test of construct validity was conducted to assess whether the theoretically-predicted difference in cognitive complexity exists between Conventional action-logics (up through late-Achiever) and Post-Conventional action-logics (starting at early-Redefining). The prediction is that Conventional thinking involves sharply distinct classes of phenomena, whereas Post-Conventional thinking involves more mutable boundaries. We analyzed the underlying pattern of two separate sub-samples: 1) 830 protocols rated overall as 'Conventional'; and 2) 61 protocols rated overall as 'Post-conventional.'

We found a remarkable, qualitative difference between the Conventional and Post-Conventional cluster analyses, immediately observable in the two figures in Livne-Tarandach and Torbert (*Integral Review*, 2009). For the Conventional action-logics, stem-response ratings load on eight distinct factors, each of the eight nodes indicating a similar pattern of answers and scores. For example, stems 3, 17, 20, 22, 24 that make up cluster 6 reflect the high correlation in scores assigned to this set of stem-responses across the different respondents. Overall, this cluster analysis of the factors, or overarching themes, that emerge when analyzing Conventional protocols is itself quite conventional statistically: distinct clusters or factors show up, with different sentence stems associated with each distinct factor.

In contrast, we found a strikingly different pattern emerging from Post-Conventional profiles. For the Post-conventional action-logics (Redefining and later), stem-responses loaded on 11 factors, but loadings were not confined to one factor per stem. More than half (52%) of the stems loaded on two factors or more (9 stems loaded on 2 factors, 7 loaded on 3 factors, and 3 loaded on 4 factors).

The stably-focused Conventional factor loadings represent a relatively simple mental map, with Aristotelian-ly distinct, independent, lasting categories ("nothing can be both A and not-A"), as one would theoretically expect of action-logics up through the Conventional. In contrast, the complexity of the Post-Conventional sets of loadings



suggest that Post-Conventionals hold a systems-oriented, inter-independent, wedding-of-opposites ‘living’ mental mapping process.

Plato’s two distinctive images for the nature of thought in the *Thaetetus* – as either ‘marks on a wax tablet’ of the mind, or ‘birds flying about in an aviary’ of the mind – seem remarkably apt as metaphorical summaries of the difference between Conventional and Post-Conventional thought.

The ability of the post-WUSCT sentence completion measures to make such distinctions, and the ability of CDAI organization transformation practices to support both individual and organizational development during and after the debriefing of the GLP, suggest the distinct credibility and efficacy of measures like the MAP and the GLP, when properly subordinated within the CDAI paradigm of research and practice.

### **For Further Reference**

Torbert, Cook-Greuter & Associates’ 2004 book *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership* is the most accessible and complete practitioner’s guide to CDAI, and also includes a review of scientific literature in its “Concluding Scientific Postscript.” Together, Torbert’s 1973 book *Learning from Experience: Toward Consciousness* and his 1991 book *The Power of Balance: Transforming Self, Society and Scientific Inquiry* convey the theoretical and existential foundations of “living inquiry.” Cook-Greuter’s 1999 Harvard dissertation, *Postautonomous Ego Development*, offers and methodologically defends her different construal from Loevinger of the later action-logics. Torbert’s 2013 *Integral Review* article “Listening into the Dark: An essay testing the validity and efficacy of CDAI for describing and encouraging transformations of self, society, and scientific inquiry” offers the most complete exploration of the grounds for trusting and continuing to test the validity of CDAI (<http://integral-review.org>). In addition, five of the most recent doctoral dissertations that are grounded in, and that innovatively extend, CDAI theory, practice, and method are authored by CDAI Fellows Aftab Erfan, Ed Kelly, David McCallum SJ, Cara Miller, and Aliko Nicolaidis. Action Inquiry Fellows who both practice and publish in the area of CDAI include Hilary Bradbury-Huang (Editor-in-Chief, *Action Research* journal and *Handbook of Action Research*), Erica Foldy (Co-Director, Center for Action Research, NYU Wagner School of Public Service), Jenny Rudolph (Director, Medical Simulation Center, Harvard Medical School), Steve Taylor (WPI Management Professor and Editor-in-chief, *Organizational Aesthetics*), and many more (see [www.williamrtorbert.com](http://www.williamrtorbert.com)).