Professional Development Grant Report

Slavica Kodish, Ph.D

Department of Speech, Theatre, and Journalism

January 26, 2007

Restatement of Problem Researched or Creative Activity

In 2006, I was awarded a Professional Development Grant in the amount of $3,780.44 for the following purposes: (1) to present my research at three conventions and (2) to advance my knowledge in organizational communication in particular and the field of communication in general. The grant monies helped me accomplish the following: (1) attend three conventions and present six papers; (2) chair a panel at one of the conventions; (2) have a manuscript published; (4) have two manuscripts submitted for publication.

Convention presentations
(1) East/Southeast U.S. Conference of the Association for Business Communication, Tampa, FL, March 16-18, 2006. Paper presented: Dimensions and Levels of Organizational Trust

(2) Southern States Communication Association Annual Convention, Dallas, TX, April 5-9, 2006. Two papers presented: Friends or Co-Workers: Exploring the Interpersonal Component of Organizational Trust (Applied Communication Division) and Communicating Organizational Trust: An Exploration of the Link between Words and Actions (Theory of Communication Division).

(3) International Communication Association Annual Convention, Dresden, Germany, June 19-23, 2006. Three papers presented: Antecedents of Organizational Trust (Organizational Communication Division); Trust Matters: An Exploration of Low-Trust and High-Trust Organizational Contexts (Intergroup Communication Division); Chocolate Cravings, *Seasonale*, and the Female Body: Resisting the Biomedical Model (Feminist Scholarship).

Panel chair
I chaired the panel "Competitive Papers: Defining and Fostering Excellence in the Study of Perceptions of Gender" at the Southern States Communication Association Annual Convention, Dallas, TX, April 5-9 2006.

Publication
Kodish, S. (2006). The paradoxes of leadership: The contribution of Aristotle. *Leadership*, 2(*4*), 451-468.

Manuscript submissions
 "Communication as an Antecedent of Organizational Trust" submitted to the *Florida Communication Journal* – currently under review

"Chocolate Cravings, *Seasonale*, and the Female Body" submitted to the *Body and Society.*

Brief Review of the Research Procedure Utilized

The largest part of my research centers around organizational trust and leadership, whereas a much smaller portion is directed at gender issues. The methods I utilize when conducting research differ. My research on organizational trust is empirical. I studied real-life experiences of people in organizational contexts. My manuscript on leadership is an attempt to resolve the paradox brought to the fore by James Collins in his book "Good to Great."   In my research on gender I applied Nelson's critical and dialogic methodology.

Summary of Findings

The Professional Development Grant made it possible for me to accomplish the following:

- present six papers at two regional and one international convention
- chair a panel at a convention
- have a manuscript published
- have two manuscripts submitted for publication

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Professional Development Grant was a wonderful incentive that made it possible for me to travel to conventions where I was not only able to present my work but also to meet outstanding national and international scholars and educators in the field of communication. I learned about new developments in the field and about new theoretical and methodological advancements and pedagogical techniques. The experience was enriching and valuable. I have gained insights that I now use in my research and in guiding students in their communication research efforts.

Appendix

Abstracts of Convention Papers

Dimensions and Levels of Organizational Trust

Abstract

Scholars and researchers of trust have long determined that rather than being a monolithic

construct, trust varies in form, direction, and depth. Distinguishing between different

types of trust promotes an understanding of trust, and also has practical implications

when deciding how to enhance trust in organizations. Research presented here explored

the dimensions and levels of organizational trust. The findings from the study contribute

to the existing literature on trust in four ways: (a) by showing that the rational, moral, and

affective components help create trust; (b) by explaining that trusting relationships differ

in their depth; (c) by proposing that organizational trust is primarily a form of general

trust; and (d) by suggesting that managers' role in promoting trust carries additional

weight. The study advances knowledge on trust and provides helpful information to both

scholars and practitioners.

Trust Matters: An Exploration of Low-Trust and High-Trust
Organizational Contexts

Abstract

Trust is an indispensable part of all meaningful relationships and a necessary

component of all human organizations. The indications that trust is breaking down, as

noted by a number of researchers, is a matter of grave concern. An environment in

which others' words are constantly questioned and judged diminishes the role of

agency and has an impact on interpersonal relationships. Research presented here

compares high-trust and low-trust organizational contexts with an aim to elucidate the

role of trust in developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships in organizations.

In the introductory section of the paper, I address the role of trust in human

relationships and organizations in general. In the following section, I explain the

purpose of the study and the method applied. In the third section, I present the findings

from the study, with a specific focus on implications of low-trust organizational

contexts. In the final section, I provide a discussion of the findings.

Antecedents of Organizational Trust

Abstract

Research presented here explores the preconditions necessary for trust to arise.

Consistent with Mayer et al.'s (1995) distinction between the factors that contribute to

trust, trust itself, and the outcomes of trust, this study sheds light on factors that are

crucial for creating a trusting atmosphere. The findings contribute to the existing

literature on trust by: (a) establishing that trustworthiness, communication, context, and

organizational support are trust antecedents; (b) showing that the overall levels of trust in

the immediate organizational context influence trust; (c) pointing to specific aspects of

communication necessary for trust to arise; and (d) addressing the importance of

organizational support. The study was conducted in a large metropolitan area in the U.S.

according to the principles and methods of grounded theory.

Chocolate Cravings, *Seasonale*, and the Female Body:

Resisting the Biomedical Model

Abstract

On September 5, 2003, FDA approved *Seasonale*, an oral contraceptive designed to reduce the frequency of periods from thirteen to four times a year. A menses suppressant carries with it a vision of a happy life unencumbered by Aunt Flo's monthly visits. It also revives the centuries-old story of the female body as an aberration of the male body and as an object that needs to be perfected. Using as a theoretical foundation Nelson's (1995, 2001) concept of counterstories, the author establishes a need for narrative repair and suggests a counterstory as a metaphorical shield from the scientific gaze and the Procrustean approach of the biomedical model.

Friends or Co-Workers:

Exploring the Interpersonal Component of Organizational Trust

Abstract

Trust is a part of the subtle ties that link us to other human beings and an indispensable

component of all human relationships. Scholars and researchers of trust have long

determined that rather than being a monolithic construct, trust varies in form, direction,

and depth. Distinguishing between different types of trust promotes an understanding of

trust and has practical implications when deciding how to enrich human relationships and

enhance trust in organizations. This paper provides a response to the question that has

not been addressed in literature: To what extent is organizational trust interpersonal? The

findings have implications for theory and practice in organizations.

Communicating Organizational Trust:

An Exploration of the Link between Discourse and Action

Abstract

Communication has frequently received attention in numerous studies on trust, but, interestingly, communication theory and practice have not been addressed in research on trust. This essay attempts to expand the theoretical and practical foundations of trust by elucidating the manner in which trust is communicated. Consistent with the view of organizations as discursive entities (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2004), research presented here examined discursive qualities of trust. Findings reveal that against the background of a continuous flow of discursive conduct or *dureé* in Giddens's (1984) terms, trust is communicated as a speech act characterized by the congruence of words and actions.