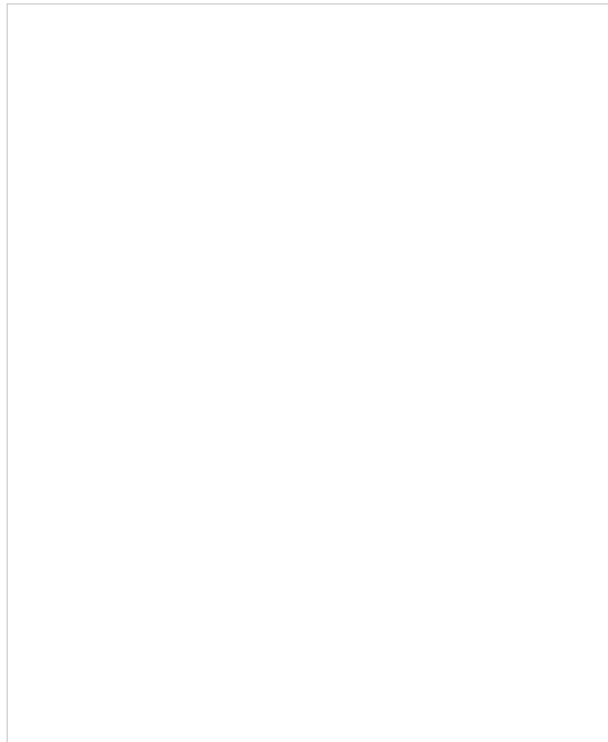


# Relationships with Followers

Dyadic theories state that rather than leadership traits or behaviours, the important concern is the relationship between the leader and the follower and why these relationships vary for different followers.

A 'dyad' is something consisting of two elements or parts, e.g. the mother-child dyad. [1] The term has inspired the development of the Vertical Dyad Linkage model which found that different subordinates often have very different views of the same leader. This means that an 'in-group' and an 'out-group' develop. The in-group has high access to the leader and feels that they are in a position of influence, with their needs being met. The out-group feels more distant, less able to contribute and less positive about the leader. In turn it is likely that the leader of this group would be limited to using their formal authority to lead this group.



Further work on Dyadic theory has led to a number of refinements, such as the development of the leader-member exchange. [2] Here, dyad members go through three stages in their relationship with their leader. The first is informal negotiation which is followed, as they become better acquainted, by a discussion on shaping and refining the roles. The relationship then moves into maturity and a steady stage. It was found that it was very difficult to change at this stage and that the overall exchange determined in-group or out-group status.

Other research has looked at whether, and how, a leader can develop successful relationships with large numbers of employees and wider networks.

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[1] Judy Pearsall (ed), *The New Oxford Dictionary of English* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

[2] R C Liden & G Graen, 'Generalizability of the Vertical Dyad Linkage model of leadership', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol 23 (1980) pp 451–465.