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How does authenticity manifest in leaders' ethical decision-making?

Authentic leadership is a positive leadership style that builds on knowing oneself and aims towards being true to oneself. Authentic decision-making highlights ethical motives for actions that are aligned with personal values. This study investigated if authentic leadership and the authentic decision-making process can be identified from managers' personal experiences of facing ethical dilemmas. We studied 25 managers who worked in both public and private organisations, at different leadership levels, and in different employment fields. The data were collected with semi-structured interviews and analysed using theory-driven content analysis. The results showed that components of authentic leadership (self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing of information, and an internalized moral per-

spective) and the authentic decision-making process (recognising ethical dilemmas, transparent evaluation of alternatives, and intentions to act authentically) were identified in the managers' ethical decisions. However, less than half of the managers converted their intentions into actions that showed alignment with their personal values. Whether or not the manager acted on their intentions related to both individual and contextual factors. Thus, we can conclude that authenticity in ethical decision-making is more likely to take place when managers' personal attributes (e.g. work experience and self-reflection abilities) and workplace conditions (e.g. social relationships) support the managers' autonomy, capacity, and courage to act according to their values.