

The current study has tested the prediction that CEO cooperative behaviour has an impact upon organizational performance. This is a fundamental organizational issue that is in clear need of illumination through studies of practice. We pursued the issue through a study of leadership in organizations located in the Norwegian socio-cultural context in which cooperation has been, and still is, a norm of appropriateness. The study provided empirical evidence of a positive relationship between CEO cooperative behaviour and organizational performance. This relationship appeared to be stronger in organizational contexts in which CEOs are perceived to have legitimacy and managerial discretion, and it appeared to be weaker in organizations in which individual performance pay is the rule. Since some organizational characteristics have the potential to enhance the impact of CEO cooperative behaviour while other characteristics might inhibit this impact, leaders have to consider carefully how to develop and maintain individual and organizational capabilities that are needed to act appropriately.