



## **Samsom his way up and his way down**

Authors: Homan, Tim & Monster, Joost

Professor: prof. dr. Paul 't Hart

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Institute: Utrecht School of Governance

Leader: Diederik Samsom



**Universiteit Utrecht**

## 1. Introduction

Two men, leaders of their political parties, fighting each other for the highest power in times of elections. This American image was seen with the Dutch parliamentary elections in 2012. Diederik Samsom, leader of the labour party (PvdA), and Mark Rutte, leader of the liberal party (VVD), running neck to neck for the elections (Erlanger, 2012). A new scene for Dutch politics. In this research paper we will examine one of those two leaders: Diederik Samsom.

Samsom became leader of the PvdA in March of 2012 by elections within the party (NOS, 2012). Within a month after this party election the cabinet fell and parliamentary election were planned for September of that year. It was the Machiavellian bit of luck (Machiavelli, 2011, Book XXV) that put Samsom in the position to become the great new face in Dutch politics and battle for the highest power in parliament. However, despite a great number of seats in parliament, PvdA didn't become the biggest party, but they did choose to form a coalition with the winners, VVD. Two years later the polls for both coalition parties have dropped considerably, but it is striking that the labour party has suffered a lot more for the coalition work than the liberals did (NOS, 2015). In between those two moments there is one very notable change within the PvdA. Party leader Samsom lost his entire campaigning team of the elections of 2012 (Hoedeman & Meijer, 2014). This development will be the starting point of this paper.

In this paper we will use the Leadership Capital Index (LCI) (Bennister, Hart, & Worthy, 2014) to analyse the leadership of Diederik Samsom in two different moments in time. First we will use this index to examine Samsom's leadership just before the parliamentary elections of 2012. The second moment in time is two years later in the autumn of 2014. Between these two periods, Samsom has lost a significant amount of support of his electorate in the polls and he also lost a lot of the people who helped him during the elections of 2012. The fact that those two things happened at the same time makes it easy to think there is a correlation. Therefore we will examine whether the event of his campaigning team leaving could be an influential factor for his leadership capital. We have explicitly chosen those two moments in time, because of the contrast of his extreme rise in the campaign of 2012 and the low polls for Samsom and his party in the autumn of 2014. This second moment was right after the last advisers of his campaigning team left and before Samsom got a new spin doctor.

In his book *Understanding Political leadership* Paul 't Hart describes the importance of advisory groups are for politicians (2014, p. 74-84). The lack of good advisers for a politician can be a problematic situation. In Samsom's case he is a former activist of Greenpeace with quite a temper, but during the elections of 2012 he seemed the statesman who was very calm and who stood above the political shouting of other politicians. When his campaigning team left in 2014, it seemed like Samsom got his temper back (Hoedeman & Pré, 2014). Because of that, the expectation of this paper is that the loss of all his advisers has had a negative effect on Samsom's leadership capital.

In the next chapter we will further explain the Leadership Capital Index and our accompanied research method. *Chapter 3* will contain some further information on the theoretical bases of the LCI and the link between the LCI and Samsom's campaigning team. In *chapter 4* we will analyse every indicator for both of the chosen times and make a comparison. In the last chapter we will draw the conclusions of this paper and we will also reflect on the research.

## 2. Method

What does the LCI contain and how will we use this instrument? This LCI contains five interpretative indicators and five quantitative indicators (Bennister et. al., 2014, p. 10). The creators of the LCI themselves state that it cannot be universally applied on all types of leaders. For example, there is a difference between opposition leaders and heads of governments (Bennister et. al., 2014, p. 11). In this chapter we will optimize the LCI for the appliance on Samsom by shortly discussing the ten indicators. All of the measurements are done on a five point scale. The indicators are divided into the categories soft skills, hard skills, relational capital and reputational capital. See *Appendix 1* for the original LCI and the changes we made to it.

The first two indicators are the soft skill indicators (S1) that are measured in an interpretive way. The first one measures 'political/policy vision' from 'complete absent' to 'very clear/consistent'. Since Samsom is a party leader and not a minister, the focus will be on political vision. It is his job, especially during a campaign, to present the PvdA's core vision and values to the public and not so much to defend policies, which would be more a minister's task. The verdict on consistency and clarity of his political vision will be based on media coverage and previously done research. The second indicator measures communicative performance. For this indicator media performances and analysis of those performances will be used.

The next three indicators are about the hard skills of a leader (S2). The first one is a quantitative indicator measuring the personal poll relative to personal poll of VVD leader Rutte. Originally in the LCI this indicator has to measure the personal poll relative to the last elections, but Rutte seemed a better point of reference. He was Samsom's main rival during the 2012 election and after this elections their parties both joined the coalition, which makes him suited as a point of reference. The same way of measuring has been used by Bennister et. al. (2014, p. 13). The difference between both will be measured in percentages. The second hard skill indicator is called 'longevity: time in office'. This indicator will simply be measured by looking at how long Samsom has been a leader of the PvdA at the two chosen moments. The third indicator of this kind is the 'election margin for the party leadership'. This is a hard indicator measuring the difference in percentage between Samsom and his main rival. This indicator will measure Samsom's support within the party.

The next category is about the relational capital of a leader (R1). The first indicator measures the difference in per cent between the recent party polls (of the chosen moment) and the last election results. The next indicator is a more general indicator of public support, measuring the public trust in a leader. Originally this indicator should be measured in percentage, but the Dutch polling agencies measure this by giving political leaders a score on a scale from 1 to 10. The third indicator of this kind is the 'likelihood of credible leadership challenge within next six months'. This analysis will be based on media coverage. We will focus on criticism and the mentioning of other potential candidates.

The last category is the reputational capital of a leader (R2). There is, firstly, the 'perceived ability to shape party's policy', which measures the influence of a leader within the party. This ability will be analysed by comparing Samsom's personal views to the views of the party. The last indicator is 'perceived parliamentary effectiveness'. We perceive this indicator as parliamentary effectiveness with his own party. Does he control what his own party members are doing in parliament? Especially for Samsom this is relevant, since he is leading a party which is part of the government coalition. Therefore support in parliament is essential.

### 3. Theory

In the method section indicators were separated into four categories: soft skills, hard skills, relational capital and reputational capital. In this chapter these notions will be expanded and linked to our central case which revolves around his campaigning team.

Skill capital here refers to how the public perceives a leader's set of skills (Bennister et. al. 2014, p. 5-6). This public perspective is created by actors around this leader like the media and other political leaders. They put certain frames on the political leader, which eventually leads to the public perspective. Skill capital is divided into two categories: soft skills and hard skills. The soft skills are about persuasion and hard skills are about the power bases of the leader within the party based on polls (Bennister et. al. 2014, p. 6-7). Since the soft skills focus on communication, this would be more relevant to the role of Samsom's campaigning team. Therefore the focus in analysing our central case will be on the first two indicators.

Relational capital then refers to the relationship a leader builds with his followers (Bennister et. al. 2014, p. 6). This though doesn't just refer to party members, but it has a broader perspective looking at a leader's relationship with the media and the electorate. This would be relevant to the case, since a campaigning team of a politician should be concerned with building a good relationship between the politician and the electorate. However, indicator 7 seems to be the most relevant one here, considering it broadly investigates the relationship between the leader and the public. Indicator 6 is more concerned with a general poll, which would be harder to directly link with the performance of his campaigning team and indicator 8 focuses more on internal party matters.

At last there is the reputational capital, which could be seen as valuing the more pragmatic side of a leader (Bennister et. al. 2014, p. 7). This form of leadership capital is the least relevant one to our case. Reputational capital focuses on what the leader gets done inside politics, but it doesn't really focus all too much on the presentation of a leader. Therefore, the last two indicators won't be directly linked to our case. It could be slightly related though, when it comes to the gap between perceived promise and observed performance (Bennister et. al. 2014, p. 7).

As we are trying to build this case here, the conclusion will focus on the direct relationship between the campaigning team and indicator 1, 2 and 7 and possible indirect relationships with other indicators. Other possible factors that could have played a role in the decline of Samsom's leadership capital will be considered as well.

## 4. The analysis of Samsom

### Soft Skills (S1)

#### *Indicator 01*

As discussed above, the first indicator regards the clarity and consistency of Samsom's political vision. He became party leader in the spring of 2012 and immediately took action to get the PvdA's political vision back on track. Samsom insisted on presenting an austerity plan before the cabinet would and wrote the plan 'Choices for the future' together with other party personalities. This plan had to give the PvdA a strong social democratic signature again, but it also had to show the public that the PvdA is able to take responsibility (Stokmans, 2013). By this time the elections were not yet announced, so Samsom didn't know that he was actually already campaigning. He carried on with this political vision during the campaign, constantly stating: PvdA will make the Netherlands stronger and more social (Limburg, 2013). With these words he was referring to the economic crisis, stating that he would deal with it in a responsible but social way. By constantly repeating this line, he created a clear and consistent political message, which leads to four points in the LCI.

After the elections in 2012 Samsom decided to stay in parliament and not become a minister. He did this because he wanted to sustain the PvdA's new political profile. Back then this was seen as a smart move (Nederlands Dagblad, 2012), but this could be doubted now. Samsom has been struggling to keep his parliamentary group under control. Two PvdA MP's stepped out of the parliamentary group, because they disapproved the integration policy of PvdA minister Asscher (Hendrickx, 2014) and a PvdA senator accused Samsom of lack of vision (Algemeen Dagblad, 2014). Political events like these resulted in the decline of a clear political vision, because it isn't clear anymore what the real PvdA vision is. After these events 60 per cent of the people said Samsom was betraying his own political views (Hendrickx, 2014). To get a clear and consistent political message across, it's important to have your party acting as a unity. Therefore, as a result of the events, Samsom LCI score drops to two points for this moment in time.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>LCI indicator 1 category</b>	4	2

#### *Indicator 02*

The second indicator of the index is about the soft skills of a leader in terms of his communicative performances. In the 2012 campaigning period the polls at first predicted the Socialist Party to be the election winner. That was partially because Samsom was known as a quick-tempered parliamentarian for the PvdA during the nine years before his leadership (Stokmans, 2013). During the period of campaigning Samsom didn't seem a good communicator. That changed over time and reached its peak in a widely discussed debate on Dutch television, there his communication was much clearer. Both in his message and in the way he spoke to other competing politicians and the electorate. (Limburg, 2013, p. 54-55 & Meerhof, 2012). After the debate the focus in the last weeks of the campaign was on the battle between Samsom and the incumbent minister-president, his main competitor, Rutte. In that battle the PvdA leader was very strong in his communicative performance, because he radiated calmness and integrity. Therefore Samsom is placed in the second highest category in this moment.

In the autumn of 2014 Samsom however got back some of his bad communicating habits by which he was known as a parliamentarian (Hoedeman & Pré, 2014). Some incidents within the PvdA and angry reactions of Samsom himself showed cracks in the personality of statesman that Samsom and his team carefully constructed (Rigter, 2014; Wagendorp, 2014 & Winther, 2014). Samsom isn't completely in control of his communication/ Because of that his communicative performances are placed in the second lowest category of this indicator.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>LCI indicator 2 category</b>	4	2

## Hard Skills (S2)

### *Indicator 03*

This third indicator measures Samsom's hard skills in relation to his competitor, in this case Rutte. In 2012 it became clear that these two men were the candidates for prime-ministership. All the polls only asked whether people wanted Samsom or Rutte as a prime-minister. The poll we use for the LCI is from the day before the elections. This poll shows us that at this moment they actually tied, both scored 44 per cent (Peil.nl, 2012). Therefore we place Samsom in the middle category on the LCI. The personal poll used to measure at the moment of autumn 2014 does include other candidates. This means that there is a difference between these polls, but it's understandable because of the context that different poll designs were chosen. To compare these polls is methodologically not fully correct, but we do think it is still relevant, because both still reflect the public opinion. In a personal poll from 5 October 2014 the difference between Samsom and Rutte is quite a lot clearer. Where 21 per cent would favour Rutte as prime minister, only 5 per cent of the respondents would favour Samsom as Prime Minister (Peil.nl, 2014). Since this difference is more than 15 per cent, at this moment in time Samsom is placed in the lowest category of this indicator.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>Difference with Rutte's personal poll</b>	0%	-16%
<b>LCI indicator 3 category</b>	3	1

### *Indicator 04*

The fourth indicator is a part of measuring the hard skills of Samsom. This one is about the time the leader is in office. In this research this indicator will be measured in terms of how long Samsom has been leader of his party at the two chosen moments. He became leader of his party on the 16th of March 2012 (NOS, 2012). The parliamentary elections of that year were on the 12th of September. As shown in the table below, at the first moment in time, on the date of the elections he was party leader for only 181 days, which is no more than half a year. At the second moment in time, Samsom was the leader of the PvdA for 961 days.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>Time in office in days</b>	181	961
<b>LCI indicator 4 category</b>	1	3

The figures in the table above indicate that Samsom would score higher on the LCI on the second moment in time, because at that time he was in office longer. In the case of Samsom it is not possible to draw this conclusion. In his case we would argue that it was the fresh face of Samsom as the leader of his party that gave him more leadership capital, although he had been a parliamentarian for the PvdA for nine years (NOS, 2012). He was the new leader and his campaigning team was able to present him in a different way. It gave him an opportunity to be a better leader than he shows to be after a longer time in office. The two years of extra experience in the period between the two examined moments don't seem to be an advantage for Samsom. According to the LCI Samsom fits the 1st category in 2012 and the 3rd in 2014. However, we question if the higher leadership capital fits the case of Samsom.

#### *Indicator 05*

The fifth and last indicator of the leader's hard skills is about his elections within his own party. Samsom, in 2012, won the internal elections by beating four other candidates with 54 percent of the votes. Some of the others were well-known party members of the PvdA. The runner-up of the elections got only 31,6 percent of the votes (NOS, 2012). Because he won the elections with a more than 15 per cent difference he scores 5 points. There haven't been any elections for the party leadership between the two chosen moments, so we cannot make a comparison. This means that he scores 5 points for both moments.

	<b>Samsom</b>	<b>Plasterk</b>	<b>Albayrak</b>	<b>Van Dam</b>	<b>Jacobi</b>
<b>Votes</b>	54%	31,6%	8,2%	3,9%	2,3%
<b>LCI indicator 5 category</b>	5	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

(Source: NOS, 2012)

### Relational Capital (R1)

#### *Indicator 06*

The sixth indicator looks at the party polls in relation to the last election results, measuring the relational capital of a leader. This way we can analyse what effect Samsom's leadership has had on the development of the party's popularity. In the case of Samsom this means the party polls right before the elections are compared to the elections of 2010 and the party polls from autumn 2014 are compared to the election results of 2012. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2012 the PvdA polled 23,4 per cent of the votes. This is 3,8 per cent more than they scored at the elections of 2010 (Peil.nl, 2012). This means Samsom scores four points at this moment in time in the LCI index. During the autumn of 2014, 5 October to be precise, only 8 per cent of the respondents said they would vote PvdA if there would be elections right now. This is quite a lot less than the amount of people who voted PvdA at the 2012 elections, which was 25,3 per cent of the people (Peil.nl, 2014). This means at this moment in time Samsom ends up in the lowest category of this LCI indicator.

	<b>Elections 2012</b>	<b>of</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>Difference between current party poll and last elections</b>	+3,8%		-17,3%
<b>LCI indicator 6 category</b>	4		1

### *Indicator 07*

As discussed in the method section, indicator 7 is measured by using scores given by the people counting from 1 to 10. This way the people are actually grading the political leaders, so this says something about the way people have perceived Samsom's capabilities at the two chosen periods. The first poll was from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September in 2012. This poll shows that the people at this moment in time the people overall gave Samsom a 5,6 as grade (Peil.nl, 2012B), which in Holland would be just above sufficient at school. In the LCI index it's also an average score in the middle category. For the second moment in time there is another story to tell. A poll from November the 9<sup>th</sup> shows a 3,7 as average grade (Peil.nl, 2014B), which would be clearly insufficient and is one of the lowest grades among party leaders at this moment in time. This poll leads to a score of 2 in the LCI index.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>Personal trust score on a scale from 1 to 10</b>	5,6	3,7
<b>LCI indicator 7 category</b>	3	2

### *Indicator 08*

Indicator 8 will provide an analysis on how firm Samsom's position as a party leader has been at the two chosen moments. On the road to the 2012 elections he seemed to be on his way up, Samsom's image was slowly changing. This improvement came after a difficult first period as party leader, when people didn't yet really know what the man stood for and who he was (Limburg, 2013). Because of this difficult period his comeback was even more spectacular and this firmed his position as a party leader (Nederlands Dagblad, 2012). It was also mentioned before that back then people thought it was a good decision of him to stay in parliament. Of course, in politics everything can happen, but since the PvdA scored so surprisingly well in the elections, a credible leadership challenge seemed very unlikely at this moment, because as comeback-kid Samsom he was the hero of the moment. This all leads to placing him in the highest category of the LCI at this moment in time.

During the elections of 2012 there was no discussion about Samsom's leadership, but Asscher's name had been mentioned before, because he was seen as the PvdA's wonder child who would one day lead the party (Het Financieel Dagblad, 2012). However, things started to turn around and during the autumn of 2014 Samsom's leadership was discussed more than ever and Asscher was mentioned more frequently. When they asked local PvdA-politicians in October 2014 who they would favour as party leader, 37 per cent said Asscher and 24 per cent said Samsom (Novum, 2014). The newspapers were saying that the PvdA was in a deep crisis and Samsom was mostly being blamed for this

(Jongejan & Wiegman, 2014). In short, his successor is already 'in the house' and Samsom himself has lost a lot of credibility. A credible leadership challenge within the next six months seems very likely because of this and therefore Samsom will be placed in the lowest category for this moment in time.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>LCI indicator 8 category</b>	5	1

## Reputational Capital (R2)

### *Indicator 09*

The first indicator of the reputational capital analyses the abilities of Samsom to shape the party's policy platform. To measure this we will make a comparison between Samsom's policy and political vision and the vision of the PvdA. However, this comparison is already partially made in the analysis of *indicator 1*. It showed that Samsom, before the parliamentary elections, but after his election as party leader, shaped the party's vision to his will together with some other senior PvdA politicians (Stokmans, 2013). Therefore we could state that Samsom really had the ability to shape the party's policy. He thus scored a 4 out of 5 points on this indicator in 2012.

In 2014 Samsom was still the party leader of the PvdA, but it is less easy to tell whether the policy of the party is like Samsom shaped it. That is because the PvdA is also a coalition party and therefore is less able to really show their true policy and political vision. In 2012, after the elections, Samsom chose to stay in parliament to preserve the party's vision, as shown in *indicator 1*. Of course he fulfils his role as the leader of the second biggest party in parliament, but he is not allowed or able to really show the PvdA stands. It is difficult to measure, but the incidents with some senators and healthcare policy show that he isn't really capable to at least control the party policy. Therefore Samsom scores 2 out of 5, because it can be assumed that he certainly has something to say about cabinet policy, but he isn't able anymore to completely shape the party's vision.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>LCI indicator 9 category</b>	4	2

### *Indicator 10*

The last indicator is about the parliamentary effectiveness of the leader. In the case of Samsom we defined this as the control he has over the parliamentarians of his party, because of the importance of the support of the party in order to be effective in parliament. This indicator is not very measurable at the first moment in time. Right after Samsom became the party leader the cabinet fell and the elections were announced. There was no time for Samsom to prove himself really in control over the PvdA parliamentarians. The way to measure his control is to see if he has had a lot of influence on the party manifesto (see indicators 1 and 9) and if there were no major incidents within the party in the campaigning period. The latter haven't occurred, which can also be explained by the fact that everyone within the party wanted the best possible

outcome of the elections. It was in no one's interest to create a scandal of any sort. Samsom will be rated a 4 out of 5 on this indicator for this period, but it is very difficult to prove. The only thing that really can be pointed out is that his campaigning team created the best possible circumstances within the party for Samsom to flourish in the elections and therefore the party had to be under control (Stokmans, 2013).

This parliamentary effectiveness in the autumn of 2014 was at a low level. In October of that year the coalition partner openly doubted the control of Samsom over his own party in parliament (Hoedeman & Meijer, 2014). This lack of control really peaked when two of the PvdA parliamentarians left the party, because they had a complete different stand on immigration in the Netherlands than the PvdA carried out (NRC, 2014). It is also discussed that those two parliamentarians wanted to leave the party already in 2012 and since then paved that road (RTL Nieuws, 2014). It is striking that they leave the party at this moment. They couldn't have left when their leader was a strong one in 2012. It is very plausible that they waited for level of control that Samsom had to be very low, so it was easier to leave. This shows the weakness of the control of Samsom, so according the LCI standards he will be in the lowest category for this indicator on this moment in time. Although only two parliamentarians left, it is plausible that this was only the tip of the iceberg.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>LCI indicator 10 category</b>	4	1

## 5. Conclusion

In the table below the scores for all indicators in both moments in time are shown. In the last row the total score is presented. Following the scale of Bennister et. al. (2014, p. 9) Samsom scored in 2012 *high capital* with 37 points. In 2014 Samsom scored 20 points and thus ends in the *low capital* category. In this chapter we will analyse the pattern of the findings and give an explanation why this pattern can be recognised.

	<b>Elections of 2012</b>	<b>Autumn 2014</b>
<b>Indicator 1 (S1)</b>	4	2
<b>Indicator 2 (S1)</b>	4	2
<b>Indicator 3 (S2)</b>	3	1
<b>Indicator 4 (S2)</b>	1	3
<b>Indicator 5 (S2)</b>	5	5
<b>Indicator 6 (R1)</b>	4	1
<b>Indicator 7 (R1)</b>	3	2
<b>Indicator 8 (R1)</b>	5	1
<b>Indicator 9 (R2)</b>	4	2
<b>Indicator 10 (R2)</b>	4	1
<b>Total</b>	37	20

In the chapter *theory* we explained that indicators 1, 2 and 7 were most linked to the presence of a campaigning team. As shown in the table above, Samsom's total decline was 19 points (this is without the compensation of 2 points by indicator 4), but the three indicators linked to the team only show a 5 point decline. Thus, we cannot state, solely on these figures, that those indicators, and thus his campaigning team, had a major impact on Samsom's decline of leadership capital. As indicators 8, 9 and 10 show, the loss of leadership capital is also greatly influenced by the fact that Samsom wasn't able anymore to control challenges of his leadership, the party policy (vision) and his party members. Those three indicators combined even form a decline of 9 points. This also stresses that it was not only the campaigning team.

Indicators 3 and 6 were about polling of the leader and his party and showed a 5 points decline. As Paul 't Hart describes, rhetoric, and thus communication, are the most basic but very important instruments of a leader (2014, p. 43-44). The importance of that rhetoric ability suggest that a strong rhetorical performance can be very influential for the polling of leaders and their parties. We therefore claim that the high scores in the polling and the decline towards 2014 is largely the effect of the communicational performances of Samsom. The fact that in 2012 he had his campaigning team around, which has eroded till none of them were left in 2014, supports the supposition of this paper that Samsom's campaigning team was his most valuable asset. We also argue that the downturn in his communicational performances also contributed to the rise of

criticism in the media and the speculations of another leader ready to take over, as shown in *indicator 8*. The decline in points in indicators 9 cannot be (completely) explained by Samsom's deteriorating communicative performances. It however did contribute to the loss in point in indicator 10, because bad communicative performances opened the door for some parliamentarians to leave or revolt.

So, to conclude, the fact that Samsom lost his campaigning team, made him lose control over his communicative performances as shown in indicators 1, 2 and 7. The decline in indicators 3, 6, 8 and 10 can be indirectly linked to his campaigning team leaving. Indicators 4 and 5 are not relevant in this case, because his campaigning team didn't really contribute to that. For indicator 9 it is not safe to say that it can be linked to this development. Overall, we can say that the leaving of Samsom's campaigning team was very influential for the decline in his leadership capital.

## 6. Reflection

Let's start with some more theoretical lessons. Of course we learned how to apply the LCI framework, but we have two theoretical comments. Firstly, we would argue that the indicator about the time in office of a leader is not a strong one for leadership capital. People get bored with leaders after a longer time in office. Besides, the longer a leader is in office, the more mistakes he can make. This indicator tricks the eventual outcome by being always higher the longer someone is in office and therefore always showing that the leader has a higher leadership capital, which we think is in many cases not applicable. Another theoretical lesson was that the context of the two moments is very important. During a campaigning period politicians obviously act very differently, which has implications for the LCI. We thought it was hard to process this contextual factor into the framework.

Then there are some more methodological lessons. A framework like the LCI helps quite a lot to structure your research, but an important lesson we learned here is that you should critically look at such a framework to get the full potential out of it. In an imaginary world there would be a perfect framework which could be universally applied to every leader, but in the real world we should apply this frameworks in a flexible manner. Maybe this flexibility could be worked out in the framework. This way researchers get more guidance with the choices they have to make within the framework. Another lesson was in the field of interpretative indicators. We think it was helpful to work on this paper with the two of us, because we could discuss the interpretation and this way we could come to a more nuanced conclusion on every indicator. Finally we learned that it helps to have a good central case in combination with this framework, because the result is a broad analysis, which covers more than one factor in explaining the decline or increase of leadership capital build around the central case.

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# Appendix 1

Criteria	Indicators	Measurements
S1	01 Political/policy vision	(1) Completely absent (2) Unclear/inconsistent (3) Moderately clear/consistent (4) Clear/consistent (5) Very clear/consistent
S1	02 Communicative performance	(1) Very poor (2) Poor (3) Average (4) Good (5) Very good
S2	03 Personal poll rating relative to rating at most recent election	(1) Very low (<-15%) (2) Low (-5 to -15%) (3) Moderate (-5% to 5%) (4) High (5% to 15%) (5) Very high (>15%)
S2	04 Longevity: time in office	(1) <1 year (2) 1-2 years (3) 2-3 years (4) 3-4 years (5) >4 years
S2	05 (Re-)election margin for the party leadership	(1) Very small (<1% of relevant electors, i.e. caucus, party members) (2) Small (1-5%) (3) Moderate (5-10%) (4) Large (10-15%) (5) Very large (>15%)
R1	06 Party polling relative to most recent election result	(1) <-10% (2) -10% to -2.5% (3) -2.5% to 2.5% (4) 2.5% to 10% (5) >10%
R1	07 Levels of public trust in leader	(1) 0-20% (2) 20-40% (3) 40-60% (4) 60-80% (5) 80-100%
R1	08 Likelihood of credible leadership challenge within next six months	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high
R2	09 Perceived ability to shape party's policy platform	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high
R2	10 Perceived parliamentary effectiveness	(1) Very low (2) Low (3) Moderate (4) High (5) Very high

We changed indicator 3 to the personal poll of Samsom relative to the personal poll of Rutte. Also indicator 7 was changed. Instead of percentages we used grades given by respondents. This means the categories also changed:

- 1=0-1,9
- 2=2-3,9
- 3=4-5,9
- 4=6-7,9
- 5=8-10