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Personal Assessment Leadership Style: Why Should I Ever Be a
Leader?

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Personal Assessment Leadership Style: Why Should I Ever Be a Leader?

I often find ask myself what makes a good leader? While I have yet to result to a simplistic definition of what this entails, I am comfortable enough with a definition that assert that a leader is someone who as the ability to mobilize the “free wellness of those that follow him”; someone who has a clear picture of what success looks like and how to achieve it; someone that has the drive and motivation to follow through with his vision. A leader is someone who has the ability to communicate his vision to motivate people in his organization to come on board. A person of integrity, honesty and dedication. While I am convinced that this simplistic definition omits many aspects of what makes a good leader, I am willing to contend with it.

My Experience with Leadership

My journey of leadership began back in Nigeria. My first recollection of being delegated to a leadership position began back when I was in primary 5 when I was chosen as the class

captain. Being a very quiet and reserved young man, I was more than comfortable with just being another student. Frankly, I hated being the one collecting fines for people speaking their first language in class; I hated telling people to put their heads on their locker when it was nap time----those were not what I saw as a characteristic of being a good class captain. In fact, I think my other classmates were aware of these and that was why they choose me. Needless to say, I did not meet the “expectation of my teacher” and I was removed.

Junior High

It was not very long after finishing my junior secondary school in Nigeria did my family decided to move to Canada. Again, being the new student in my grade 7 class, I was selected as the class representative for the student council. Although I was a little unsure If I was ready to take on another “disappointment”, I quickly gave in when I saw how supportive my fellow classmates were of the idea of me representing them. This experience gave me the opportunity to develop on so many levels. I not only had

the opportunity of representing my class, I was named the secretary of our student council. I quickly got used to people expecting more of me than I expect of myself and this pushed me not only to develop the confidence to speak to the council every time a meeting is called, I learned how to budget and manage money for the various projects that council hold every year. I held this position until I graduated junior high in June of 2008.

Mentors

I have been fortunate enough to have had many mentors. As I earlier indicated, I did not have a lot of confidence growing up in a very small town. I had lots of friends, but I was never really a very talkative individual. As a result, when I moved to Canada and some of my earlier education assistants really assisted me in gaining the confidence I need to believe in my potential. It is amazing how powerful words can be. I remember very vividly an EA telling me that had good communication skills and that was all it took for me to realize that maybe I really can go on to complete my high school. Back then, it was a huge goal for me; it was

something that I wanted to accomplish. There was one particular education assistant who had a profound impact on helping me develop my leadership skills. The way she carried herself, the quality of work she does, the way she communicated with everyone---it was admirable. I remember thinking to myself “I want to be just like her some day---I want to help people find out what they are good at”.

Assessments

Over the years, as I struggle to discover who I am and what characteristics I have that distinguish me from the next person, I have taken a number of leadership tests and surveys. I must admit, I tend to be very cynical and skeptical of the results. I do not see them as a representation of who I am or by any means an embodiment of my personality or leadership styles. To this end, when I was asked to do the ‘Myer Briggs’ personality assessment, Leadership Style assessment and the favrious feedback given to me for the group presentation, I received the results with the

same caution. Interestingly, the assessments presented a very accurate portrayal of my communication style and the way that I typically lead. Due to its accurate portrayal, I feel like it will offer me a different perspective into how I can improve as an individual and as a leader.

The Myer Briggs personality assessment indicated that I am an introvert, intuitive, feeling and judging (INFJ). I personally love to connect with people on an emotional level. I do not like to have a conversation with a group of people, I would much rather have a conversation with one person at a time. This makes the conversation more authentic for me. I have a very good long term memory. I often find myself reminding my mom of something that happens several years ago and she has no idea what I am talking about. This is very much in-line with the intuitive aspect of my personality. I often find myself being the only one at home on weekend because everyone has gone out to socialize with friends and I enjoy that; I enjoy having a very quiet environment---no one

to pop into my room looking for something while I am trying to think. This is another aspect of the Myer Briggs assessment that I connect with; the introverted aspect. I have always been a very internally motivated. It was not always a part of my personality, but my experiences have definitely contributed immensely to this aspect of my personality. Growing up with a single mother who had to do back breaking jobs just to support us, I had to figure out what I wanted in life and go after it. It has always been internal though rather than those experiences that played a bigger part in my motivation. I have this unbreakable spirit to go after what I have set my mind to. This is also in line with Myer Briggs' assessment of motivation. I do not really enjoy seeing people fight. It has an emotional and psychological effect on me. As a result, I prefer people working out their differences through consensus so that everyone can win.

Similarly, when I conducted the leadership style assessment, my initial prediction of what my leadership style might be was

confirmed. I scored very highly as a democratic leader on the leadership scale (27). As a democratic leader, one has to be open when running an organization; ideas has to be able to move freely within the organization that I am a leader of. This is a central aspect of my philosophy as a leader. I love having people come together to discuss and brainstorm ideas for how we can organize projects. While I was a sectary of my student council, I always worked with every member of the council to ensure that they can truly contribute to how the budget is being spent. In many cases, I find that the most creative and effective use of school resources comes out of a discussion that involves every member of the council. I think part of the reason why is because everyone has a unique lens that contribute to the bigger picture.

Additionally, I am also more keen in facilitating the process of having everyone's opinion rather than leading the process. I think people know what they want and if you can just be the one guiding the conversation; asking the big questions, people will

resolve challenges in a much more effective manner. From my experience, I feel that some people might not feel included initially in the conversation, but if you encourage them to share their ideas, you will be amazed how much they can contribute and how quickly they become a part of the process. A democratic leader has to be flexible; flexible to a new way of seeing and doing things. I often struggle with this aspect of my leadership preference. While I am definitely flexible and always open to new ideas, It takes me a lot longer to envision how new ideas can be integrated into the whole process. For example, while I was in high school, I took a couple of business management classes and one of our assignments was to create a commercial for a product that we designed. One of the members of my group had a very interesting idea that could have worked, but it was not until the process was over that I realize how it could have been beneficial to the project. As a result, I realized that working on my ability to ask deeper questions so that people can come up with creative solutions for integrating ideas would be something beneficial for

me. Ultimately, as a democratic leader, I have to ensure that when working with a complex project, the people involved are from different field, expertise, culture. These are all important ingredients to coming up with proactive solutions that are creative and unique. This complements my intuitive personality that loves to explore possibilities in depth. I believe that my personality and my leadership style will definitely be an asset to any organization that I choose to work for in the future. Bringing in fresh perspectives and different ways of solving problems are something needed in the field of disability services.

Strengths and Weakness

As a leader, one has to be able to recognize what one's strengths and weaknesses are. I think the ability to know how to delegate work effectively is something that I consider one of my strengths. I want to find what people enjoy doing, what they are good at, the type of training they might need in order to be effective in completing the tasks, these are things I am good

doing effectively because I recognized the importance of working from a strength base rather than a deficit based. As a result, I think my preferred role when working in an organization would be as a supervisor. I am a firm believer in equality. I really think the essential component of being a good delegation leader is respected. I want people to be treated with dignity and worth because that's exactly how I will like to be treated. I am very good at keeping problems separate from the person and that's an essential part of being a good delegation leader. I am fairly good at praising and recognizing the worth of the people that I work with and that is very important when delegating. I am also very good at reflecting on my performance. I do journaling and critical thinking every week to assess my performance both as an individual and as a professional. This is important, especially when you are the one in direct contact with the direct support staff—you have to be able to reflect and decide whether you are handling situations in the right manner.

However, not an efficient leader. It takes me hours and hours to finish an assignment. As a result, I often plan my assignments ahead of time. I am constantly working on improving my ability to utilize my time more efficiently. If people need me to complete something tomorrow and gave it to me 2 or three days before, the quality of the product will probably not going to be as good as if I had a lot more time to work on it. Also, I have had time taking risks. I have to calculate the risks in advance and be able to ensure that if it did not work, it is not going to impact the organization I am working for so much. As a result, I will not be a good CEO of an organization. Couple with that, I am not very strategically incline. I am more focused on the process rather than worrying about the strategy that might be used. This can also be a challenge in apposition where you are constantly working to strategically plan how to improve the quality of services being provided. I am also not a very directive leader. Making individualized decisions is much harder for me than making decisions together. I don't need to tell people what to do because

I believe they know what to do and if they do not, they will ask for help. This can be challenging because some people might need someone to give them a bit more structure and I will not be a very good supervisor for them 😊. I am working to improve my ability to let people know that if they need something they can come and ask me. Being able to change my leadership type in a time of crisis will be harder. Having another person there that can maybe make those decisions will be helpful.

Future Employment

In my future employment, I think probably the most important thing that I will bring along from this course is being a servant leader. I really believe that if one is truly focused and committed to making a difference, the best way to do so is by putting the people that I work for ahead of organization and personal goal. When the people are at the heart of the organization that I work for, it is important note that most profound change occurs from the bottom to the top and not the other way around. Listen to people

and truly paying attention to what they really want is something important that I am confident I can offer. I am always willing to admit my mistakes---this shows that I am a human being and I make mistakes just like everyone else. I do not believe by any means that asking for help is a sign of weakness, but I do often find that people think I am stupid when I ask them for help. It can be discouraging when people give you a look of “that’s common sense” to continue to ask questions. However, I never give up. These are all qualities that I think I have to offer an organization looking to hire me. Being a culturally competent practitioner. Haven come from a different country myself, I understand how hard it is to feel equal in a society where people often do not understand your background. As a result, in whatever position I am hired for, I will be fair, equal and honest with the way I work with everyone of different background, race, gender or sexual orientation. I will get to know about different cultures within my organization and find ways to make them feel like they belong in the organization.

Conclusion

As a result of my experiences with leadership positions and the various assessments which I have conducted, I have come to the conclusions that being an effective leader in any organization is a process—a process of internal growth of people working together with the intention of a common purpose; a process of realization that true leadership lie in the collaboration of every member of the organization contributing their own quota to the common interest of the organization. As advance in my profession of practice, I hope to continue to be a true leader in every way possible; I hope I can maintain those values and commitment that propel me to pursue a diploma in this field.