

At the beginning of the course I wrote a two-page summarization of my learning beliefs at that given time. I anticipated having to do this assignment and my thought prior to the course are on the two pages below. Obviously this part of the narrative was established before any of the readings or case studies. Honestly all of these ideas are segments of my philosophy but now the depth of my thinking has grown drastically as a result of this course.

In order to be an effective teacher one must formulate and practice one's own personal philosophy on how to educate. This one single element truly defines a teacher's identity. One's belief system must include everything involved in education. Without this system a professor is not prepared to enter the classroom. Moreover every teacher is going to have differing beliefs. My philosophy is to educate a student in mind, body, and spirit.

Stimulating the mind of the student is the basis for the educational process. Throughout this process the brain must be stimulated through a variety of cognitive activities. One of these actions is simply reading. If a love of reading is instilled, a student is empowered to educate him or herself. A more advanced concept is helping students develop their own worldview. This is the way in which an individual views the world from their own perspective while considering the viewpoints of others. In order to help students originate a healthy perspective they must experience the different levels of knowledge.

The first level is recall in which students simply communicate the knowledge he/she has been told. The second level is comprehension where the students understand

information's significance. The next step is application of the understood information to a problem or circumstance in a constructive manner. Following this a student must learn to analyze information by categorizing and deciding what information is relevant. After the analysis level is complete students must synthesize information. This is giving information a new meaning for the individual or circumstances. The final step is evaluation in which students develop an educated opinion and make an informed decision. With this process complete students can become a rational decision maker.

Equally as important as strengthening the mind is the body. A true education must inform students on how to take care of their bodies through exercise. This knowledge can be instituted through health and physical education classes along with sports. Another part of this education is helping students develop confidence in their bodies and preventing them from developing eating disorders and anorexia. Furthermore students need nutrition information about healthy food so he/she can have a balanced diet. Lastly students need training in hygiene to develop an acceptable appearance. A holistic education emphasizes the care of the body.

The third and most important purpose of education is the development of the spirit. In addition to a teacher facilitating knowledge they must include morality in their lessons. The hidden curriculum of ethics in schools is invaluable in students becoming well rounded. Another way the students must develop their spirit is by learning their true identity. A teacher can facilitate this through having students do assignments pertaining to personal preferences and decisions. Students must obtain an understanding of religion and its role in their life and society in which they live.

In closing my philosophy as an educator can be summed up in the following quote
“Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know; it means
teaching them to behave as they do not behave.” -*John Ruskin (1819-1900) English critic*

The first new part of my philosophy is gathering appropriate facts. Through the
case studies I learned to decipher which facts are most important in relation to an issue.
This will greatly help me in my leadership in the future. Now I know that I cannot make
a decision unless I have not only analyzed a situation but know all the information.
Furthermore this class forced me to look at all angles, I now realize many more
perspectives are affected by decisions. Although all those perspectives must be
considered I must remember they cannot all be satisfied.

A second part of my values in leadership is the definite need for clear-cut
responsibilities. I like the shared leadership model where everyone gets a voice in the
leadership process as well as outcome. However for this to effectively function all
parties both during and after the decision making process must take responsibility for
their actions. If this does not occur diffused accountability results. (W Drath 2003)
defines this liability as when leadership is shared but no one takes responsibility for the
outcomes. Leaders must be responsible decision makers that admit when mistakes are
made and gain respect from wise decisions.

An additional part of my philosophy is leaders as well as their guidance must be
authentic. (B George 2004) states to become authentic; each of us has to develop our
own leadership style, consistent with our own personality and character. As a leader I
must be able to direct others in a way I think is best. Importantly this personal flare must
be balanced with the needs of ones followers. However if I ever find myself in

leadership circumstances that I cannot be myself then I will leave. (B George 2004) Also states the pressures of an organization push us to adhere to its normative style. I will not allow a job to force me into compromising my leadership principles. A leader cannot be afraid to stand up and be ones self.

Another philosophical change is in the timing of management decisions. I have made leadership mistakes by acting quickly without gathering all the facts. Also in the past I have grown impatient with leaders that did not make decisions on my timetable. (M Wheatley 1997) If we've learned anything in the past 20 years, it's that there are no quick fixes. Organizational change is a dance, not a forced march. Through this course I learned the decision making process should take time. The reason being this allows consideration for all possible outcomes as well as perspectives. Making swift choices more than likely is an uninformed decision.

The importance of an organization upholding a grounded identity is a major philosophical element. (M Wheatley 1997) states the primary task of being a leader is to make sure the organization knows itself. That is, we must realize our task is to call people together often, so everyone gains clarity about who we are, who we've become, and who we still want to be.(pg.1) Without identity followers will not know how to pursue a leader. A school must decide its goals and vision and then consistently uphold them every day.

In the modern day educational climate a leader must have the ability of utilizing different leadership tactics. E.M Benison (1989) has outlined various leadership styles. The first style is transformative which is when a leader enters an organization and changes everything. Transforming an organization in certain circumstances is necessary.

However in other cases transactional control is a better pathway. On this path the leader maintains the culture, as it exists. In leadership no concrete answers exist therefore he/she must be flexible in all they do.

A major alteration in my philosophy is the ultimate goal of leadership. A. Hargreaves and D. Fink (2004) state the true mark of successful leadership is the level of sustainability achieved. In other words after a leader is gone is their legacy carried on by the next regime. I firmly believe if an organization is guided properly then the school will reflect their leaders values. A principal cannot come into a school making rash and short-term decisions. In all choices the long-term impact must be a major consideration. If an individual truly cares about an institution proper planning will go into all pivotal changes. A common characteristic of sustainable headship is resourcefulness. In all I do as a leader I want the plans that make financial sense. An organization cannot last without strong financial framework.

The leadership part in my educational philosophy now includes multiple line leadership. I previously believed in leading all the responsibility rested on my shoulders. Conversely by reading the *Ecology of Leadership* I now understand the necessity of involving others. Three lines of leadership are outlined in the article: line leaders, internal net workers, and executive leaders. The leaders main job is managing those groups in helping the organization function efficiently. I wholeheartedly believe H. Seifert (2001) research. In recent years, company leaders have heard a common refrain: organizations that empower their workers with true authority and responsibility can expect better products and services, more satisfied customers, and increased revenue and

profits. (pg.40) Delegation of responsibilities is must in education no one wants a micromanaged job.

I came into this course with an open mind without preconceived ideologies about leadership. This approach has allowed me to be shaped and molded by articles. Honestly through this process I now realize how difficult the art of leadership can be in education. The call for leadership is definitely not for everyone. However seemingly everyone wants to take part in the decision making process. This is a struggle for me now as a follower and leader in my school setting. Many times I see leaders in different areas manipulating followers by listening to their input but in reality it means nothing. This brings up a question in my philosophy of leadership interaction. Is it better for a leader to have a closed door or an open one but all the while knowing they are not going to truly do what anyone says? As a follower I hate the feeling of wasting my time in useless suggestions. This question is one the many flaws I have not worked out in my educational philosophy.

Along the way in this course the main point I gathered has refocused the entire practice of leadership. A truly successful leader simply empowers those around them to lead in a way that backs up the stated vision of the organization. Honestly all the great coaches in athletics have coached great players. The majority of those superior players were great leaders. The coach allowed and let them lead the team on the field. In the school or any other setting this is no different. If one person tries to do it all then even if it's well done those around them will not appreciate the job.

Honestly one of the parts of the course I have struggled with most is the practicality of my own conclusions and the assertions of others. I have heard many ideas

about philosophy of education. The flaw of many of these ideas is they are not applicable to the real world. Call me a cynic or a realist but to many times people have great ideas that either are quickly defeated or never tried. Possibly the problem is new leaders along with their ideas are never given a chance. Now as a result of this class everything in my education philosophy will be qualified with the idea of practicality.

Honestly from class I developed a theory on being a follower. Simply put I will be the kind of follower a leader wants behind them. On the other hand I will be the type of leader I myself wanted to follow. Hopefully through this process I will earn the respect of those around me and they will deem me a leader. Self appointment is a horrible way to become a leader.

I will be the first to admit I have much to learn about leadership. My philosophy of education will always be open for change. I really need to work on how to lead as well as follow females in the workplace. Culturally a variety of stigmas exist surrounding this subject. Also as a follower I must learn how to handle following leaders when I do not agree with their decisions. A final question I have is how should leaders be elected? What type of system should schools have for new appointments? In some way I wish teachers could have a say at least in the process of election.

In closing I would like to end with a quote that summarizes the essence of leadership. If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.- John Quincy Adams. Leadership is all about caring and helping other people become the best they possible can. No leader will be respected that does not care for those around them. Leaders must have a passion for their organization,

peers, and principles. This class has definitely inspired me to become a better leader in all phases of life.

Source Page

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