Rachel Brief October 2014

Reflection #1 EDCP217

In order to succeed as a leader, one must master the five different practices of exemplary leadership- Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. Throughout history, there have been many different leaders that have had different goals, skills, and personalities, yet they share all share one thing in common, which is they all encompass these practices.

 My group was assigned the first practice in the Leadership Challenge, Model the Way. Model the Way is when a leader’s actions are aligned with his or her values. (Kouzes and Posner, 42) Leaders who illustrate the model the way practice are trustworthy and credible because everything they do sets an example. I believe the most important concepts of Model the Way is that leaders must create standards of excellence, they set an example for others to follow, and finally, leaders set interim goals so people can accomplish small achievements in order to work towards accomplishing bigger objectives.

 In order to create standards of excellence, one must always strive to thrive. In other words, I believe that in order to be a leader you should never slack off, you should never settle for less, and you should always, always, always, try your hardest in everything you do. This past year I interned at my dream job; I was working with my favorite Registered Dietician in New York City. I had admired Tanya Zuckerbrot, the founder of the F-Factor diet plan, for many years because of her passion to her patients, her application of science to the diet, and her work drive. I had aspired to learn from Tanya firsthand for years, and was given the opportunity due to finally being a college student, a principle in order to be an F-Factor intern. I applied for this internship one year before it began, because I wanted it so badly and was committed to working for this nutrition practice. My friends were so inspired by my motivation and work ethic to accomplish my goals that they too, began searching for their passion and applying for internships early on in the year, freshman year no less.

 I believe that one of the best techniques for learning is by watching and observing other people. This is embodied when leaders set an example for their followers by aligning their actions with their shared values (Kouzes and Posner, 42). As I stated earlier, I interned with a Registered Dietician this past summer. I have a strong passion for health, wellness and nutrition and all my friends are aware of this. I try my best to always eat healthy, exercise and overall live a healthy lifestyle. This year, I live in a sorority house with many girls, and they are always observing what I eat and my eating habits. This puts a lot of pressure of me, but in a good way! I am flattered that my sisters are interested in what I am fueling my body with and essentially, admire the way I eat. I now always make a conscious effort to live up to my word and the advice I give to my friends about health and nutrition, because I am aware that I am setting an example for their behavior around food and fitness.

 Lastly, I believe that people flourish when interim goals are set, in order to achieve a larger objective. This summer at F-Factor, Tanya would assign all of the intern’s small magazine articles to write, regarding different foods and their properties. By the end of the summer, I had written about 25 short magazine offerings, which in retrospect helped prepare me for when I debuted on television alongside Tanya, debating against another dietician. Tanya was a phenomenal leader and helped prepare myself and the other interns for a career in nutrition. Her fame in the nutrition-sphere compared to the way she educated us interns proved that slow and steady wins the race.

             Rosa Parks is a great example of a leader who embodies the Model The Way practice. On December 1st, 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama when Rosa Parks was asked to give up her seat in the colored area on a bus for a white man, she refused. Parks is a true civil rights activist because she exemplified her values when put to the test, and stood up for what she believed in, in order to make a greater change for America.

 Work Cited:

Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012. Print.

"Leader Values | Rosa Parks." *Leader Values | Rosa Parks*. N.p., n.d. Web. 26 Oct. 2014.

Reflection #2 EDCP217

 An important aspect of being a leader is being able to work with a team of people. A good leader values other people’s opinions and if a leader cannot work with other people, they cannot have a following, to inspire others. I have realized this over the past few weeks as my group and I work on our final project together. Each of us posses our individual strengths and weaknesses, and have come together to work efficiently because we have a joint main goal, which is to complete the final project as best as we can.

Our group’s strengths, as a result of the Strengths Quest Assessment, include achievers, strategists, and competitive students. These qualities will help our group work well together so that we can efficiently demonstrate Model The Way, and ultimately become a leader ourselves. I love and value that our group is full of achievers. We all want what’s best for the final project and will strive to do whatever possible to make sure we succeed. Also, because are all strategists, we are creative and our presentation will be unique and special, and represent who we are as a group. Lastly, I think it’s great that we are competitive because we will never settle for anything less than what we know is our best.

 Our first task as a group was to present what we all believed Model The Way means. I believe we worked well together from the start. We were easily able to communicate together and we each put in equal effort to make the presentation as great as possible. That group project has set the tone for the remainder of our time working together. Our greatest strength as a group is communication. We communicate in and out of class about the direction of our project, and we are aware of each other’s strengths and weaknesses. We take advantage of Google Docs and have an email chain going to validate that we are up to date on assignments and deadlines. Additionally, my group was very up front about everyone’s best qualities, such as who is good using iMovie, who is creative, etc., in order to establish set roles for individual tasks within our project.

 I am extremely communicative and empathetic. I am able to speak up when there is a problem or feel that the group is not working up to our normal standards, or slacking off. Additionally, I love that I am empathic. This quality helps the group because I am able to understand and listen to my fellow group member’s opinions, feelings, and ideas. However, this may hinder the group because sometimes I may have too much empathy for people. If someone’s ideas aren’t the best for the group, I am sometimes too nervous to hurt their feelings, and too sensitive to say “no”. Yet, this is only detrimental to the group as a whole in the end and I am working on it. My Strength Quest Assessment qualities fell into the Model The Way category, which is my group’s particular practice. I hope that by demonstrating Model The Way characteristics, I am influencing my fellow group member’s and they are inspired by the example I lead.

 As this project continues, I will continue to value everyone in my group. I will continue to be empathetic and listen to everyone’s ideas, and I will be communicative. I will continue to voice my opinion and ideas and always reach out to my fellow group members while working on our project outside of class. I think we should try to work on meeting face to face outside of class more often. Communicating online is definitely better than not communicating at all, but nothing compares to working face- to -face and feeding off of each other’s ideas.