

BUILDING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Council of East Asian Libraries
2020 Online Annual Meeting
Plenary Panel II

PRACTICING TRUE LEADERSHIP

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The Wisdom of Lao-Tzu

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.”

What does this mean to you? What comes to mind when you consider this?

Leadership Is...

- A relationship of mutual trust, respect and reciprocity
- Dependent upon the commitment and active engagement of followers
- A process of empowering others
- The capacity to translate vision into reality
- About releasing energy from others
- Enabling others to “do it themselves.”
- A rich opportunity to discover capacity within oneself and others

Leadership calls for...

- Competencies that can be learned and developed
- A “growth” mindset
- Commitment to continuous learning
- Leading by example
- Engaging others to do their best

And...

- Resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge
- An optimistic and positive view of the future
- Experimenting and taking risks
- Recognizing contributions and accomplishments
- Building commitment; inviting others to contribute
- Stamina and resilience

EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP

- Leaders are made, not born. Your experience is uniquely yours. Some learn more from experience than others.
- Experience and its lessons vary. Quality, quantity and diversity of experience matter.
- Past experience and present experience are in constant interplay.

FOUR ESSENTIAL SKILLS of TRUE LEADERSHIP

Self-Awareness: your insights, your reputation, your understanding of who you are, and your leadership practice

Learning Agility: seeking and embracing new opportunities, adapting to new situations, openness to feedback, focus on what you are learning, and apply what has been learned

Communication: active listening, giving and receiving effective feedback, working with differences, building trust

Influence: political savvy, persuasion, leveraging networks

Determining your “one step”

- Begin by identifying your current strengths – what do you do well now in your leadership practice?
- Jot some quick notes to yourself now
- Consider your current situation – what does it call for in your leadership practice?
- Jot some quick notes to yourself now

A Take-Away Task:

- What are your options?
- What might move you out of your “comfort zone” – require that you act in a new way?
- Identify a performance goal for yourself. Determine what new behaviors and competencies might be required to accomplish this “leadership challenge” for yourself.
- Set a plan, seek support from trusted colleagues and proceed!

Leadership Development Practices

- Understand that learning and development takes time, practice and positive reinforcement.
- Learn how to give and receive feedback, especially constructive feedback.
- Solicit feedback from trusted colleagues – separate receiving the feedback from responding to it.
- Reach out to mentors, others who can help you.

And ...

- Know that learning from mistakes is key to development.
- Adopt a “growth mindset.”
- See each challenge as an opportunity to improve, gain confidence, and be a better leader.
- Commit to doing your best and accept that perfection is not possible.

Some Resources to Pursue

Humble Leadership by Edgar H. Schein and Peter A. Schein

Learning Leadership by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

Lead 4 Success: Learn the Essentials of True Leadership by George Hallenbeck

Two more tips:

Monitor the research published in the **Harvard Business Review**

Consult with trusted colleagues