

# BUILDING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

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Council of East Asian Libraries  
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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