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EAD 801

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Leadership Analysis

Leadership is very complicated and once explored it can further the complications and/or clarify or simplify it at the same time. Throughout this course we have explored many aspects of leadership. We have touched on topics that I didn't even know existed. We have made concept maps, written case studies, read articles, and even conversed with our classmates on the various topics within leadership. The wonderful thing about leadership is that it can be applied to anyone, anywhere, doing anything. Although this course focused a lot on leadership within schools, the qualities leaders learn can be translated to any leadership position, not just in a school setting. I currently work at a university in the athletic/academic department. I don't teach (although I may want to someday), but I have the opportunity to help mold students minds daily on different aspects of school and life. From this class, I've really been able to identify my leadership beliefs, the different aspects of leadership, how I value my time and team (as a leader) and have gained an abundance of knowledge in all aspects of leadership. Here we will explore the main points I have gained along the way in this course and address the characteristics, values, behaviors and dispositions I want to have as a leader and why.

In the beginning of this class we were asked to create a group word bank. Little did I know how important and valuable these words would turn out to be. The words I chose were not necessarily picked haphazardly but by no means did they have the meaning and value I know they now have.

Throughout the course, the words I contributed to the word bank were empathy, performer, energizing, integrity, feedback, guidance, primacy, optimizer, initiate, accountability, achievement, synergy, sustaining and guarding. What's actually quite amazing to me is how pretty dead on I was with my first list for the word bank. Many of these words have come up often throughout this course as needed and valued characteristics within a good leader. It's actually pretty neat to be able to look back at the work we've done and to know that I had good ideas and now I have more knowledge to really put those words into place and action.

During this course we were asked to create a few different concept maps of our own. At first I found it to be a pain and not of much use. However, I can no longer say that creating those maps was a waste because it's nearly the opposite. Going back looking through my maps I have really learned about leadership and how I view things. It was surprisingly very helpful to see my thoughts visually. The maps almost break your thought process down better and can really help you see what you're trying to accomplish. What also actually turned out to be very beneficial was feedback on my maps from others and reading other peoples maps. I found I learned so much by going through each of my classmates' maps as well. It showed a whole new perspective and helped me learn more and give me more ideas to build on. I was able to compare my maps to other peoples and see areas or characteristics that they found important and to see if I could somehow intertwine those into mine. I still see myself making comments on posts saying "what a great point, I never thought of that." It's amazing to see how each person depicts the same information and how different their thoughts can be from mine. Yet it is from these depictions where we can learn so much more and grow into better leaders. Because I found the work of the concept maps to encompass so much we've done and learned in this class, I have included them at the end of this paper. You will see the maps on page 7, 8 and 9 (in order as I created them).

Each of the three concept maps are themed differently, yet all revolve around leadership. For the first map (page 7) we were asked to express our views of the different aspects of leadership (using words from the word bank and others we wanted). This was a very good way to start because it really helped me analyze leadership and come up with components that help make a good leader. The second map (page 8) was what my leadership beliefs are. This one was harder to do because it required a lot more critical thinking. I really had to sit back and think about what beliefs I think a leader should have. After viewing others maps and getting feedback on my map, I still stand firmly behind mine and think that my beliefs as a leader are good. The third and final map (page 9) was to be created showing how you think a leader should split their time and team up. This too was tricky because you really had to think if you were a leader and how you would be spending your time. Yet, this was a very good realistic example to create and made me think of all of the aspects that a leader has to work with. I believe by looking at these three concept maps, you will be able to get a good grasp of what characteristics I value as a leader, what my beliefs as a leader are and how I think my time as a leader and team should be spent.

From this course I am really able to value the meaning within and behind the word feedback. It was actually one of the words that I added in the word-bank the first week and it turned out to be quite a large focus in this class. We talked about feedback in ways of learning, growing and following the rules. We all contributed to a set of ground rules for the class. The feedback for the ground rules was important for everyone because it let us all know the point of feedback, the value from it and the ramifications of it. We set guidelines to make useful and helpful comments to each other. It was important to get feedback on this topic especially as this class solely conducts virtually. After establishing guidelines for the feedback and types of feedback to give (constructive) we were able to grow and learn from it. People posed questions about topics, our ideas and work. We were able to

communicate to each other from this feedback and learn new ways to do things, how to do things, and even new things. We are able to grow from getting this constructive criticism while also having to think harder to answer some of the questions our classmates and even teacher (probes and such) rose.

I will tie feedback in ways of learning and growing with another assignment we had with the Educational Leadership Assessments and Self Evaluations. This assignment made me a little nervous to do because I felt very vulnerable allowing my boss and co-workers to critically analyze my work and performance. However, after completing the evaluation myself and after going through their evaluations of me, I was pleasantly surprised. I think I doubt myself or am a lot harder on myself than what I should be. But by doing so, I think that makes me better at what I do because I hold higher standards for myself. The tough part from the evaluation was that it didn't quite match up for my job position, as I'm not a teacher. However many of the skills and qualities were able to be assessed and evaluated. This actually was a morale booster for me and helped show that my work is appreciated and seen as well done. I do of course now see in areas where I can improve, and that's why this feedback is so important.

I learned it's not only good to get good feedback back but to also get the bad feedback so you can see where you need and can improve. I wish that I could have always gotten feedback like this from my past boss' and co-workers because I think it can really only help you grow as a better leader. Now that I have done this and see what can come of it, I will try to incorporate a type of survey like this in my future leader roles. In addition, it was also a pretty good idea to make us talk amongst our group members about our results of our assessments. I was really able to relate with my group about the results, especially as we are all young in our profession and don't really carry large leadership roles. We were able to discuss this and talk about how to pick it up and really get our hands dirty in order to make a difference and take on a leadership role. It's like the Peter Senge quote you provided to us in Lesson

13, "Truly creative people use the gap between vision and current reality to generate energy for change."

I also found the ISLLC Standards to be very useful. If I ever become a teacher or leader within a school, I will definitely use these standards and try my best to fulfill them. As a person not in the educational system or having an undergraduate degree in this field, I was not familiar with any of these standards or that they even existed. I was able to gain a hefty load of knowledge in leadership from these standards alone. From within the standards, we were able to touch on topics of religion, culture, environment, safety, political, social, economic, legal, educational success, integrity, fairness, ethics, families, communities, management, efficiency, operations, growth, development, articulation, implementation, stewardship and support. The way we explored each standard allowed me to really gain a better understanding of each one. I loved how we had to create case studies related to our assigned standards. I was able to relate and understand the standards better when applied to a real life situation. The content of the standards became so real to me when we were able to see it happen in real life situations. In addition, the probes and issues related to the standards also helped expand my knowledge on the topic and helped me think outside the box. I now can see how and why these standards are in place and why they are so important in the educational system. These standards help advocate strong leadership by looking out for everyone involved. It is through all of these standards that we hope to really succeed in leading a successful educational system for everyone. Although these standards are meant to be used for leaders within schools, I think that I can incorporate most of them into the jobs I will be doing, where as the success of the students becomes the success of the organization I will be working for.

I want to be a leader that incorporates all of these aspects we've learned in this class. I want to strive to succeed in all of the areas a leader is involved in. As a leader I will need to focus a lot on my

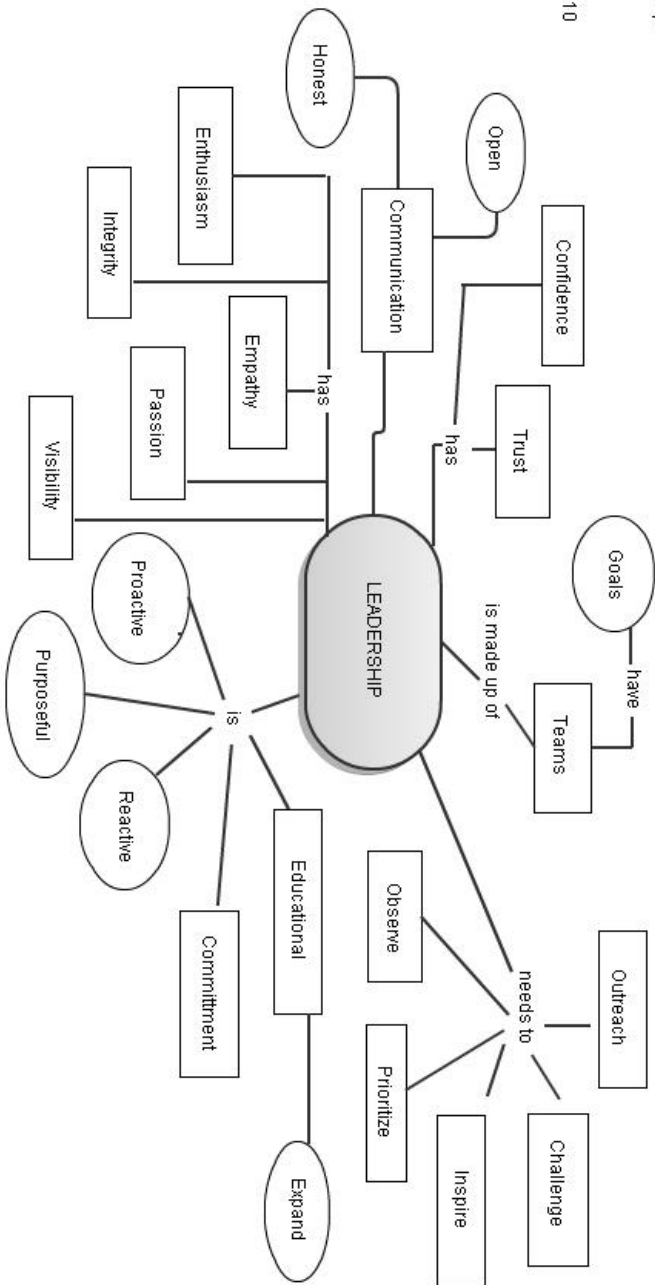
communication skills, as most of what a leader does is through communication. Communicating well will enable me to assign duties, ask for help, provide feedback, ask for feedback, motivate others, encourage participation and involvement, create a safe environment, build relationships and many more. I want to be able to accomplish these things because I want to be the best I can be. By being the best you will be a leader. People will listen to you and follow you. Being a leader will help me to help others.

I took this educational leadership class as an elective for my Master of Arts in Education program. Once I saw that this course was offered it was a no brainer for me to take. Leadership is a something I've always strived to have and know that it applies to every aspect in my life. If I can be a successful leader, I believe I will in turn be a successful person in many areas in my life. I think that in any job people are looking for leaders and that's why I found this class so beneficial to take. As you will see in the concept maps I have created, I have really learned many different aspects about leadership that will help me in my journey. Leadership is like education to me as it should be ever changing and never ending. Through education we can enhance our leadership skills individually and as a whole. By working with our families, communities, co-workers, elders, and students we should be able to create the environments for everyone to succeed. I have learned that being a leader doesn't mean you ride the road alone, but you seek help from others, get feedback, assign duties, do the right thing, engage with others and their work, respect people, continually grow and learn, communicate, and challenge. Leaders should be challenged in their role but they should also challenge others. What I've learned is that leadership is connected with so many different things and people. I hope that I can take what I've learned from this class and my classmates to help drive me to step up and become more of a leader and to one day find myself as a very successful leader.

Aspects of Leadership

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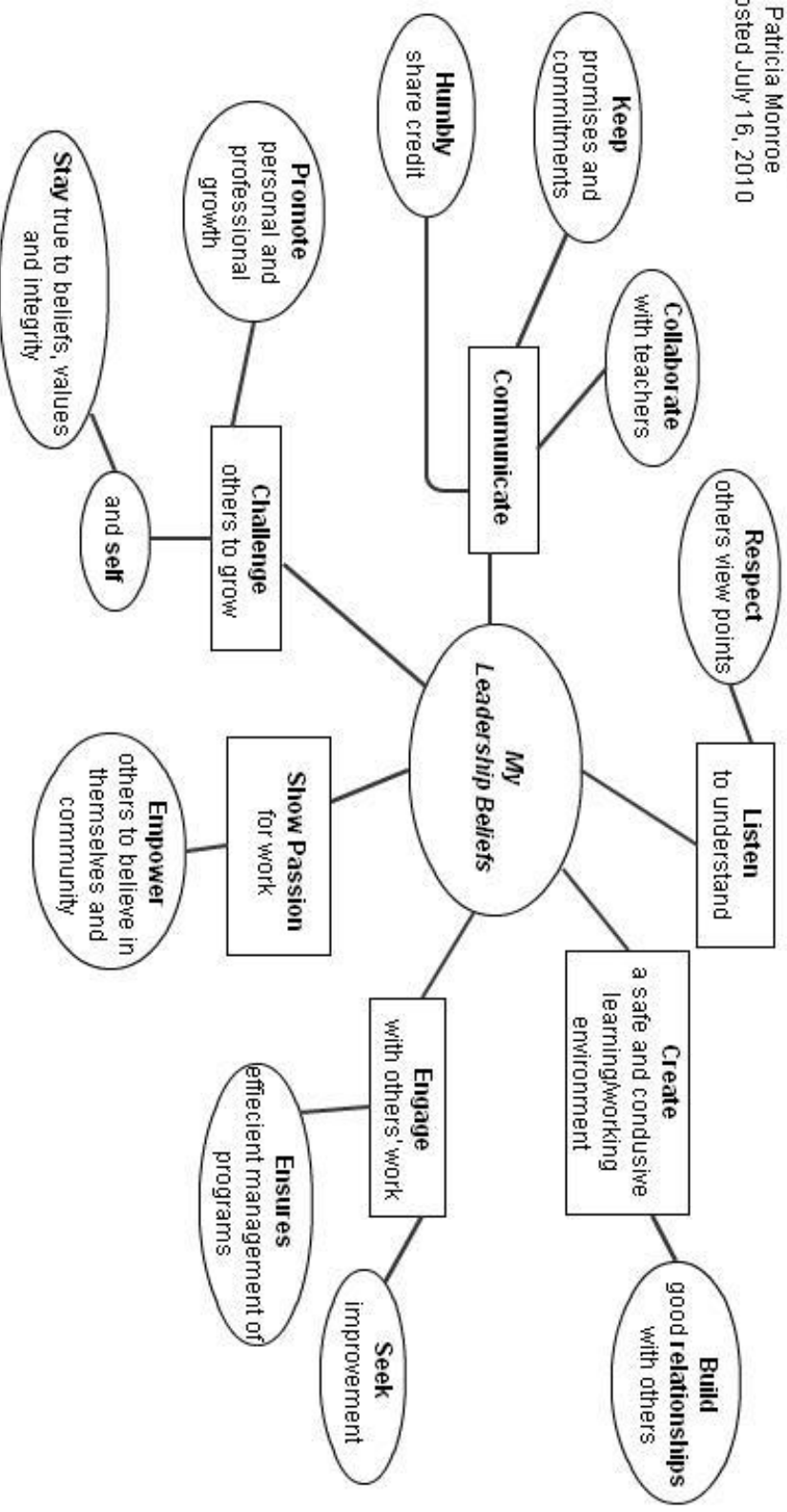
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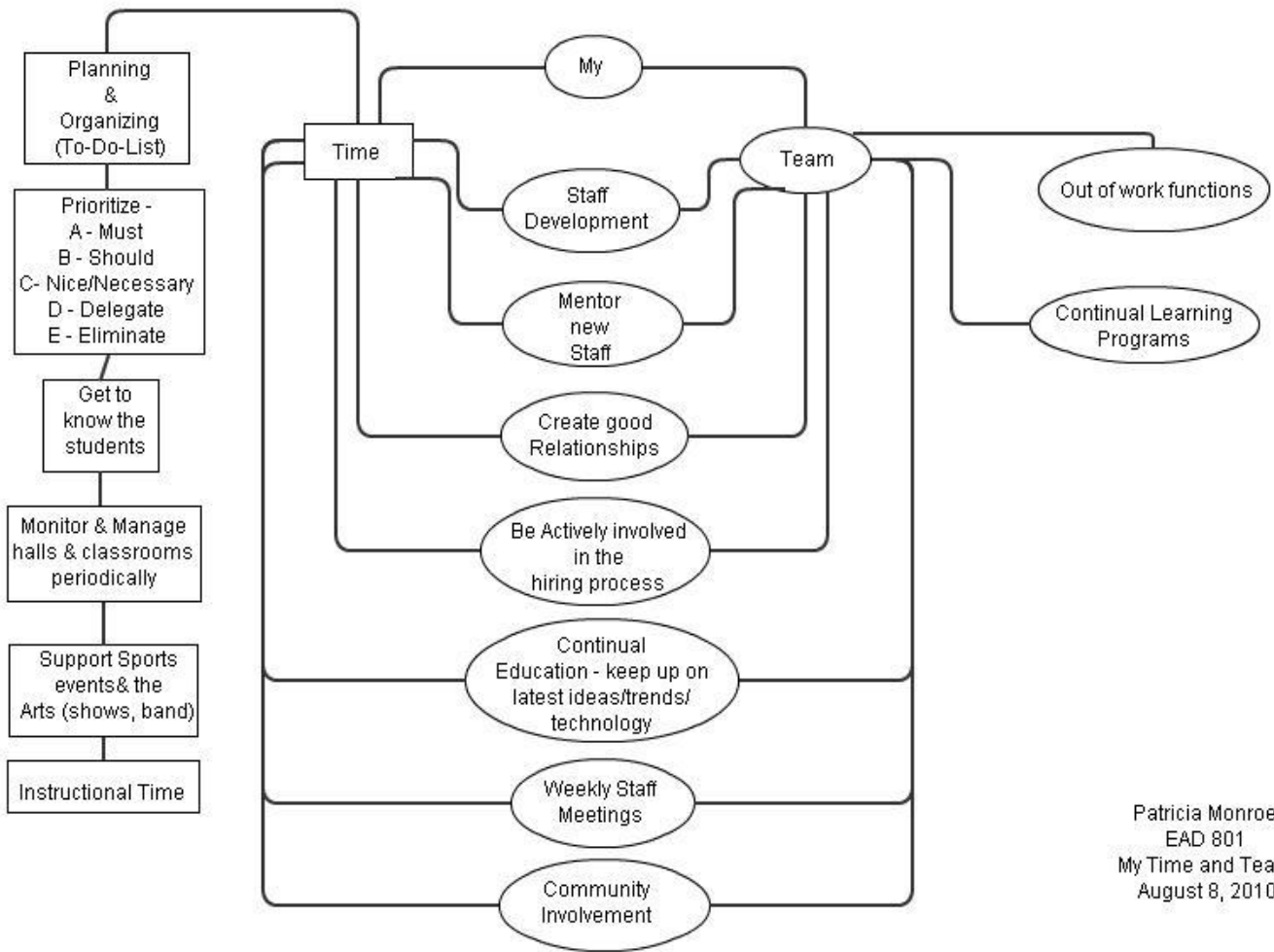


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