Chapter 5
Models for School Leadership

Leadership is a learned set of traits. We are not born to be leaders. Success only comes through rigorous learning, self-assessment and continuous improvement. However, that process starts with identifying core values. What are your core values?

Chapter Purpose & Preview
This chapter provides a practical processes, ideas, and models for your success and your school success. This chapters challenge you in understanding how to be an effective leader and discover that being an effective leader involves more than merely showing students and those you serve as the way "it has always been done" but how to assist them in being a effective, creative, and innovative leader themselves.

Practical Leadership Practices
Great leadership comes from your core values. Remember leadership is a learned process but the more you put your core self into the leadership learning and leadership dynamics, the more complete leader you become.

Process for New Leaders

Understand the history of the department
        – Organizational culture takes years to build by many individuals, thus it must be respected.
        – If culture is no longer relevant to the institution or department it should be changed without disregarding the past.
         – Change requires listening to constituents and stakeholders; employees, senior leadership, governmental officials, and community members.
        Leadership Lessons for New Leaders

Make small, incremental changes
        – Establish priorities and focus on them
        – Small changes allow employees to "buy into" the changes and work as an active participant in improving the department
        – Massive changes or changes occurring too quickly can send the department into a state of chaos, leading to resistance of employees and losing the opportunity for real change.

Evaluate policies and procedures

        – Reviewing policies and procedures gives a new leader insight into the culture
        – Deeper insight can be obtained by comparing written policies with actual practices

Determine what your constituents expects

– they value their security, security of their domain, and security of the institution as a whole.
        – Dialogue with them allows leaders to understand if goals are being met and what future expectations are
         – It's critical that they feel as if they are active participants in protecting their community.

Address operational issues
        – To get a complete picture of the department and determine its priorities
        –a new leader needs to assess:
                • Overall activity (e.g. quantitative and qualitative)
                • Training and hiring standards
                • Equipment care and maintenance
                • Job duties and descriptions
                • Technology
                • Attendance (work and meetings
                • Timely reports on activities performed

Be the torchbearer
        – A new leader should be the torchbearer for the service-oriented mentality
        – Demonstrate their willingness to serve
        – Provide strong leadership that will instill confidence
        – Identify issues and find solutions to problems

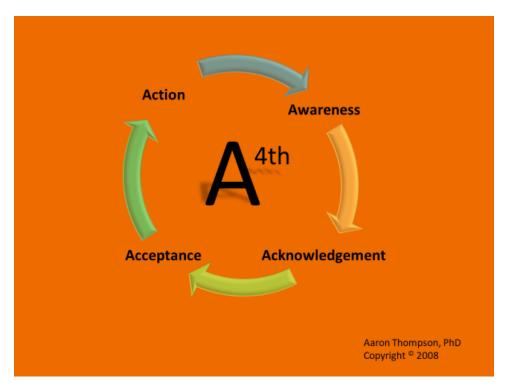**Make Your Statement as a Leader**

Take your core values and think about how they apply to your leadership philosophy is the first step. Following the Four-Stage model (5.1) will assist you in rounding out the statement.

A Four-Stage Model to implement and assess great leadership.

Only a deep sense of self-awareness can uproot and correct bias and previous held beliefs about what leadership is and should be. We need to continually and consciously ask ourselves what we believe about a subject, person or group, but also why we hold it and what evidence there is to support it. Taking time to introspect and inspect our biases represents the critical first step in the process of accepting and appreciating diversity. This reflective process may be conceptualized as unfolding in a systematic sequence of steps that begins first with gaining awareness of your leadership beliefs and the beliefs you hold about the group you lead (building your IQ) is then followed by: acknowledging biases (explicit or implicit) toward the people you serve and how that effects your leading (SQ), accepting that there are different leadership styles and that all of the people you serve don't think the same way and your job is to connect with each individual member in a deep way so understand who they are (EQ), and putting that acceptance into action by engaging in authentic interaction with members of diverse people you serve and then be able to increase your leadership abilities, your team's leadership abilities, and then build continuous

improvement (action and assessment). Thus, the process creates a dynamic and innovative culture in your school environment.

Figure 5.1

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    This four-step process is not only sequential, it's also hierarchical—each step builds on the step preceding it in such a way that advancing to a higher step isn't possible until the previous step has been taken. As an example of implementing a cultural competence process and make sure schools are able to improve to serve all of their students, faculty and staff, this is the process each individual needs to use to make sure they are at their peak involvement. Thus, when all steps are completed, the person (leader) moves beyond mere acceptance or tolerance of diversity to valuing diversity and reaping its benefits.

Stage 1. Awareness

Biases can be held without people being aware that they hold them (Fiarman, 2016) and these biases can lead to acts of discrimination, unintentional though they may be (Baron, Byrne, & Branscombe, 2006; Butler, 1993). Teachers, for example, can bring unconscious biases to the classroom (Cochran-Smith, 2012), which, in turn, that can lead to inadvertent discriminatory behavior toward certain groups of students (Green, 2012). When educators gain deeper awareness of subtle, subconscious biases they may hold, and help students do the same, they achieve one key objective of multicultural education: promoting self-insight (Gorski, 1995-2019).

From a very young age, a variety of social agents (family members, peers, media, etc.) have shaped our attitudes, beliefs and behaviors, and shaped them to such a degree that we no longer evaluate them. In fact, to question or challenge culturally acquired beliefs may make people feel as if they're dismissing or disrespecting their upbringing and heritage. However, by taking time to carefully examine our beliefs and consciously challenge those that are biased, we become less blind to and bound by those biased beliefs, and less likely to engage in discriminatory behavior that may be driven by them. Obvious, this is exactly true for leaders and leadership development.

"We must learn to be vulnerable enough to allow our world to turn upside down in order to allow the realities of others to edge themselves into our consciousness."
—Lisa Delpit, "The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children." Harvard
    Educational Review

Thus, the first step toward culturally inclusive education is for educators to gain deeper awareness of their culturally influenced beliefs and how those beliefs may affect their expectations of and interactions with students from different cultural groups. Before effective multicultural education can take place, educators need to gain awareness of any subconscious biases they hold that may interfere with their ability to treat students from different social groups in an impartial and equitable manner.

Figure 5.2

→Insert figure and caption on p. 131 of Diversity & The College Experience, 2nd ed.

Change caption to read as: "Self-awareness is the first step in the process of overcoming personal biases."

PERSONAL INSIGHT

I have become more aware of a deep-seated bias that was rooted in my childhood experiences. I recall that when I was 11 years old, I was comparing baseball cards with a friend of mine who was of Irish descent. As he was showing me his cards, he pulled out certain ones and said "he's good." After he pulled out the fourth or fifth card, I finally figured out what his criterion was for determining who was "good." All the cards he pulled out had Irish surnames (e.g., O'Toole, McMahon, Maloney). He certainly didn't pull out any cards that had Italian-sounding names like

mine. Later that year, I noticed that some of my Italian classmates were being derisively called "waps" and "guineas." On one particular occasion, someone in our crowded schoolyard shouted out the following question at me: "Hey, Cuseo, you know why you don't have any freckles? It's because they'd slide right off your greasy Italian face!" Laughter then broke out among a bunch of kids who overheard the comment.

I am aware now that these childhood incidents left me with a lingering bias against Irish-Americans. To this day, I cannot bring myself to root for Notre Dame's sports teams because their nickname is the "fighting Irish" or for Boston's professional basketball team because they're called the Celtics.

The good news that I'm aware of this bias and haven't let it led to full-blown prejudice and discrimination toward people of Irish descent. In fact, the young Irish-American boy who showed me only the baseball cards of "good" (Irish-named) players has remained a close, lifelong friend.

<div align="right">Joe Cuseo</div>

Exploring and unearthing unconscious biases doesn't mean we're taking a self-induced "guilt trip." It is not to say that we are personally responsible for the extreme forms of prejudice and discrimination that have long plagued, and continue to plague us at a societal level. Instead, it's a personal, introspective journey that leads to greater self-insight and potential discovery of subtle beliefs or attitudes which can result in behavior that disadvantage members of diverse groups, even if done without conscious awareness or malicious intent (Butler, 1993). As Ginsberg and Wlodowksi (2009) point out:

> The first requisite for culturally responsive teaching [is] a sincere sense of self-scrutiny, not to induce guilt but to deepen sensitivity to the range of ways educators are complicit with inequitable treatment of others and to open ourselves to knowing the limitations of our own perspectives . . . . Mindfulness of who we are and what we believe culturally can help us examine the ways in which we may be unknowingly placing our good intentions within a dominant and unyielding framework—in spite of the appearance of openness and receptivity (pp. 13 & 330).

One effective way to increase self-awareness of feelings, beliefs, and biases about diverse groups is to do the following:

- Take a moment to list all of the things that come to mind about a social group of which you are not a member and with whom you've had very little contact. (You can use the diversity spectrum on to identify one such group.)
- Write down all thoughts and feelings you have about the group. Be sure to write down what you truly believe and not what sounds right to say or seems socially acceptable. Try to be totally honest; don't worry about how your thoughts and feelings might be judged because you will not be sharing them with anyone.
- Reflect back on the ideas you wrote down in the previous step, go deeper into the thought process, and dig up any subtle beliefs you may have about that group.
- Once you've carefully examined your deepest thoughts and feelings, and have recorded them in writing, answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

Would you say that any of the thoughts or feelings you wrote down represents a negative bias, stereotype, or prejudice? If yes: (a) Why do you think you hold it? (b) How do you think it developed in the first place?

The process of gaining new knowledge through deep assessment, deep reflection, deep learning, is a process of increasing your intellectual capacity as a leader. We call this as a process of building your IQ.

If you have honestly answered the above questions, you're ready to advance to the next stage in the process of diversity appreciation: Acknowledgement.

Stage 2. Acknowledgement

Diversity cannot be appreciated without first acknowledging the diverse groups that make up our social environment and how their life experiences differ from our own. This involves moving beyond the diversity-dismissive question: "We're all human aren't we?" This statement denies the reality of group identity and that an individual's group identity can strongly influence that person's life experiences and personal identity. Minimizing or ignoring group differences also ignores the fact that different groups of people experience different personal privileges, such as access to different amounts of social and economic resources. For instance, to ignore differences between socioeconomic groups is to fail to acknowledge the reality that individuals born into families with greater wealth and socioeconomic status have the privilege of tapping into networks of influential people who can help them gain access to employment, loans, educational services, and legal assistance.

This "acknowledgment" stage of the diversity appreciation process also involves acknowledging how our attitudes and behavior can, in turn, affect how members of diverse groups view themselves. George Cooley, famous sociologist, coined the term "looking glass self" to capture the idea that when people sees how others act toward them and react to them is like looking in a mirror—those actions and reactions (positive or negative) reflect back on them and affect how they view themselves (positively or negatively) (Cooley, 1922). Applying Cooley's concept to educational settings, if children come to the school environment with a positive view of their academic ability and prospects for success and see that educators have low expectations of them and treat them accordingly, they internalize these observations—which, in turn, lowers their

academic self-image and academic performance (Bowman, 1995). For instance, teachers who believe that females cannot perform as well as males in math and science have been found to hold lower expectations of female students in these subject areas—which, in turn, lowers their levels of academic aspiration and achievement in these subject areas (Clewell, Anderson, & Thorpe, 1992; Tobias, 1978). Teachers can help guard against unconscious biases that lead to lower expectations of students from different groups by observing videotapes of their classroom behavior being, or by having a colleague visit class and provide objective "third party" feedback about whether they are treating certain groups of students differently, albeit unknowingly.

Culturally competent educators acknowledge that:

- attitudes and actions toward different students, differ faculty, and different staff from different social groups can affect their academic self-concept and level of achievement
- learning is maximized in classroom environments that are inclusive and personally validating
- a key role of an educator is to serve as a bridge builder between the culture of the student, the school, and the surrounding community
- the families of students from all social groups have a vested interest in the educational success of their children
- students' language and culture are interrelated
- cultural and linguistic diversity are essential elements of the learning experience
- cultural dialect is a valid expression of language that should not be dismissed or devalued, but acknowledged and utilized to enhance a student's ability to learn, read, and communicate.

After acknowledging how our thoughts, feelings, and actions are impacting others (especially those you serve) who differ from us (particularly if that impact may be has disadvantaging them). This is called social intelligence. You are now positioned to move to the next stage in the cycle of diversity appreciation: Acceptance.

Stage 3. Acceptance

This stage of diversity appreciation involves sensitivity to, and empathy for, others who have been adversely affected by biases or prejudices. In this stage, we accept the fact that although we cannot actually feel what victims of prejudice have felt, we can still understand how they feel and sympathize with them. By so doing, we exhibit empathy—a critical component of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2006) and a powerful predictor of personal and professional success (Goleman, 1995).

To increase empathy for the experiences of members of a disadvantaged group, imagine that you are a member of that group and attempt to visualize yourself having the same experiences. Better yet, place yourself in a role, position or situation of a member of the disadvantaged group. For example, spend a day in a wheelchair to experience what it's like for someone who has a physical disability, or wear an eye mask for a day to experience what it's like to be blind.

A third-grade school teacher from Iowa by the name of Jane Elliot once devised a famous and daring classroom exercise to develop empathy for victims of racial discrimination. In 1968, after Martin

Luther King had been assassinated, Elliot was struck by white reporters' lack of empathy for what black Americans were experiencing after the assassination. So, she decided to conduct an experiment in her class of all-white students that came to be called the "blue eyes - brown eyes" exercise. Elliott constructed brown fabric collars and asked the blue-eyed students to wrap them around the necks of their brown-eyed peers so they can be easily identified as members of an "inferior" minority group. The "superior" blue-eyed children were given such privileges as front-row seats in class, opportunity to participate in class discussions, access to the new jungle gym, extra recess time, and extra helpings of food at lunch. The brown-eyed children had none of these privileges; they were forced to sit in the back of class and were more severely reprimanded for the same type of behavior that blue-eyed children were allowed to get away with. The blue-eyed children were also encouraged to ignore the brown-eyed students, play only with other blue-eyed children, and drink from different water fountains than the brown-eyed students.

At first, the disadvantaged group (brown-eyed students) resisted the idea that blue-eyed children were superior to them. However, their resistance faded when the class learned about scientific evidence "proving" there was a body chemical that causes a person's eyes to be blue and is also associated with higher levels of intelligence.

The results of the classroom exercise were stunning. The "inferior" group became more timid, submissive, and their academic performance declined. In contrast, the school performance of the "superior" blue-eyed students improved, but they also became more arrogant, dominating, and unpleasant to their "inferior" brown-eyed classmates (Peters, 1987).

Later, the Elliot reversed the roles assigned to her blue-eyed and brown-eyed students, giving the brown-eyed students the accolades and privileges previously given to the blue-eyed students. Similar results took place, but in the opposite direction; the only difference being that the brown-eyed students didn't taunt their blue-eyed classmates quite as viciously as they had been taunted, likely because their prior experience of being victims of prejudice and discrimination supplied them with greater empathy.

As soon as the classroom exercise ended, Elliot gave her students a detailed explanation about the purpose of the exercise was conducted and what the results suggested. The blue-eyed and brown-eyed children then hugged and apologized to one another. Their teacher had effectively helped a class of all-white students develop empathy for racial groups that experience prejudice and discrimination.

The children wrote stories about their experiences that were published in a local newspaper.

The children's stories then received attention from the national media, launching their teacher into a career as a public speaker against discrimination. In 1970, ABC produced a documentary about the classroom experiment, titled The Eye of the Storm (https://vimeo.com/153858146). Fifteen years later, the film inspired a reunion of the 1970 class members with their teacher. Two books were also written about it the classroom experiment: A Class Divided and A Class Divided: Then and Now (https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/class-divided/), and it was reenacted by adults on the Oprah Winfrey show in 1992 (https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/02/jane-elliott-race-experiment-oprah-show_n_6396980.html) (Huffpost, 2018).

"God created one race: The human race. Human beings crated racism."

—Jane Elliot, third-grade schoolteacher, [anti-racism] activist, and nationally-known diversity educator

More formal research studies were later conducted on this classroom exercise, which supported its effectiveness for promoting students' empathy toward members of disadvantaged groups (Byrnes & Kiger, 1990).

As a leader, it is your job to develop other leaders. To do that, you need to be able to connect to each of your staff and/or peer members on a deep individual level. They need to know where you are coming from and you need to know where they are coming from. Building these relationships will give them the skills to assist you in moving the organization forward and increase the capacity of the team to perform the duties they are assigned. Connecting at these deep, empathetic levels is the essence of an emotional intelligent leader.

PERSONAL INSIGHT

As mentioned previously, one of the best attended events that ever took place at my school was a presentation made by Floyd Cochran, a former member and recruiter for "Aryan Nation" (a white-supremacist hate group), who eventually left the group and went on to became a nationally known civil-rights activist and educator. During he was speaking at my school, Cochran pointed to a key experience that caused him to change his bigoted views. It occurred when his pregnant wife had an ultrasound that revealed his unborn son had a cleft palate. In the minds of the white supremacist group of which he was a member, the baby was "defective" and if he were to become the father of that defective child, he could no longer be a member of the supremacist group. This left Cochran with two choices: (a) abort his son and remain a member of the group, or (b) keep his son and be ostracized by a group whose supremacist beliefs he endorsed. Cochran chose to quit the group, renounce his racist beliefs, and began speaking out publicly against the hateful prejudices he once firmly believed and taught.

After hearing Cochran's story, it struck me that the experience which triggered his incredible transformation was an exercise in role reversal. When his son was deemed "inferior," he was thrust into a reversed role—he became the recipient rather than the perpetrator of hateful discrimination. Cochran's radical reversal from hateful racist to civil rights activist is a dramatic illustration of how being placed in the role or position of a person experiencing prejudice is a powerful way to promote empathy for victims of prejudice.

Joe Cuseo

Stage 4. Action

Once we: (a) become aware of our biases, (b) acknowledge how our biases have affected members of those we interact with and serve, and (c) accept the feelings of others and deeply connect with them who may have been adversely affected by our biases, we can take (d) take action to capitalize on the benefits to create a strong leadership team. This fourth, most advanced stage in the process of leadership development involves stepping beyond tolerating and accepting status quo. A person who merely tolerates stagnation, or simply co-exists with co-workers or those we serve, might say something like: "Let's just keep doing what we've always done." This highest level of understanding oneself and the role you have as a leader will take you to a new leadership conscience and a new level of competence. Attaining competence involves deeper, authentic diversity-related action and interaction that promotes both our own development and the development of others who are differ from us.

   Educators who truly appreciate diversity transform attitude into action by seeking out interaction with members of diverse groups, collaborating with them, and learning from them (Smith, 1997, 2015). In so doing, they help realize an important objective of multicultural education: self-transformation (Gorski, 1995-2019).

   Applying this to student success, when educators have attained cultural competence, they are positioned to deliver culturally inclusive education that recognizes and capitalizes on student differences to achieve learning outcomes that benefit all students (Ety et al., 1995). They engage in such practices as:

- Communicating high expectations to students from all cultural backgrounds
- Allowing students opportunities to become acquainted with one another and learn about each other's cultural experiences
- Encouraging students from different culture to work collaboratively, enabling them to experience and discover multicultural perspectives
- Participating in community meetings and activities to gain a deeper understanding of their students' cultural backgrounds
- Soliciting input from family and community members of students with diverse backgrounds and being mindful of it when making educational decisions
- Offering families a variety of ways to participate in their students' education
- Becoming an advocate for diverse students at school and in the local community

In summary, competence of all kinds (i.e., leadership, cultural) is attained by advancing through successive steps or stages (depicted in Box 4.1) and the ability to assess growth increases higher levels of output for not only the individual but also the school.

Box 5.1

Leadership Statement

As a leader I am committed to the development of effective, ethical leaders. I believe that through study and life experience, individuals have opportunities to enrich their knowledge and refine their attitudes and actions which are essential in acting responsibly. I believe in social justice and value those willing to utilize their talents assisting others in obtaining equitable justice. I believe in exercising power appropriately and strive to view all items in a critical and creative manner. I attempt to create conditions within the organizations I work with that will allow people to accomplish what they need to do. I do this by being well organized, having a clear mission, and setting attainable goals. I believe in involving everyone in the process and allowing them to feel ownership of the goals of the organization. Most of all, I employ the process of self-evaluation often and use this assessment to become a better leader.

-- Aaron Thompson