



SERVANT LEADERSHIP

IN HIGHER EDUCATION



Servant Leadership

In Higher Education

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Exercise 1 Write down two or three words commonly associated with leaders. Then write own two or three words commonly associated with servants.

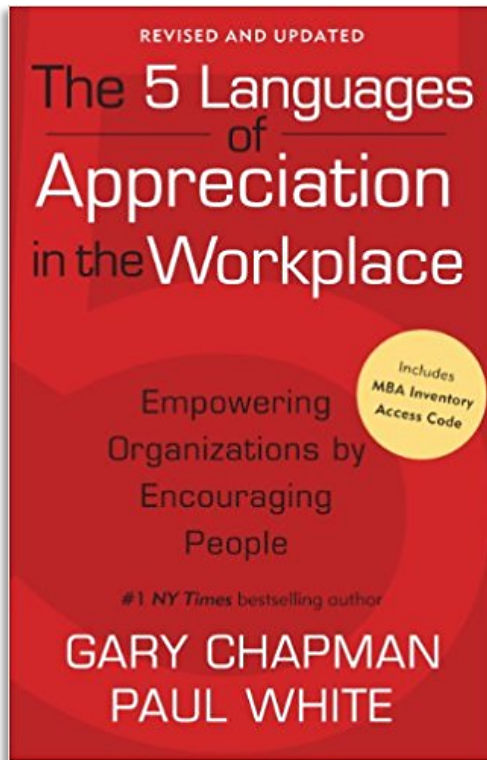
Leaders	Servants

Components of Servant Leadership

- Meeting the needs of and empowering others
- Open mindedness and paradoxical thinking
- Integrity and authenticity
- Leaving a legacy
- Emotional healing

“The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, *while being served*, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”

Robert K. Greenleaf



Exercise 2

Dr. Constance Druggle is a top researcher in her field and has published numerous articles. She is also a popular professor, and her classes fill up quickly with students who also come to her office either for extra insight on the material or just to chat about life. Her students regularly elect her as Teacher of the Year, which involves a public ceremony and the presentation of a large plaque. Dr. Druggle loves her job so much that she also volunteered to serve as interim chair of her department to better assist and serve her colleagues. They, in turn, frequently throw her parties and give her small gifts to thank her for her support.

While Dr. Druggle is happy to perform all of these tasks and can manage her time fairly well, she still feels as though something is missing. Whenever colleagues ask how things are going, she suggests that she's a little overwhelmed. They usually reply with, "Don't worry. You'll get it done. You're the best, after all," and then walk away. Dr. Druggle's heart fills with resentment whenever this happens. **Why might Dr. Druggle feel unappreciated despite all of the kind words and gifts she receives?**

"When we feel appreciated, we are motivated to 'climb higher.' Conversely, without appreciation, we often settle into mediocre performance, often far below our level of capability."

(pp. 117-118)

- ☐ Words of Affirmation
- ☐ Quality Time
- ☐ Acts of Service
- ☐ Tangible Gifts
- ☐ Physical Touch



Exercise 3

Professor Alex Blaine Layder loves teaching. While he is very busy with all of the research he has to do, he still strives to give quality time to his students. His teaching philosophy involves getting to know his students on a personal level rather than simply assigning papers and giving grades. He enjoys greeting his students individually as they walk into class. Every now and then, he'll even treat his students to coffee in the Student Union after class to show his appreciation and so that they get a chance to talk about issues aside from simply the material of the course.

Year after year, Professor Layder receives glowing evaluations. This semester, however, a group of about five students wrote that Professor Layder seemed to play favorites. They complained that he was more focused on making friends rather than giving feedback on coursework and helping students understand the material. Professor Layder was taken aback. All of his students passed with flying colors, and most of them seemed excited about the personal relationship he had with them. He is confused as to why these few students seem to feel so unappreciated. **Where may have Professor Layder missed the mark with these few students?**

Exercise 4.1

Can you think of a time when you and your colleagues seemed to come to agreement on a decision right away? What were the results?

Exercise 4.2

Can you think of a time when you and your colleagues had many opposing viewpoints on an issue before a decision was made? What were those results?



Ultimate Goal:
**To create more
servant leaders**

A Servant Leader Is:

- ☐ Self-aware
- ☐ Humble
- ☐ Authentic
- ☐ Called to serve
- ☐ A servant first and a leader second

The leadership job is never complete. It can always move to another level if we are willing to continue the effort, think innovatively, and commit to others' development.

Daniel Wheeler

**Steps for
Developing More
Servant Leaders:**

- ☐ Modeling
- ☐ Creating a Safe Environment
- ☐ Professional Development
- ☐ Evaluation



Exercise 5

Using a scale of 1 [= "Doesn't describe me at all"] to 10 [= "Describes me perfectly"], rate yourself on Larry Spears' 10 characteristics of a servant leader. Where do you need to grow?

- | | |
|---|---|
| _____ 1. Listening | _____ 7. Foresight |
| _____ 2. Empathy | _____ 8. Stewardship |
| _____ 3. Healing | _____ 9. Commitment to the growth of others |
| _____ 4. Awareness | _____ 10. Building community |
| _____ 5. Persuasion | |
| _____ 6. Encouragement of others to dream big | |

(some items are paraphrased from the terms used by Larry Spears)

Exercise 6

- What associations, feelings, and reactions occur to you when you reflect on David Dudley's image of the toilet brush as an appropriate "diploma" for a true servant leader?
- Have you ever known a leader that you felt truly embodied those values?



Exercise 7



Identify one action you could take immediately to put you further on the path toward true servant leadership.

Resources

- Autry, J. A. (2001). *The servant leader: How to build a creative team, develop great morale, and improve bottom-line performance*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.
- Buller, J. L. (2013). *Positive academic leadership: How to stop putting out fires and start making a difference*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Chapman, G., & White, P. (2012). *The 5 languages of appreciation in the workplace: Empowering organizations by encouraging people*. Chicago, IL: Northfield Publishing.
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https://www.essr.net/~jafundo/mestrado_material_itgjkhnld/IV/Lideran%C3%A7as/The%20Servant%20as%20Leader.pdf.
- Sinek, S. (2017). *Leaders eat last: Why some teams pull together and others don't*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House.
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For more information, refer to the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership:
www.greenleaf.org

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

"Twenty-first-century leadership relationship dynamics are from the bottom up rather than the top down; from the outside in, rather than the inside out."

James M. Strock, *Serve to Lead*

