Facilitator’s Guide

Significant Leadership Characteristics

Character matters; leadership descends from character. —Rush Limbaugh

Rationale:
For maximum leadership development potential, it is important for every person to have a strong understanding of what leadership is, what good leadership looks like and how it can vary between genders.

Goal:
To recognize significant leadership characteristics for increasing individual leadership development opportunities in a variety of situations

Program Objectives:
• Distinguish the three basic factors that define leadership.
• Identify characteristics of successful leaders.
• Compare perceived gender differences in leadership.

Pre-Program Preparation:
• Copy the Significant Leadership Characteristics fact sheet and Characteristics chart for each participant.
• Collect pictures of five to six great leaders such as Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, local community leaders.
• Copy the Question and Quotes handout for each group.
• Make Leadership Definition Factor Scramble cards.
• Make Gender Differences cards.
• Secure pencils/pens/markers, wall poster/paper, highlighters, baskets/containers marked “male” and “female.”

Introduction:
Leadership can be seen all around us. From the local pastor to the County Judge Executive to the Little League Baseball coach, leadership is played out in a variety of situations every day. Everyone has the opportunity to be a leader at some time, so it is important that every person have a strong understanding of what leadership is, what good leadership looks like, and how it can vary between genders. Learning about leadership will make you much more effective next time it is your turn to lead.

Introductory Activity:
Post or show pictures of five to six great leaders. Include individuals such as Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, Napoleon, Mother Theresa. (Continue the list on your own. Include a few local great leaders, so the audience can make a personal connection with the activity.)
Ask the audience to consider the list, and together brainstorm what characteristics and traits make these leaders exceptional. Write the list on flipchart/wall poster. After a few minutes, segue way into the training while leaving the list on the board to refer to later.

Objective 1. Distinguish the three basic factors that define leadership
Leadership is important within a wide variety of situations. A good, basic definition of leadership is to influence others toward a shared goal. Three important factors shape any leadership definition: Leadership is a group occurrence that is directed by a goal and has a definite structure.

Learning Activity 1:
Divide the participants into groups and distribute the Leadership Definition Factor Scramble cards, two envelopes to each group. One envelope with have three factors. The other will have three sentences. Have the participants arrange the cards to connect the right factor with the right sentence. Once they’re assembled, post the completed sentences with the correct factor for participants to see.

This leadership curriculum was developed by Family & Consumer Science (FCS) agents along with University of Kentucky specialists. Therefore, the examples used in the facilitator’s guides are geared toward an FCS audience, such as Homemaker’s groups. Please feel free to modify and reproduce the facilitator’s guide for any appropriate educational or training purposes with other audiences.
These three factors include:

• **Group occurrence**—A leader cannot practice leadership without at least one person following.

• **Directed by a goal**—The leader must be leading the group toward a shared goal that followers believe in.

• **Structured**—To be effective, structure is needed within the leader-follower relationship.

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**Objective 2. Identify characteristics of successful leaders**

Effective leaders share many common characteristics. Several of these characteristics are directly tied to the three factors we just discussed. At the beginning of the lesson, we discussed characteristics of great leaders. Let us compare our list of characteristics with a list developed from research studies of effective leaders. (Share the Leadership Characteristics chart.) What similarities exist between the two lists?

**Learning Activity 2:**

**Characteristics Study Activity**

- Separate group into small groups of four or five individuals.
- Give each group a Question and Quotes segment and the characteristic chart.
- Participants will compare the Question and Quotes segment with the Leadership Characteristics chart and highlight which characteristics come out in the quote or question they were assigned.
- Each group should be ready to discuss its quotes and question and corresponding characteristics with the group.

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**Objective 3. Compare perceived gender differences in leadership**

As society continues to change, more and more women are taking on leadership roles. Originally, the primary question was “Can women lead?” Of course, we know the answer is yes, but that does not mean there are not differences in leadership styles between genders. So how do the genders differ when placed in leadership roles?

**Learning Activity 3.**

Distribute Gender Differences cards to participants. Have participants read their cards and place the cards in the appropriate basket, marked “male” or “female.”

**Perceived Female strengths:**
- Democratic
- Participative
- Inspiring motivation
- Individualized attention to one’s followers
- Reward successful follower behaviors

**Perceived Male strengths:**
- Autocratic
- Directive
- More likely to ask for what they want
- Skills at negotiation

The role that gender plays in leadership is notable but not absolute. Men and women have different strengths and are therefore more effective within different leadership situations. It should be noted, however, that effectiveness isn’t related to gender; rather, every situation requires the right leader, whether male or female. Understanding gender differences in leadership is just one tool in helping to identify the right leader.

Ask volunteers to select two strength cards from each of the baskets. Read each card and ask the participants to give examples of an Extension Homemaker situation in which the leadership strength would be an effective strategy to influence others toward a shared goal.

**Summary**

Just as there are specific factors that contribute toward an accurate definition of leadership, there are also some common characteristics shared by effective leaders. Realizing what characteristics are associated with successful leaders is important for personal leadership development and helps give the individual a clear picture of who he or she is as a leader. The same is true for gender differences in leadership. By understanding how leadership works for men and women, people can be put into the right situations in order to excel as leaders.

**References**


Developed by Melissa Goodman, Hickman County Extension Agent–FCS; Janet H. Johnson, Allen County Extension Agent–FCS; and Laura F. Stephenson, Kentucky FCS Extension Program Leader
Leadership Characteristics Chart

Confidence
Consistency between word and action—“walking the talk”

Creativity
Active listening skills
Efficient coaching skills

Visioning
Ability to inspire
Long-term focus
Ability to balance individual needs and team needs
Awareness of realistic conditions
Willingness to share credit or recognition

Strong self-esteem
Sense of priorities
Service mentality
Sincerity
Technical expertise

Trust
Willingness to share responsibility
Question and Quotes

Kentucky Senator Denise Harper Angel

“I truly love public service. Being in a capacity to make real and positive change in the lives of the citizens of my district and in all our Commonwealth is an honor beyond explanation.”


Tony Robbins

“I challenge you to make your life a masterpiece. I challenge you to join the ranks of those people who live what they teach, who walk their talk.”

“People are not lazy. They simply have impotent goals —that is, goals that do not inspire them.”

“The only limit to your impact is your imagination and commitment.”

Source: http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/t/tony_robbins.html

John Maxwell

“A great leader’s courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not position.”

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.”

“Competence goes beyond words. It’s the leader’s ability to say it, plan it, and do it in such a way that others know that you know how—and know that they want to follow you.”

Source: http://thinkexist.com/quotes/john_c._maxwell/2.html
Leadership Definition Factor Scramble Cards

Directions: Make as many copies of this sheet as you will have groups. Cut each copy into strips at the dotted lines. For each group, put the three bold-faced statements in one envelope and the three sentences in another.

A group occurrence

A leader cannot practice leadership without at least one person following.

Directed by a goal

The leader must be leading the group toward a shared goal that followers believe in.

Structured

Some type of structure is needed within the leader-follower relationship.
**Gender Differences**

Directions: Make enough copies of this sheet for the number of participants. Laminate each sheet. Cut the sheets on the dotted lines into individual cards. Give each participant a full set of cards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democratic</th>
<th>Autocratic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participative</td>
<td>Directive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiring motivation</td>
<td>Skills at negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized</td>
<td>More likely to ask for what they want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attention to one’s followers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward successful follower behaviors</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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