

Excellence in Global Leadership at Institutions of Higher Learning

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Abstract

This paper will enable the reader to 1) understand characteristics of highly effective leaders, 2) review the importance of an Institution of Higher Learning (IHE) to take a position of distinction internationally and 3) establish motivation to become an effective leader. Leadership skills include: trust, a guiding vision for the institution, integrity, candor and the maturity to lead by example. Also, leadership skills include: curiosity and daring and above all, passion! For excellence in global leadership, an IHE is wise to follow a globally effective mission statement. An effective mission statement should include a purpose, a description of the audience one is addressing and key elements how the institution will address the purpose. Establishing individual motivation contributes to the IHE's distinction in a global venue. When one believes in one's constituents, it is more likely the "job" will be completed efficiently and on time! Motivation comes from an internal locus of control rather fostered by trust rather than micro management. Those Institutions of Higher Learning that exhibit excellence in global leadership also exhibit collaboration with other IHE's. Networking is essential to the contribution of new ideas, new schemas and innovative methods to teaching and learning. The answer to excellence in global leadership for Institutions of Higher Learning lies with an effective mission statement, carried out by skilled leaders who are willing to communicate and collaborate on a global level.

Rationale

To stay competitive in the global education market, an Institution of Higher Learning (IHE) must remain competitive in the arena. How might an IHE accomplish this daunting task? Writing an effective mission statement is the begging of successful completion of this objective. Using National University (USA) as an example, stakeholders have mastered the creation of a

highly effective mission statement so that students can compete globally in all areas important to the success of the individual and instructors have a guide as to how to most effectively teach so that students can learn what is vital in a competing world market!

“National University’s central purpose is to promote continuous learning by offering a diversity of instructional approaches, by encouraging scholarship, by engaging in collaborative community services, and by empowering its constituents to become responsible citizens in an interdependent, pluralistic, global community” (#75, p.20).

Theoretical Framework

Renown writers in the field of leadership, that are favored by the author, are Covey, Bennis and Woolfolk, who is the quintessential author for examining educational psychology. What contributes to effective leadership skills?

According to Bennis (1994), the quality of integrity shines through the character of an effective leader! Shakespeare is famous for the phrase “Know thyself” and self knowledge is an integral part of integrity. One must look to one’s inner core to determine whether unknown prejudices lurk or whether one is actually being honest with oneself and is always speaking truthfully in all matters.

Candor which is based in honesty of thought and action, a steadfast devotion to principle, and a fundamental soundness and wholeness, is also inherent as a primary characteristic in a successful leader. Carol Rogers, therapist, speaks of it as “congruence”.

Maturity does not come easily in the development of the human psyche, but one earns “developmental strips” when one leads and/or motivate by example. This is not to say that the

timeworn element of life experience does not have a significant rule in how one achieves this leadership skill. Often it is earned through trial and error, fraught with countless errors in judgment, including (but not limited to) finance, relationships or education.

Curiosity and daring provide are two other characteristics evidenced by skilled leaders. A good leader is a risk taker in order to find efficacy in problem solving, task fulfillment and time management. In order to sustain the above, one must feel a spark of passion in what one does! According to Bennis (1994) “A very particular passion for a vocation, a profession, a course of action” sustains the leader to meet old and new accomplishments (p.40). If you love what you do, you’ll never work a day in your life!

Covey (2006) favors trust for the success of all relationships including business and education. He contends there are five “waves of trust”: self trust (credibility), relationship trust (behavior), organizational trust (alignment), market trust, (reputation) and societal trust (contribution). When trust is evident in a relationship, “waves” of trust flow to each entity mentioned above which creates competence in the industry and/or institution of higher learning (IHE). These waves also contribute to the character of skilled leaders at the helm of the industry or IHE!

Thus far, the objectives of this paper have been discussion. Characteristics of skilled leaders and the rationale as to the method an institute of higher learning can take to achieve a leadership role globally. One of the most important objectives this paper is to discover what it takes to motivate oneself, and/or a group to become a skilled leader in an industry or IHE to remain competitive in a global market.

According to Woolfolk (2010), social cognitive theorists believe that motivation is product of two factors: the student's expectation of reaching a goal and the value of that goal to the student (p.379). In other words, when one is designing and or marketing a product that will distinguish one from others globally, one will need to meet the expectations of the client (or customer) and make those expectations or outcomes relevant to the client. For example, many of National University's instructors teach the discipline in which they work. They are aware of current trends in the subject matter they teach, and show students/clients how their knowledge can be applied to the classroom and/or industry.

Locus of control provides additional impetus to one's motivation. Ideally, leaders are successful are considered to have an internal locus of control. Their desire to excel in a global market comes from an internal desire to continually search for excellence in all that they do. However, looking outward for motivation can lead to failure, as it is difficult to grasp the golden ring when one relies on influences outside of one's locus of control. "Extrinsic motivation is motivation created by external factors such as rewards and punishments" (Woolfolk, 2010, p.377). Unfortunately, mercenaries are extrinsically rewarded monetarily (but this can lead to a "Goldman-Sachs" debacle) or the loss of a job (punishment). When there is passion in one's work (as noted previously) intrinsic motivation and enthusiasm prevail. Again, when one enjoys the job, one never has to work a day in one's life!

Importance of the Mission Statement

Once an IHE or industry has crafted a mission statement that addresses its goal, its audience and fulfills a need ascertained by the constituents, it is paramount that mission statement is carried out! How it is implemented is the responsibility of all stakeholders!

For example, National University's charged, based on the mission statement noted above is to do promote continuous learning (goal) through various strategies mentioned that empowers its constituents (audience) to become responsible citizens (need). Before a program design, including an ultimate program evaluation, is undertaken, a carefully crafted mission statement must be in effect that covers these three main components: goal, audience, and satisfies need.

We are all ambassadors of the institutions we represent! Wherever we go we project the values and goals of the schools, companies and industries we represent. It is incumbent upon us to carry out the leadership of these entities by knowing and achieving the skills of a good leader, follow the entity's carefully crafted mission statement, and motivate all stakeholders to embody the path of leadership. This will allow the IHE, industry or company to remain competitive in a global market!

Conclusion

The objectives of this paper were to discuss the characteristics of skilled leaders, review the importance of an IHE or other industry to take a position of distinction globally, and achieve motivation to a prominent global position by following a carefully crafted mission statement. It is incumbent upon all stakeholders to take a serious look at what they wish to accomplish for themselves, individually, and what position of prominence to they want the group they represent to take. Our glove continues to shrink and when we share ideas, network and follow the model characteristics of skilled leaders, we can all reach a prominent position in world economy and education. Our descendants will be the better for it!

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