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The Social Change Model of Leadership Development

Summary excerpted from: The Social Change Model of Leadership Development Guidebook Version III.

THE MODEL:

In understanding the leadership model presented here, it is necessary to assume that a "leadership development group" has been formed and that the group intends to engage in some form of change-action project as the primary vehicle for developing leadership skills.

BASIC PREMISES:

The model is inclusive in that it is designed to enhance the development of leadership qualities in all participants- those who hold formal leadership positions as well as those who do not - and to promote a process that is inclusive and actively engages all who wish to contribute.



- Leadership is viewed as a process rather than as a position.
- The model explicitly promotes the values of equity, social justice, self-knowledge, personal empowerment, collaboration, citizenship, and service.
- Service provides a powerful vehicle for developing student leadership capabilities in a collaborative environment. Learning happens by "making meaning" of life experiences.
- While the model was initially designed to assist professionals in the field of student affairs who are engaged (or wish to engage) in facilitating leadership development among students, we have come to realize that it can also be useful to faculty and academic administrators or to students who are interested in undertaking leadership development projects on their own.
- The model is only one of the many possible models of leadership development. It is presented as a working framework that is subject to regular revision and refinement based on the experience of those who use it. Practitioners and students may very well find certain elements in the model to be more applicable or relevant than others. Moreover, different types of institutions may need to make some modifications in accordance with their institutional missions.
- The model has two primary goals:
 1. To enhance student learning and development; more specifically, to develop in each student greater:
 - Self-knowledge: understanding of one's talents, values, interests, especially as these relate to the student's capacity to provide effective leadership.
 - Leadership Competence: the capacity to mobilize oneself and others to serve and work collaboratively.
 2. To facilitate positive social change at the institution or in the community. That is, to undertake actions which will help the institution/community to function more effectively and humanely.

Since our approach to leadership development is embedded in collaboration and concerned with fostering positive social change, the model examines leadership development from three different perspectives or levels:

The Individual: What personal qualities are we attempting to foster and develop in those who participate in a leadership development program? What personal qualities are most supportive of group functioning and positive social change?

The Group: How can the collaborative leadership development process be designed not only to facilitate the development of the desired, individual qualities (above), but also to affect positive social change?

The Community/Society: Toward what social ends is the leadership development activity directed? What kinds of service activities are the most effective in energizing the group and in developing desired personal qualities in the individual?

Through many hours of discussion and debate, it became clear that values were at the core of what we considered to be the critical elements in our leadership development model. In addition to Change, the "hub" around which our evolving

model was being developed, there were seven other critical values about which we could agree:

- Collaboration
- Consciousness of Self & Others
- Commitment
- Congruence
- Common Purpose
- Controversy with Civility
- Citizenship

Since it happens that there are seven values on this list and they all begin with the letter "C," they are dubbed the "7 C's" of leadership development for social change. These values, in turn, can be organized within the three levels of the model (Figure 1), as follows:

- Individual Values
- Consciousness of Self & Others
- Congruence
- Commitment
- Group Process Values
- Collaboration
- Common Purpose
- Controversy with Civility
- Community/Societal Values
- Citizenship

CHANGE

CHANGE, of course, is the value "hub" which gives meaning and purpose to the 7 C's. Change, in other words, is the ultimate goal of the creative process of leadership - to make a better world and a better society for oneself and others.

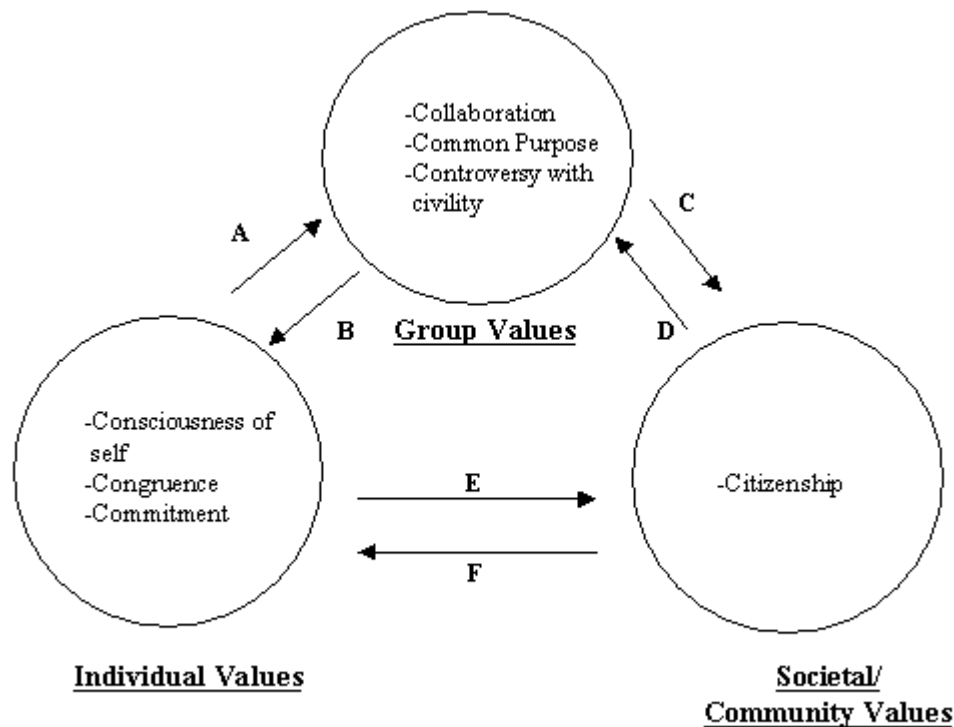


Figure 1. The 7 C's organized by level of focus

Individual Values Societal / Community Values

Following are brief definitions of each of the "Seven C's."

- Consciousness of Self & Others means being aware of the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions that motivate one to take action.
- Congruence refers to thinking, feeling, and behaving with consistency, genuineness, authenticity, and honesty towards others. Congruent persons are those whose actions are consistent with their most deeply-held beliefs and convictions. Clearly, personal congruence and consciousness of self are interdependent.
- Commitment is the psychic energy that motivates the individual to serve and that drives the collective effort. Commitment implies passion, intensity, and duration. It is directed towards both the group activity as well as its intended outcomes. Without commitment, knowledge of self is of little value. And without adequate knowledge of self, commitment is easily misdirected. Congruence, in turn, is most readily achieved when the person acts with commitment and knowledge of self.
- Collaboration is to work with others in a common effort. It constitutes the cornerstone value of the group leadership effort because it empowers self and others through trust. Collaboration multiplies group effectiveness by capitalizing on the multiple talents and perspectives of each group member and on the power of that diversity to generate creative solutions and actions. Collaboration empowers each individual best when there is a clear-cut "division of labor."
- Common Purpose means to work with shared aims and values. It facilitates the group's ability to engage in collective analysis of the issues at hand and the task to be undertaken. Common purpose is best achieved when all of the members in the group share in the vision and participate actively in articulating the purpose and goals of the leadership development activity. Recognizing the common purpose and mission of the group helps to generate the high level of trust that any successful collaboration requires.
- Controversy with Civility recognizes two fundamental realities of any creative group effort: that differences in viewpoint are inevitable, and that such difference must be aired openly but with civility. Civility implies respect for others, a willingness to hear each other's views, and the exercise of restraint in criticizing the views and actions of others. This is best achieved in a collaborative framework and when a common purpose has been identified. Controversy (conflict, confrontation) can often lead to new, creative solutions to problems, especially when it occurs in an atmosphere of civility, collaboration, and common purpose.
- Citizenship is the process whereby the individual and the collaborative group become responsibly connected to the community and the society through the leadership development activity. To be a good citizen is to work for positive change on behalf of others and the community. Citizenship thus acknowledges the interdependence of all who are involved in or affected by these efforts. It recognizes that the common purpose of the group must incorporate a sense of concern for the rights and welfare of all those who might be affected by the group's efforts. Good citizenship thus recognizes that effective democracy involves individual responsibility as well as individual rights.

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