

The Truth is Out There

Aisle or Window? Smoking or Non-Smoking? Leadership or Management?

Julie Todaro

In trying to decide how I might contribute to this leadership-focused edition, I began to calculate my years of involvement with managing and/or leading. In a startling assessment (it's never good when you have to use a calculator), I just figured out that I have been managing collections, money, full-time staff, part-time staff, and/or volunteers—in varying degrees given my positions—for a little over thirty-five years and teaching management and/or leadership for over twenty-five years. Given this track record, I now know why I am so grey—and I imagined this column would be easy, and it wasn't. But I *have* decided on a few general management and leadership “truths”:

- Although management is considered a science and leadership is considered an art, one *can* teach and/or train others in the art of leadership.
- Although management and leadership competencies and attributes can overlap, these elements easily sort into discreet curricula.
- Most training and education content “out there” does not offer specific, discreet curricula.
- Many leadership faculty/trainers/instructors do not include specific content on teaching leadership content to individuals who do NOT supervise and/or have direct authority over others.
- Just because individuals may have longevity in an organization does NOT mean that they should automatically be labeled “leaders” or that they *can* lead.
- A “core” or “master” leadership curriculum is not easily found in training/education leadership literature.

In addition to these leadership truths, I have observed over the years that a number of leadership questions reoccur in the leadership versus management debate. They include:



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- Can you really train/educate people to be leaders?
- What is leadership curriculum?
- Why have leadership training/education for me?
- Why have leadership training for some/all of my staff?
- How does the organization benefit from leadership training?
- What is the best leadership curriculum?
- When should we offer the curriculum?
- How do you, once you've learned it, put leadership competencies into practice?

Can you really train/educate people to be leaders?

Absolutely. Many say that management is a science and leadership is an art that can't be “taught.” However, more contemporary thought offers definitions for leadership, sets of leadership competencies and attributes, leadership training curriculum, and leadership internships and opportunities for “leading without managing” to provide learning opportunities for professionals who don't want to be in management but want to lead, as well as for those who don't manage but want to gain experience in managing.

What is leadership curriculum?

This question is one of the most difficult questions to answer. Primarily because leadership competencies and attributes do overlap with many management competencies and attributes and because so many trainers and educators combine content—often without also teaching what does overlap and what the overlap means and without identifying those that legitimately can be both leadership and management. In general, a leadership curriculum can be:

- the art of leadership versus the science of management;
- definitions of leadership if you supervise/manage;

- definitions of leadership if you don't supervise/manage; or
- definitions of management, supervision, and administration.

Leadership curriculum competencies and attributes for the institution include:

- developing the strategic vision and mission of the institution as well as determining a shared vision with motivated employees committed to carrying out and working toward the vision and mission;
- articulating the values of the institution;
- determining the importance of ethical behavior and defining what ethical behavior is within the institution and possibly within the specific profession;
- thinking about how to lead others through specific instruction as well as by example;
- ensuring an environment of trust and mutual respect among employees and between employees and constituents;
- motivating and inspiring constituents;
- leading in the midst of conflict and adversity;
- developing an infrastructure for and the spirit of teamwork and cooperation;
- articulating with others a teamwork structure for decision making and the institution's work processes;
- leading the institution through change;
- integrating and maintaining processes that include innovation and creative thinking; and
- designing and maintaining mentoring relationships.

Leadership curriculum competencies and attributes for the individual include:

- determining the leader's (your) leadership style;
- identifying pathways to lead flexibly as needed by the institution, followers, and constituents;
- determining employee/follower leadership styles;
- integrating and maintaining pathways to working with followers/other leaders;
- using the personal power of leadership;
- leading when the leader has the primary authority within an organization;
- leading when the leader does not have authority with constituents such as in peer leadership, community leadership, or leadership of cross-trained teams;
- transitioning from a manager to a leader; and
- transitioning from a manager to a manager/leader.

Why have leadership training/education for me?

Leadership training/education is not a one-time continuing education or professional development activity. This content joins the ever-changing world of technology content, for example, as the critical elements of leader-

ship curriculum change, styles and preferences vary given leadership situations and institutions, constituents change, and constituent styles and preferences change. While there isn't a specific time line for updating leadership competencies, leaders should assess the need for new content when significant changes occur within the institution or within the umbrella environment of the institution, if significant changes are made with the institutions' other leaders and managers, and if a leader's job responsibilities change drastically.

Why have leadership training for some/all of my staff?

Leading can take place at every level and through almost every employee or follower within institutions. Leading short-term or long-term teams, committees or workgroups, leading project management groups, and leading individually (all followers), including leading by example, training or educating other employees within the organization should be standard operating procedure. However, the other side of the coin is that those "being led" need to know about leadership as well. Followers need to know, "Why do leaders behave as they do?" and "What responsibilities do followers have?"

How does the organization benefit from leadership training?

Organizations run smoothly if employees know their primary job responsibilities, their secondary job responsibilities, the policies and procedures of the organization, how the organization runs, and how the organization is managed and led. Through leadership training, employees—as followers—and managers have similar expectations for behaviors and performance for both leadership and followership.

What is the best leadership curriculum?

Leadership curriculum can be generic or standard, but the most successful curriculum is presented with some customization that can include: general content but customized activities for learning; specific content that matches a type of leadership style or a type of institution; and curriculum chosen because the institution is in a specific place, that is if morale is strong and positive, morale is low, there has been a recent big change, or there is a major change on the horizon. Institutions should assess where and who they are and then work with educators/trainers to match or customize leadership curriculum to institutional needs.

When should we offer the curriculum?

Obviously in today's continuous learning environment, teaching and learning is ongoing. For leadership curriculum to bring all employees to the same page a general large group presentation with specific activities is critical, but

additional leadership teaching and learning should follow, which could include ongoing self-directed assessment; reading and applying new content through periodical articles, research data, monographs, and Web-delivered content; updating results of institutional leadership activities or data gathering; and guided small or large group discussion of the application or status of leadership within the institution.

How do you, once you've learned it, put leadership competencies into practice?

While implementing and integrating leadership knowledge, skills/abilities, and attitudes into institutions, leaders typically follow their own timeline; however, it should be pointed out that:

- any timelines for major changes in leadership approaches or expectations should be carefully chosen to minimize stresses relating to change in general; and
- any leadership redirections/changes should be identified for employees/followers. For example, even something as simple as, "I used to do it this way, now I'm going to do it this way."

Individuals seeking ways to integrate leadership activities into management of the institution should:

- review institutional/management memos for opportunities for integrating leadership content;
- review meeting processes (including such specific areas as agendas) for integrating leadership opportunities;
- review job descriptions for managers to ensure leadership responsibilities are clear;
- review job descriptions for all employees to ensure that followership responsibilities and possible leadership roles are articulated; and
- review team/committee and any workgroup leader descriptions to ensure that leadership roles and responsibilities are integrated into workgroup processes.

So, the next time we hear "sweetened or unsweetened?" as well as myriad other options, just remember that it's not leadership or management, it's leadership *and* management—but you can and should learn the content independently and then apply both to your big picture.

Save the Date! Save the Date!
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