

Exercise: Laying a Cornerstone for Future Leadership Development

1. Individually, as you listen to the Warren Bennis interview (transcript provided), please jot down, in the left column of the attached worksheet, any insights that you believe are important skills, attributes, or behaviors of an effective leader (for now, feel free to ignore the Kouzes & Posner column).
2. At your table, discuss the items you selected to write down during the interview, including why they seem particularly important and how they might be applied in your work at CSUN.
3. Individually, review the items in the right column of the attached worksheet: these are the Kouzes & Posner set of five key leadership Practices, each with two Commitments, that were presented in the advance readings. Pick two to three (2-3) of these that you believe are particularly important for effective leaders.
4. At your table, discuss the items you picked from the Kouzes & Posner column, including why they seem particularly important and how they might be applied in your work at CSUN.
5. (Individually) from all the items on your attached worksheet, pick (a) one that represents one of your strengths as a leader and (b) one that you feel should be a priority for improving your leadership skills. Plan and *write down* at least three action steps that you could take to improve your performance relative to the area for growth you picked. You might make use of the list of actions in the Advance Readings for some ideas, although you should be more specific to plan how, when, where, and with whom you will take these actions.
6. With one person sitting next to you, take turns sharing both your area of strength and your area for growth. Include why you picked each and the initial action steps you plan to take to progress in the area for growth. If appropriate, note how you might evaluate your progress (this could be as simple as asking some peers for their observations). Help each other refine and make specific the action plans. If possible, make an agreement to check back with each other regarding progress on your plan at least once about two weeks from now (continuing check-backs would be even better).
Name & contact information: _____

7. Have a brief discussion in the total group at the table that includes how you might use this brief beginning as a catalyst to improve your next stages of the life-long process of personal and leadership development.

Worksheet

Characteristics of an Effective Leader

Based on Warren Bennis:

Based on Kouzes & Posner:

A. Model the Way

1. Find your voice by clarifying your personal views
2. Set the example by aligning actions with shared values

B. Inspire a Shared Vision

3. Envision the future by imagining citing and ennobling possibilities
4. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations

C. Challenge the Process

5. Search for opportunities by seeking innovative ways to change, grow, improve
6. Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes

D. Enable Others to Act

7. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust
8. Strengthen others by sharing power and discretion

E. Encourage the Heart

9. Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence
10. Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community

Based on Self-knowledge, Select from the Above Items

One of Your Strengths

One Area for Growth
