Leadership Research Project Alternative

You can organize yourself into a research group of no more than 3 people or you can proceed with this project as an individual. The amount of individual work is approximately the same. You will select one of the leadership topics listed below. This research project represents 20% of the grade and is due to the instructor via email on May 20th or sooner. Evaluation is based on full participation in the steps below and the quality of the work presented.

Step one: topic selection
Indicate your interest in doing this as individual or as a group project. Email me (alan.wright@csun.edu) indicating your intent and group member names if you are doing the group format. Indicate your topic areas with a priority list of the three top topics. I will respond immediately to your email with the selection of the topic area for you (or your group).

Step two: meet on-line or in person and organize your research project.

Step three: abstracts and articles research
Your group must consult the following on-line research databases in search of abstracts and articles on your selected topics. Each student is responsible to locate and download a minimum of 15 relevant (a very key word) abstracts on their topic and email the abstracts to the instructor (awright@csun.edu) as an attachment or an embed in your email program. You must also list which keywords were used in your searches and which years were included in your search. (Some databases do this automatically).

The focus is to select articles that are researched based (meaning a specific research experiment) or in peer reviewed journals versus articles of general opinion in the popular press.

If more than one student is available for a particular database that could be a good thing. You may want to divide your search over certain years of publication or not. It’s up to you to organize a solution to this research initiative.

Since some databases would easily get you to your 15 sources and others will generate few; you will need to decide as a group or an individual how to meet the individual needs (15) and cover all the databases (unless your group is really small).

Research databases:
  - PsycINFO
  - SocAbstracts
  - ERIC
  - Lexis-Nexis
  - ABI/INFORM Global and ProQuest Newspapers (Business Sciences)

Other relevant databases selected by the students:

Step four: discuss your research topic and research questions (or reflect if individual format)
You then return to a chatroom or a face to face meeting on a predetermined date and time and have a discussion about your topic with your research project team; sharing what you found in the research. At the end of your discussion, each research team must do the following: a) identify the top five sources based on most significant contribution to the topic. b) include the full article (if electronically available) for the best abstract on the topic. c) make 2 - 4 key conclusion statements based on your research and discussion. d) identify 1- 2 areas that need further research in the opinion of the group. This material is then emailed to the professor with all team members names identified in the email and/or attachment.

**Explanation of the research topics.**

**Character leadership:** What studies exist which explore leadership effectiveness as it relates to character. Character searches should also include issues of attitude or values. The key is what supports the proposition that these areas are related to leadership effectiveness in contrast to just issues of skill or ‘personality paradigm’ to use Covey’s term.

**Diversity training programs:** Look specifically at programs that have been implemented in education or business to increase managers understanding of cultural diversity. What works? What doesn’t work? How have they tried to measure outcomes or effective - what methods or variables have been used? Can you identify any common methods or principles from different programs that are claiming effectiveness? Some key words to get you started (do not limit your research to these): diversity training, multi-cultural education, cooperative learning and prejudice cross referenced to business, corporate training, management.

**Decision making:** What research indicates effective decision making strategies for leaders or managers. Problem-solving is another keyword to explore. Search brainstorming as a keyword as well.

**Creativity:** What strategies are effective to lead managers to creative solutions. What studies have documented creativity outcomes. Beyond general creativity searches for managers or leaders look specifically for research on Six Hats theory by Ed deBono. Other keywords: lateral thinking.

**Group Cohesion:** What brings groups together, what makes people feel like a cohesive unit. What research instruments exist to measure group cohesion.

**Group Life cycle:** Stages or steps in group development. What are the leading theories and which ones have an experimental research base that documents these stages.

**Team Effectiveness:** Teams is a key buzzword but who has actually measured what makes an effective team or whether teams are more effective than individuals.

**Hiring Effectiveness:** Does the system explored in class by Dr. Paul Greene, More than a Gut Feeling, have a research base for it. What studies have been done of this system or others which makes leaders make better hiring decision.
**Listening Skills:** What research exists which demonstrates effectiveness in listening or helping skills. Does the body of knowledge show a clear agreement in what creates an effective listener and what training programs produce these skills in human service professionals or in leadership in general.

**Gender and Leadership:** Do differences between women and men impact their effectiveness as leaders. Are there differences in gender that affect leadership styles. Make sure you are going after scientific studies here as there are plenty of opinions that women and/or men are naturally more effective based on certain characteristics.

**Temperament and Leadership:** Does the Myers Briggs Temperament theory have any data which suggests that Temperament influences leadership behaviors or leadership roles within teams. Does an understanding of personality differences increase leaders and managers effectiveness in the work place.
Joshua Tree Field Experience - Alternate Assignment:

Follow the instructions for the research assignment above but you will do an additional topic area. The number of abstracts increase as well - you will submit 20 abstracts rather than the 15 for the base assignment. All 20 abstracts will be rank ordered in terms of most valuable to least valuable. All 20 must be relevant to the topic area in question.

The summary write-up will follow the same format as described in the basic research assignment.