



Personal Leadership in Tertiary Education: will I be there when it matters?

Phil Ker, HERDSA, July 2010

Who Comes To Mind When You Think About Leadership?



- Leadership gurus?
- Successful business leaders?
- Politicians?
- A colleague?

Someone who has made a difference ...

What Is Leadership?

- “Leaders are people who do the right things”
 - Professor Warren Bennis
 - Not something just for managers
 - An essential career competency
 - Leaders are made not born
 - Not anyone can lead
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Why Do We Need More Leadership?



- Challenge 1: Funding
 - Challenge 2: Educational performance
 - Challenge 3: Value for money
 - Challenge 4: Rapidly changing technology
 - Challenge 5: Changing generational expectations of what is important
 - Challenge 6: Doing more with less
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Meeting These Challenges Requires Leadership At Two Levels



- Leadership in “pushing back”
 - shifting the debate to what we can do rather than what we can’t do
 - ending our silence
 - harnessing the internet
 - Leadership of change
 - doing better by our learners
 - challenging the taken for granted
 - real grass roots leadership
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Back To The Essence Of Leadership



- Positively influencing people and events
 - anticipate and plan for change
 - envision better futures
 - deal with difficult and challenging situations
 - Helping others to change and cope with change
 - being positive
 - fostering trust and openness
 - motivating through enthusiasm
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What Is Needed For Grass Roots Leadership To Develop?



- First – want to be a leader
 - stand up and be counted
 - see the cup as half full
 - be generous
 - avoid the ‘valley of excuses’, “it is always your fault”
 - be willing to try new things and hear new ideas
 - deliver on your promises
 - own up when you have got it wrong
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What Is Needed For Grass Roots Leadership To Develop?



- Second – develop the necessary skills
 - learn how to learn and be a lifelong learner
 - be personally effective
 - become action oriented and result focused
 - learn how to lead yourself
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Leadership Is Developed By Practising Leadership



- through passion, energy, vision and focus leaders encourage the same in others
 - by standing for things worth doing leaders inspire others to pursue doing what is worth doing
 - by seeing things in new or different ways leaders bring about real improvement
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Developing As A Leader Is A Never Ending Journey



- constant self evaluation of your capabilities
 - renewing self knowledge – especially of your strengths and a focus on using these
 - learning from mistakes in self and in others
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What Can Our Organisations Do To Improve Grass Roots Leadership?



- create the environment for leadership to flourish
 - provide staff with development opportunities to learn about themselves and to develop personal effectiveness
 - have expectations of and create opportunities for staff to practise leadership
 - develop a culture of openness where critique is welcome and alternative views can be expressed
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Bringing It All Together

- I would like to leave you with five simple points of reference:
 - we live in challenging times
 - in such times we need strong leadership to do the right things
 - we cannot afford for that leadership to reside only with our managers
 - so we need grass roots leadership
 - we need YOU
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THANK YOU



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