

Benchmark Personal Philosophy of Leadership & Advocacy

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My Personal Philosophy of Leadership & Advocacy

My personal philosophy of leadership and advocacy consists of an integration of the path-goal theory and the charismatic and transformational leadership styles. The path-goal theory is important on so many levels. First, this theory supports the notion that successful leaders assist people to attain organizational goals by demonstrating how to attain those goals and by giving them the necessary tools, in order to attain those goals (Chang & Minton, 2022). Also, a greater level of motivation, satisfaction, and performance is attributed to this theory (Chang & Minton, 2022). Finally, this theory promotes flexibility via the use of the directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented leadership styles, in order to meet the specific needs of the situation at hand and to encourage the attainment of goals (Chang & Minton, 2022).

The charismatic and transformational leadership styles are important due to their nature of inspiring and motivating people to fulfill their goals and to become the best version of themselves. The characteristics attributed to charismatic leaders are essential and needed. Some characteristics are as follows: vision and communication to others, healthy risk taking, responsive and sensitive to others' needs, and thinking and behavior that are outside the box (Chang & Minton, 2022). Transformational leadership is equally essential and needed. This type of leadership creates an environment of trust, inspiration, creativity, stimulation (intellectual), respect, and support (personal/individual) (Chang & Minton, 2022).

With these things in perspective, I have strong beliefs about leadership in counselor education, as it pertains to academia at the graduate level. I believe that leadership in counselor education must be able to demonstrate best practices and must be able to equip others with the

tools to develop best practices. Next, leadership must be able to engage and inspire people to want to improve and work through their issues, in order to reach their goals. Leadership must also be in tune to the people's needs and must be flexible in being able to reach each individual where he/she is at that time mentally. In addition to this, leadership must be able to demonstrate effectiveness, inspire others through word and deed, and empower others through a vision that is well articulated, understood, and able to be replicated. Leadership must introduce and teach the importance of leadership and advocacy, as well as the importance of ethics.. Finally, leadership in counselor education must create an empathetic environment that promotes trust, inclusivity, and respect.

These particular beliefs are important to me because they are in alignment mostly with the personal beliefs that I embraced before I even began to understand the importance of leadership and advocacy in the counseling field. As a leader, I can either give people the "end result," or I can teach/show them how to attain the "end result." I choose the latter and believe that inspiration is a key element in leadership and advocacy. It is through this inspiration that people can begin to believe in the well-articulated vision, to embrace and become open to the vision, and to actively change and run with the vision personally. I believe that we are here to be beacons of light to those we serve and to create an authentic environment that creates trust, mutual respect, and the opportunity to grow and evolve.

I love inspiration and inspirational people. Jesus Christ has influenced my leadership approaches. He is inspirational, and his teachings and leadership example are inspirational. He authentically and holistically met people where they were, taught and encouraged them to turn to God, inspired them, and then sent them out to do the Father's will. He is my ultimate example.

My mother also influenced my leadership approaches. She was an inspirational leader, was honest, encouraged me to become the best version of myself, and had a heart for God and His people. Finally, the teachers I have recently met in this doctoral program have influenced my leadership approaches through their actions and deeds, honesty, inspiration, and ability to articulate the vision that must be embraced to effectively make a difference in the counseling field and as counselor educators.

My beliefs have truly been greatly impacted by my experiences as a student in viewing counselor educators. Concerning leadership and advocacy, I now realize the importance of teaching, leading, and advocating for people and what they need to become more successful. As a student, I have seen my instructors advocate for us as students, for their community, and for the counseling field. I have come to realize that I too must do the same and must use this inspiration to make a tangible difference in the lives of those I will either teach, work alongside with in the counseling field, counsel, or actively advocate for, including myself. I have experienced and have seen great representation and modeling concerning being gatekeepers and truly embracing the need for advocacy.

As a leader, I hope to make an impact in the counseling community and in the world. My desire is to continue to grow and embrace the vision to become an inspirational and effective counselor educator. I hope to advocate for the marginalized populations and to bring awareness about the need for cultural humility in dealing with people from different, ethnic backgrounds. I hope to encourage support and participation as a leader and to inspire others to engage and actively become a part of the solution. Moreover, I hope to inspire people to want to become

better and to provide them with the tools to be able to become more effective in all aspects of their lives.

In a post-secondary context, a good leader must continue to be someone, who effectively engages, models, teaches, equips, inspires, and serves. A good leader is in tune with the people's needs, creates an empathetic and safe environment to learn, and meets each individual where he/she is, while being a gatekeeper during the process. A good leader is knowledgeable about all aspects of the counseling field and encourages student participation, development, and growth.

As it pertains to my impact and influence, I strive to be inspirational, authentic, encouraging, and humble. I taught in the school system for over sixteen years and have taught people in some form or fashion for over twenty-five years. When either my former students, their parents, or other people I taught have approached me to share how I had touched their lives, I am encouraged and know that God allowed me to make an impact and a difference in their lives. I also know that I have impacted lives when I can see people demonstrate the principles taught and the vision embraced through their actions, deeds, and behavior.

As a leader, I encourage people to do their best, to never give up, and to take ownership of their contribution to the learning process. I hope to be known as a leader who listens to my followers, inspires them to buy into the vision and to reach their goals, gives them the opportunity to express their thoughts, and equips them with the tools to become successful in attaining their goals. I also hope that others have learned from my leadership that it is important to be authentic, inclusive, listen and address their needs, and make everyone feel as if he/she is a part of the team.

My Personal Action Plan

I believe that it is important to develop, grow, and improve as a leader. This is an on-going process that must be done with humility and a willingness to learn. With this in mind and perspective, it is important to have a personal action plan for leadership that works in conjunction with my integrative philosophy of leadership and advocacy. I believe that specific steps can be implemented, in order to accomplish the leadership goals. First plan of action is to create a vision plan that is comprehensible to everyone; something that charismatic leaders and those, who believe in the path-goal theory, aim to create and share (Chang & Minton, 2022). Next, I plan to creatively use some form of the arts to present the vision statement, which can help people to become more familiar with the vision focus. I will speak with my followers to get their perspectives about how to artistically present and engage others with the vision statement.

It is also important to include the following in the action plan: attend and present at workshops (networking) and actively participate in counseling associations, by working with and alongside other counselor educators and students. It is also important to create seminars to teach and educate my followers. As a leader, I must lead by example, must model, and must show followers the importance of attending, presenting, and actively engaging in workshops and counseling associations. These are important elements that must be understood because they also lead to understanding the importance of advocacy and leadership in the counseling field.

As a charismatic and transformational leader, I believe that it is important to remain a student of learning, to remain humble, and to learn from experiences and interactions with other people in the field. Creating an environment where people feel safe to express and feel like their

opinions are heard and respected is important for all individuals in any organization. People want to feel respected, and showing people that their participation in the organization is important helps to transform and engage everyone involved. It mobilizes them and increases their participation and level of engagement; something that can increase positive outcomes (Chang & Minton, 2022).

I plan to give back to the counseling field as a mentor and plan to influence and inspire other up and coming counselors/therapists by being a light and a source of inspiration. This is important as a leader and involves actively engaging each individual by providing specialized assistance and guidance that is professional, ethical, and relevant to the mission of the vision. I also plan to have an open-door policy and to offer followers the opportunity to schedule an appointment to meet with me to answer any questions or to address any issues without fear of retribution.

Another important aspect of my action plan is to meet people where they are mentally and to provide the type of leadership that is needed to help people reach their personal goals and to experience favorable outcomes. Therefore, I plan to provide the type of leadership (directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented) that is needed to encourage the accomplishment of specific goals and to maximize each person's gifts and abilities (Chang & Minton, 2022). The goal is to position them for success!

Employing best practices and adhering to the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) and the 2016 CACREP accreditation standards must be included in any action plan. I believe that this is relevant and necessary in helping counselors form their counselor identity and can be used to

teach the importance of ethics, advocacy, and leadership. With this in mind, I plan to teach and encourage cultural humility and to assist in developing an understanding about marginalized populations within the hearts and minds of my followers. I believe that this helps to encourage conversation, reflection, and change, in order to become better counselors and to make sure that everyone is treated fairly.

Another important element of my action plan is to encourage individuality and inclusion by being open to using various methods to fulfill the vision. Charismatic leaders are open to taking healthy risks and to using unconventional methods to fulfill the vision (Chang & Minton, 2022). I believe that, as a leader, I must be flexible in the execution of the vision.

With my plan of action for leadership, I plan to teach the importance of staying abreast of recent research and topics that are being investigated in the counseling field and plan to encourage others to do the same. As it pertains to growth, it is important to stay relevant and to be willing to always conduct personal research about topics that are interesting and needed in the counseling field.

I believe that the following skills will make me an effective leader: empathy, warmth, openness, interaction through strong relationships, charisma, and strong ethics. Charismatic and transformational leaders are empathetic and warm. They are also sensitive to the needs and desires of their followers and create an environment that is warm, inviting, supportive, and inclusive. They are open to suggestions and conversations and are supportive of developing strong relationships with their followers. Charisma is important in building these relationships, and the implementation of strong ethics is always effective for any leader. Overall, I believe that

the use of these skills will make me an effective leader, especially in assisting to accomplish my leadership goals.

Concerning teaching and learning in post-secondary education, I am most interested in helping to shape and mold the minds of students, to teach about cultural humility and multiculturalism, to effectively communicate the importance of leadership and advocacy, and to learn, as well, in the process of teaching. Concerning the changes that I most hope to see and inspire, I hope to inspire reflection and change in the lives of students through reciprocal interactions, wisdom, action/deeds, and helping others to reach their personal and professional goals. Concerning my future goals and aspiration as leader in counselor education, my desires are to teach, to conduct research, to present that research, and to inspire change through my research and leadership style.

The integration of the path-goal theory and the charismatic and transformational leadership styles are important in my personal philosophy of leadership and advocacy. I believe that this integration is most effective and reflective of my personal beliefs and values. I also believe that my personal action plan is effective, relevant, and needed in making a change in lives of the people I hope to inspire. I am excited about the future and about how I can contribute to the counseling field.

Reference

Chang, C. Y., & Barrio Minton, C. A. (2022). Professional counseling excellence through leadership and advocacy (2nd ed.) Routledge.