

The Influence Servant Leadership Has on Emergent Leaders in the Field of Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The nature of work has changed drastically. In order to maximize delivery and customize value in the workplace, specifically in education, leaders also need to change. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, there are three main emergent leadership requirements. The first emergent leadership requirement is the ability to motivate people. The second emergent leadership requirement is the ability to work well across cultures and geographical boundaries. The third emergent leadership requirement is the ability to facilitate change. Some of the key characteristics of an effective servant leader include role modeling, collaboration, accountability, and innovation. Effective servant leaders emphasize the importance to embrace and apply new knowledge on both individual and team levels. In addition, effective servant leaders encourage novel approaches and ideas. The world is in desperate need of role models who lead second and serve first.

INTRODUCTION

The teachings of Servant Leadership continue to reach hundreds of thousands of people worldwide, with an impact which is beyond measure. Have you ever wondered about the path some people took to achieve their success - or rather their level and source of *influence*? After exploring numerous philosophies, this chapter focuses on some of the most salient points to prepare educational leaders through the practical examples of three exemplars and influencers of

Servant Leadership. Those Servant Leaders include: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Robert Greenleaf, and Dr. Ken Blanchard. Let's begin by reading this quote from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.:

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If you want to be important, wonderful. If you want to be recognized, wonderful. If you want to be great, Wonderful! But recognize that he who is greatest among you is your servant. That's the new definition of greatness. This morning, what I like about it is that by giving it the definition of greatness it means everybody can be great because everyone can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know about Einstein's Theory of Relativity to serve. You don't have to know the Second Theory of Thermodynamics in Physics to serve! You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. You can be that servant (King, 1968).

Existing research informs us that there isn't much leadership preparation for new teachers when they enter the field of education. It is important for teachers to view leadership styles through many different lenses; this will help them understand leadership and learn how to progress into the role of leadership. A healthy and thriving relational work environment will be established through the exposure of, and collaboration with different leadership styles. The purpose of this chapter is to establish a foundational understanding of Servant Leadership. This will be accomplished as four case studies are presented by teachers who shared the experiences their leaders demonstrated through Servant Leadership.

BACKGROUND

Robert Greenleaf knew that leadership could make a difference in our organizations and our society. Greenleaf worked for AT&T where he was the director of management research. His job was to educate and train the leaders and managers at AT&T to be as effective as possible.

After 38 years of experience, Greenleaf concluded that the most effective leaders and managers were those who were not focused on their own power and wealth, but rather were focused on serving their colleagues and customers. Additionally, Greenleaf states that while servant leaders are more apt to serve, they do not harm the least advantaged. Greenleaf's vision states servant leaders should transform organizations into institutions that would not only offer creative opportunities, but also create a more just society.

Who is a Servant Leader?

The servant-leader is servant first... it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...the leader-first and the servant- first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. (Greenleaf, 2021).

In 1970 Greenleaf launched the modern Servant Leadership movement with his classic essay, *The Servant as Leader*. It was in that essay, that he coined the term *Servant Leader*. Although Robert Greenleaf coined the term Servant Leadership, it is not a new concept. This chapter discusses the philosophies and characteristics of Servant Leadership. What is Servant Leadership? The core message of Servant Leadership is that servant leaders are driven by a desire to serve first, and then, by conscious choice, that person chooses to lead.

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