ADM109 - Developing Leadership in Early Care and Education - Handout

Welcome to ADM109

Course Objectives:

By taking notes on the handout provided in this course, completing reflection exercises, and successfully answering assessment questions, participants will meet the following objectives as a result of taking this course:

- Demonstrate an understanding of interpersonal skills relevant to successful leadership
- Identify traits of responsible leadership in the context of the early care and education environment (ECE)
- Identify intellectual characteristics of a successful ECE leader
- Demonstrate an understanding of the director's role as both manager and leader
- Compare and contrast the responsibilities of a program director and school principal
- Identify characteristics of the "Five Faces" of ECE leadership, including administrative, community, conceptual, advocacy, and pedagogical
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of providing appropriate support during periods of change and transition

Note: At four points in this course, participants are expected to reflect and write about topics related to their own learning and teaching experiences in relation to course content.

References:


Defining Leadership

Conventional Wisdom Concerning Leadership

Interpersonal Skills

What are active listening skills?

Personal Qualities
Knowledge and Experience

Cross out the areas where you feel you are most knowledgeable; underline the areas where you are “so-so” but need improvement; circle the areas where you need to start learning right away.

- State/local child care program regulations (these usually address rules related to organization and administration; staffing rules, including ratios, qualifications, and training requirements; facilities, supplies, equipment, and transportation; health and safety; activities and equipment; discipline; parent involvement and communication; nutrition and food services)
- Child development principles
- Curriculum design and development
- State learning standards
- Teaching practices
- Environmental design (indoor and outdoor)
- Community resources
- Research trends and developments
- Program planning, evaluation, and improvement
- How to recruit, train, supervise, and evaluate staff (a big one, CCEI offers a whole series of courses on this topic alone)
- Professional organizations (e.g., NAEYC), major advocacy groups (e.g., NACCRRA), and state/local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs)
- How to conduct a needs assessment for the program, classroom, or individual
- Recordkeeping
- Ordering and maintaining equipment, materials, and supplies
- Marketing strategies
- Developing and implementing a budget
- Working with funding and regulatory agencies
- Grant-writing
- Public relations
- Fiscal regulations (e.g., taxes and payroll rules, contract law)
- Laws that protect the staff (e.g., anti-discrimination laws included in the Civil Rights Acts, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Labor Standards Act, and Family and Medical Leave Act)
- Quality Rating Systems and Environment Rating Scales
Leading vs. Managing
Childcare Programs Are Different

Understanding Leadership in Early Care and Education

Advice for ECE Leaders
Leadership in Times of Change and Transition

Try This!

Mission, Vision, and Philosophy: Revisit, Review, and Revise

Speaking of reinventing the wheel, when is the last time you reviewed your programs mission? Can you recite it? Is that all you can do, or do you apply it in your work, as well? Granted, you may be in a program with a time-honored mission or philosophy that nobody would dare question much less revise. You might love your mission statement, and it might inspire you every single day. Or, you might not even have one. In any case, it is worthwhile to revisit the program’s mission, vision, and philosophy regularly, if not to revise them then to find ways to apply them more effectively in daily practices.

This is not a solitary exercise but a team effort, and a great way to establish yourself as a conceptual leader within the program. You will not need to exercise many leadership skills to draft a vision alone in the comfort and silence of your own office; a leader invites input and debate and new ideas. It requires a patient, careful process. Sometimes, the process enables you to make important “tweaks” here and there, bringing your program to higher level of quality. And, sometimes, the process leads to an overhaul or restructuring of the entire program, if you realize that what you had just was not working as well as it could.