Personal Project

The Personal Project is a systematic analysis of leadership in organizations. Your organization has asked you to learn about leadership and to interview two people, report your findings, and then recommend leadership development initiatives. You will decide within your learning cluster what level of leadership (for example, individual, middle management, or top management) will be the target of your interviews and choose which of the seven leadership mastery topics listed in the Cashman text you would like to explore. Examples of these choices are: the importance of change mastery in middle management; the importance of interpersonal mastery as an individual contributing leader; and the importance of purpose mastery at top management.

Parts of the Personal Project

- Develop leadership interview questions about your mastery topic.
- Write up findings of your two interviews with leaders at your chosen level.
- Analyze the data from the interviews demonstrating leadership theory and application.
- Relate your interview experience to the New Business Realities and The Thinking Habits of Mind, Heart, and Imagination.
- Prepare a report of your interviews to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of this mastery topic to your chosen leadership level and other leadership theory, keeping in mind that it will serve as a foundation on which to build the team project.

Preliminary Interview

Develop an interview protocol based on the model presented in the chapter on your mastery topic. Within your chosen leadership level contract with two people to interview. Explain who you are, what you are doing, which leadership mastery you are looking at and how you will use the interview material. Clarify with these people whether you have permission to use their names and organizations. Conduct the interviews and take copious notes or record the interviews.

Interview Narrative

Write a thorough description of what happened in your interview experience from beginning to middle to end. The story should integrate the following elements:

- Whom did you interview and what was your contract?
- What were your questions? (Use the worksheet from the chapter on your mastery topic in the Cashman text as a guideline.)
- A summary of your findings from each question including best stories and quotes in each interviewee's words and some themes that seem to pervade both interviews.

Analysis of Interviews

After you write the interviews in narrative format, you will analyze the experience in the context of leadership theory and the common learning themes of the program: *New Business Realities* and *The Thinking Habits of Mind, Heart, and Imagination*.

Topics to be addressed in your analysis include the following:

- New Business Reality: Did the interview reflect the dynamics of transformational change in complex systems in the change mastery questions?

- Thinking Habits: Did the interview encourage professional self development through conversational reflection in the questions on Personal Mastery?

1. Leadership theory: Summarize the leadership theory that you used to develop your questions. Analyze how the questions and the data support your chosen leadership theories. You might use Servant Leadership, Kevin Cashman, Margaret Wheatley, or articles from the Center for Creative Leadership, Leadership stage theory, from Novatons, and other sources. Demonstrate your understanding of your chosen Mastery (Personal, Purpose, Change, Interpersonal/Being, Resilience, or Coaching). Use examples from your interviews to demonstrate your mastery topic.

2. What did you learn as an interviewer? Write a section on your learning as an interviewer. What seemed to work? What did not work? And what would you do differently next time? How would you change your contract or your explanation of your leadership topic, the medium you chose, or your behavior during the interview, to enhance the quality of your data?

3. Common Learning Themes: Reread the New Business Realities and The Thinking Habits of Mind, Heart, and Imagination. Select one topic from each and discuss its relevance to your experience interviewing leaders.

4. Summary Statement. Think about your experience interviewing leaders at this level. Describe the primary lessons you gained from this experience, the value of interviewing leaders and the impact this approach has to leadership development. Include your recommendations to your organization about the development of leaders at this level and on this mastery topic and the use of interviews to propel personal development.

Relationship to Team Project: You have been asked by the local Organization Development Network to make a joint presentation with several other learners from other universities. The network hopes to pool individual experiences with interviews at this leadership level on this topic of mastery at its next conference. You will work with other learners to make joint recommendations for developing leaders. Your personal report will serve as a foundation for the work of the joint project.

- The final paper should be 7 to 9 pages, double-spaced and set in Times New Roman or Arial, 12 point. The paper margins should be 1" on each side. A title page, table of contents, and reference page are also expected and do not count toward the paper length. APA format is required.
- Writing should be well organized and clear. Writing structure, spelling, and grammar should be correct as well.

To successfully complete this project, you will be expected to:
1. Gather interview data on effective leaders.

2. Analyze their leadership story.

3. Create your own theory of effective leadership.

4. Learn how to contract for data gathering.

5. Create an insightful interview protocol.

6. Describe how effective leadership in organizations relates and embodies the *Thinking Habits of Mind, Heart, and Imagination*. Examine how leadership theory and practices help you as a business professional deal with *The New Business Realities*.

Project Requirements

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