

Leading from Beside:  
A Journey of Transformational-Servant Leadership

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We live in a rapidly advancing, technological world where computers and machines are being used to solve real-world issues. The implications of this are that students must learn to interface with these modes of technology in school in order to not only prepare for but engage in this new world. Consequently, this engagement will also create a brave new classroom environment. In the field of education, the current leadership regime is struggling to keep up with the unrelenting pace of changing technology. I began my Master's program hoping to develop a system, style, or means of support for teachers to guide their students without requiring the teachers themselves to continually be required to update their understanding of these technological advancements.

Through the lens of Transformational-Servant Leadership [TSL] theory, I redeveloped my worldview and evaluated my leadership style, values, and abilities. I reflected upon areas of my life where I demonstrate high-capacity ability and strength and contrasted these with my limitations, or weaknesses. Specifically, I evaluated my TSL competencies and found strength where I had previously seen weakness as well as areas that could still benefit from further self-reflection and assessment, as well as be used to create goals for my future growth and development.

TSL principles for leadership provided me with a foundation for perspective on my research around technology. My initial thought was to provide a means of making better transactional teachers. I hoped to help give teachers a foundation for guiding students. Through two systematic literature reviews, and a phenomenological research study, my perspective on leadership and my values shifted to a more holistic and follower valued model. When I began the research, I believed I understood the transformational and servant leadership models. When I

finished the research, I began to understand that without followers, a leader is nothing and that there is more value in the voice of the follower than I had previously recognized.

Transformational-Servant Leadership is best embodied in the model Christ portrays. We are His followers, and He came to be amongst us, to hear from us because He loved us first. Great leaders lead through love, and the well-being of their followers guides their planning, vision, and intent. The greatest leaders do not lead from the front; they lead from beside.

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## CHAPTER 1

## OVERVIEW OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY APPROACH

**Transformational-Servant Leadership**

Leadership is striking a balance between doing what is right for the organization and righteously supporting and guiding one's followers. The sinful, broken world in which we live often elevates and exalts the bold, strong individual who demonstrates evolutionary justification that the strongest, the survivors, are indeed the best. Nietzsche (1989) points out the will to power is driven by individual desire to succeed and that the best test of independence is "know[ing] how to conserve oneself" (p. 57). Yet, even in this world of individualism and selfish pride, a longing for community, and a respect for mankind permeates. Where our sinful desires call us to selfish ambition, Christ calls us to great sacrifice. Great leaders are not those who stand atop a pile of broken employees asserting their superiority and thereby achieving great fame or fortune. Instead, great leaders are those who care for and understand their followers. They embody the beatitudes of Matthew 5, sharing mercy and compassion. The pivotal theme of the Master of Educational Leadership at Trinity Western University is Transformational-Servant Leadership (Leadership integration Project Manual, 2017).

Transformational-Servant Leadership combines the theory of transformational leadership and Greenleaf's (1977) theory of servant leadership. Transformational leadership, as defined by Northouse (2016), is a theory of leadership in which a charismatic leader inspires growth and transformation in their followers, encouraging them to greater deeds than they previously thought possible. Transformational leadership, as defined by one of my professors, was challenging one's followers to be bigger than they believe they can for the good of the mission (Klapwyk, 2018). There are many examples of charismatic leaders who inspire greatness

throughout history. However, it is much rarer and more unique to find a leader who desires the success of their followers above their own individual success. Servant leadership embraces that selfless desire for the growth of one's followers.

Servant leadership is synonymous with sacrificial leadership. This style of leadership places the needs of the follower above those of the leader. Biblically, it is demonstrated in the example of Christ washing his disciples' feet in John 13 or most profoundly, represented in the ultimate sacrifice of Christ's death upon the cross for those that accept his sacrifice and follow him. Northouse (2016) describes servant leadership as leaders putting followers first, "empower[ing] them, and help[ing] them develop their full personal capacities" (p. 225). Northouse breaks down servant leadership into ten key characteristics, which all revolve around a leader's ability to understand the needs of the follower.

Trinity Western University shapes leaders who have the capacity to generate greatness in an organization through inspiring and caring for the needs of their followers. Organizational success is founded upon the principle of transformational-servant leadership. In an educational setting, this is demonstrated by the teacher that cares about the well-being of their students. Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to get to know their students. The purpose of assessment is not to quantify students but rather to develop an understanding of each student's personal needs and strengths. Good teachers inspire students to learn the curriculum in a way that can be adapted to the individual's passions, talents, and God-given gifts. Great teachers understand their students' struggles, interests, and capabilities and adapt the curriculum to further challenge and inspire students to use their talents, pursue their passions, and to learn how to overcome their weaknesses.

Nonetheless, even the best teachers struggle to deeply understand the needs of their students. Similarly, the best servant leaders can miss opportunities for development, mentorship, and growth with their followers. All people have areas of strength and areas of weakness. When a leader's limitations prevent opportunities for growth and development in those who follow them, there are three choices set before a leader. The first option a leader can choose is to ignore their area of limitation and deal with the consequences as they arise. Often in these situations, followers are left behind or are trampled upon. Other times, more dire consequences arise; these leadership situations cause catastrophic organizational failure. Personal experience has taught me that choosing to ignore challenging situations, to avoid conflict, will only serve to create more significant issues in the future. One of my professors stated that most of the time, when a school has to pay severance to a teacher, it shows a failure of leadership and brings to light a situation that should have been dealt with months or years previously (Lowen, 2019). A teacher that is not meeting the expectations of the school vision and values needs to be addressed as soon as possible. When an administrator or principal avoids this difficult situation, they are not only postponing the conflict, they are also aggravating the conflict by not giving the teacher an opportunity to grow and to make changes. In turn, this affects the students' learning and has lasting ramifications in a child's educational journey. When a leader ignores their area of weakness, everyone in the organization feels the effects.

Another choice is for the leader to delegate or develop workaround solutions to address their area of limitation. When I am weak at organizational planning and keeping track of events and dates, I find myself relying on others to support me. I also find the use of day planners, calendars and other tools help to make-up for my disadvantage around executive functioning as it pertains to scheduling and prioritizing. I often rely on my administrative team to keep me on

track with upcoming events, and utilize digital tools like Any.do, a reminder and planning app for Mac devices (Perchik, 2019). Yet, even with all of the options for delegating my responsibilities, if I delegate too much, I lose the ability to understand what is going on and what is coming up in the future. Leaders must be in touch with all that is happening in their organization. If I delegate my responsibility of organization to too great a degree or lean too heavily upon devices, I can lose track of events or significant dates in the communication. As a result, I am often slow to commit to events because of my unsureness as to whether I have another event planned.

Lastly, the leader can choose to admit their flaw and seek to grow themselves. In doing so, they can set an example of humility and life-long learning for their followers. Our world likes to find faults in leaders, and the news is full of examples of people in authority making poor choices. It is rare to see a leader accepting responsibility for their actions without an ulterior motive to sway public opinion. Trinity Western University's Leadership Integration Project Manual (2017) states in dimension one that a leader takes responsibility for "accomplishing work goals... accepts responsibility for own decisions, and attempts to learn from mistakes" (p. 7).

The story of David and Nathan in 2 Samuel 11-12 is an example of a leader admitting their mistakes, repenting, and accepting the consequences. David, in a moment of weakness, gave into temptation and plotted the murder of one of his officers so that he might marry the man's wife. Nathan, the prophet, challenged David on his sinful actions. While many kings and politicians would have tried to cover up their indiscretions, David admitted his mistake and accepted the consequence. As a result, God revealed to David love and blessed him with another son, Solomon, who was to be the next king of Israel. Leaders who are able to admit their weakness can find that the admittance can bring forth exponential growth. There are always



consequences to our actions, and a leader's flaw will always affect the organization. However, when weaknesses and mistakes are appropriately recognized, they can be used as a tool for growth and development.

### **Personal Leadership Experience**

Throughout my career as a teacher, I have relied on past learning experiences and reflected on individuals who helped develop my teaching model. My past is fraught with both positive and negative experiences that have shaped my worldview. Both Kierkegaard (1987) and Nietzsche (1989) would agree that our individual perspective is both unique and relative to our experience. We are more than just a cumulative series of events; rather, those events shape the way in which we view our world. Three foundational experiences significantly shaped my teaching experience, my worldview, and my leadership story.

The first came shortly after I had re-dedicated my life to Christ at the age of 17. At that time, I rediscovered Elisha. In 2 Kings 2, Elijah gives Elisha an opportunity to ask for anything, much like when Solomon is given the opportunity to request and receive wisdom. Elisha asks for double the faith of Elijah. My time of re-dedication to Christ was a mountain top experience, and shortly after, I had to enter the real world and deal with real struggles. During this time, I sought out the faith to overcome all doubts and obstacles in my life. I prayed diligently that God would give the gift of faith, much like Elijah, Elisha, or even the disciple Peter. I prayed to be able to be bold like Peter stepping out of the boat and to be of faith so great as not to sink into the sea (Matthew 14). I negotiated, pleaded, and demanded of God that He would grant this request of faith because I saw how often I had fallen away in my past and knew that if he did not give me faith in the valleys, the mountain top experiences would be meaningless.

The benefit of faith is a peace that surpasses all understanding, the knowledge that God is in control and His plan is good, no matter how life may appear. When Christ talks of faith that is able to move mountains, it is more than a call for miraculous excavation; it is a knowledge that God's plan spans time and impacts every blade of grass, stone, or tree on that mountain (Matthew 17). God's plan considers every atom on the mountain and often uses wind or water to erode and shape the stone. His plan is far grander than our timeline. This faith has been a boon and a challenge in my leadership experience. Where I might see struggles as part of the plan, others are full of frustration and discouragement. Where I might see a vision or plan that is greater than our individual experience, it is hard for most to see beyond themselves.

The second experience that shaped my worldview and grew me as a leader was working at Gibsons Christian School [GCS]. I had spent two years teaching at another Christian School and was let go for financial reasons. In hindsight, I know that God removed me from one school to train, shape, and mold me in another experience. He called me to the coast to isolate me from the temptations of the world and to challenge me through new experiences. While at GCS, I was called to take over as Acting-Principal while the principal took a medical leave of absence for several months. When she returned the following year, I was asked by the board to fill the role of vice-principal to ensure she was able to keep up with the stresses and demands placed upon her. During my time in a position of leadership at GCS, I worked closely with the board and the Society of Christian Schools British Columbia [SCSBC]. This experience shaped me in several ways.

First, I was forced to take on all of the leadership roles of principal while also dealing with several issues left unfinished by the leadership, including the discipline of two students who had been involved in pushing the former principal to her limit. While dealing with the parents of

the students, the board, the principal, and I came to a critical realization that I had to stop trying to please everyone when making critical decisions that impacted the organization as a whole. This experience was integral for me as I had previously been overly concerned with how people perceived me. This revelation enabled me to stand up to a founding board member, whose son was to be suspended, and to take control of the meeting. I realized that the chairman of the board and the other board members, though well-meaning, were inexperienced in the field of education and leadership. They needed someone who would guide and defend them in the difficult meeting. I felt my father's boldness and determination flowing through me at that meeting. I gave the former board member an ultimatum and closed the meeting as he was screaming and swearing over my decision. The chairman of the board and another board representative were both very impressed by how I handled the meeting as they had been intimidated by him and therefore, had not acted in accordance with their consciences. It was an enlightening experience when I realized I was more capable of leadership than my elders in this situation, and that age was not a prerequisite for leadership maturity.

Another powerful learning experience, born out of my time at GCS, was when I realized there were major financial issues being covered up by both the bookkeeper and the principal. The school had run deficit budgets consecutively for three years. It was covering up the deficits in budget planning at the annual general meetings by using imaginary donations to convey a budget proposal in the black. The school was paying far too much for the facility they were renting from the public school, and the principal had failed to negotiate a financially viable deal. Through this experience, I took on the responsibility of developing a strategic plan to save the school. The preliminary notes for this plan are included in Appendix A. I came up with ten possible solutions to the financial crisis and held an emergency general meeting to discuss the proposals, as seen in

Appendix B. By the AGM, the school community was all aware of the financial needs and were at work on several options to help the school financially. Both SCSBC and the board asked me if I would take over as principal permanently. The Canada Labor Code (1985) Division XIII, 239(7), states that an employer may not dismiss an employee because of medical leave. I reminded them both that to remove her without her acceptance was going to be problematic. I met with her several times, and she was adamant that she would return to work. The following year I worked with several members of the school community and the board to help keep the school financially viable but realized that without a strong visionary in leadership of the school, it would ultimately fail. There were many possible options that could have come from that situation, but God used my leaving of GCS to build me up in other ways at Cornerstone Christian Academy [CCA], my next school of employment.

The third life experience that shaped my worldview and provided me with leadership perspective was during my time at CCA. During my first week at CCA, I noticed a difference in the collective attitude of the staff. The joy of the Lord was tangible at CCA. My 7 years at CCA has given me many opportunities to witness compassionate servant leadership. My principal, Leila Chin, had also been my high school chemistry teacher. She knew me when I was a goofy, mischievous youth, and still treated me both as a mature teacher and peer. Through her compassionate leadership and mentoring, I recognized the need for more formal education on leadership, and she challenged me to do my Master's degree. My wife and several other people in my life also saw my leadership abilities and how much I had matured. God used many to guide me into the program at Trinity Western University [TWU], and I am grateful for the experience. I entered the Masters of Educational Leadership [MAEL] program hoping to get a very expensive piece of paper that would open doors to leadership jobs. I am leaving the

program with a whole new outlook on education and teaching. Right from the start of the first course, LDRS 500, my work designing a Transformational Servant Leadership [TSL] Tool to use at CCA began my applicable use of the theoretical learning. The TSL Tool can be found in Appendix C. The third perspective shifting experience was both my time at CCA and my time in the MAEL program, as these environments are where I have developed my new respect for the experiences of those I lead. Previously, I viewed leadership in a transactional or path-goal mentality, where the leader would manipulate the followers to achieve organizational success (Northouse, 2016). Now, I recognize the primacy of transformational-servant leadership and the need for the leader to learn from and respect the follower as an equal. Effective leadership is horizontal rather than hierarchical.

### **Philosophy of Educational Leadership**

Robinson (2015) states, “every individual is unique. We all differ physically and, in our talents, personalities, and interests.” He goes on to describe the failure of our education system to value this uniqueness. Worldview is the “baseline inclination” through which people view their reality and does not come from conscious desire (Smith, 2016). It is the passion of our heart brought about through our everyday interactions with the real world. Every student, staff member, parent, and educational stakeholder has a unique drive and perspective on the education of our students. Their individual perspectives combine to shape school culture and pedagogical practices. A visionary and passionate principal is required to guide that school culture and pedagogical practices to success (Robinson, 2015; Sergiovanni, 2007). To best describe my principles of educational leadership, I will break it down into a vision, mission, and values type of overview. Lencioni (2012) taught me that both a strong vision and mission is key to directing organizational success and should be at the heart of every decision. While vision, mission, and

values statements are typically organizationally specific, they will suit my needs for future self-reflection. Loewen (2019) described a vision statement as a “hyper-optimistic dream for the future.” My vision for educational leadership is: A body of many parts growing in God’s plan. Much like Paul’s description of the church in 1 Corinthians 12, a school must be made up of diverse and unique people, each gifted with particular talents and abilities. The role of the leader is to understand and direct these parts. The leader trains alongside these people to learn from their experiences and strengths, and, in turn, be strengthened by them. Proverbs 27:17: “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” I hope to lead in ways that will gain the respect of those around me, listening to their experiences and serving them as best I can.

My mission statement expands upon this vision: Working together through teamwork, collaboration, and respect for diversity to strengthen one another in Christ in order to fulfill the great commission. Dr. Loewen (2019) suggested that a mission statement needs to be a “who we are and how we get there statement.” My mission statement is built upon principles of transformational servant leadership, calling for mutual respect and a common purpose, and it prioritizes three fundamental values. The first value is the community. The community is made up of a diverse group of believers who are each uniquely gifted. The second value is Christ-centered growth. Truly, this is the foundation of the whole vision. It is essential that the purpose of all pedagogy and vision be built upon developing our relationship with Christ. Many Christian schools create great students who can perform well. They put on great programs and have exciting classes and pedagogical practices. However, if they do not prioritize their students’ development of a personal relationship with Christ, one must ask how they are set apart from a secular school? The third value is our duty to those outside the community. I placed community and the world as a bracket around the second value, much like a sandwich is just two pieces of

bread around the important filling, as we the people are merely two brackets around a foundation of God. This mission-vision-values development came throughout the research process. When I first began the Master's program, I valued the development of people from a more transactional standpoint. I saw the leader as someone superior to the follower, who directed the follower toward achievement. Now, this view has shifted, and I see the transformational impact that both a leader and a follower can have on not just one another but together this can have a greater organizational and even community-wide impact.

### **Scenario for Research**

When I began my Master's program and the Scholastic Inquiry course, I recognized that my passion for technology provided a good opportunity for research and leadership development (Strong, 2018). While my research and learning have taken me through many areas of study, the underlying drive to provide a system to support teachers in keeping up with technological advancements reshaped my view on learning and teaching. My initial research question was: Can new teaching techniques that are collaborative and flexible provide a means to transfer computational thinking ideas across subject matter and, thereby, support teachers in overcoming the obstacle of rapid technological advancement?

Speers (2002) broke down Greenleaf's servant leadership into ten categories, and I anticipated to listen, empathize, and conceptualize a solution to the challenge that many of my colleagues felt towards technology education. Ultimately, my goal was to provide a tool or theory to help teachers grow and feel comfortable teaching technology education.

First, I created a systematic literature review to better understand concepts like computational thinking so that I would have a foundation for understanding technology education. I found Wing's (2002) research on computational thinking to be a strong starting

point for my perspective on what is required in technology education. Assignment 2 provided a good understanding of the foundational requirements for technology education. Many of the articles researched were quantitative analyses of the impact of technology education and computational thinking on a variety of ethnographic groups. This research opened my eyes to the realization that teaching technology requires awareness of the diversity of students. Students come to class with a multitude of factors that impact their ability to learn. These factors included everything from age, gender, and cultural background, to economic bracket, diet, distance to school, time of day, and much more; these factors could play a significant role in affecting both students' abilities to think computationally and to retain knowledge.

In assignment 3, I researched areas of technological learning and tools for teaching. My goal in supporting teachers was based upon my experience using digital learning platforms and the flipped classroom model to provide room for student learning regardless of my ability as the teacher. I have used virtual learning environments like Khan Academy to provide a source of knowledge far more comprehensive than my own. In doing so, I was admitting that I, as a teacher, could not provide all of the factual knowledge the students' required. My capabilities and knowledge were limited. Much like in transformational servant leadership, the student often surpasses the master, and I had to find tools to support the students' growth beyond my own abilities to teach. As a result, I developed a systematic literature review on various alternative learning methodologies such as flipped classroom, discovery-based learning, problem-based learning, and virtual learning environments. In retrospect, it was a large area of research, and my ability to cover all the content was limited. Notwithstanding, I felt that I gained a valuable perspective and understanding of the vast alternative pedagogy that exists.



Finally, my research led me back to the student's perspective. Initially, I hoped to hear from students and see what effect my teaching had on them. I wanted to see what kind of retention of ability and knowledge they had. Due to many of my courses and the new BC curriculum, I found value in the student perspective and realized that my hope for their learning was less important than their perspective on their learning. I ceased to care about their quantitative retention of knowledge and began to care about their experience in the learning process. My research began as a desire to support teachers in keeping up with technological advancement and ended with a desire to hear from students and recognize their growth. My research journey started with a perspective that I, the leader, am the most crucial player in the leadership game and ended in the humble realization that I am only teaching so that others may succeed. I must value and treasure their growth and success.

My detailed journey through the research process will be detailed in both chapters 3 and 4. I began my research looking for a tool to give to teachers so that they may be better equipped to teach. I ended my research recognizing that the best tool for teaching is listening and working alongside our students, learning both with and from them.

## CHAPTER 2

## SELECTED LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

**Personality Assessment**

When I began the Masters of Educational Leadership Program, I was assigned the Birkman Personality Assessment Questionnaire. My sister-in-law works as an Executive Director of the Beede School of Business at Simon Fraser University. She mentioned that it is a common practice in leadership to use tools like the Birkman and the Meyers Briggs to assess employees to understand what types of experiences best challenge and inspire them. She also commented that she found the Birkman method an excellent source of personal revelation, and through the assessment she gained greater insight into her strengths, weaknesses, and stresses.

When I filled out the Birkman questionnaire, I was skeptical. I struggled to see how 250 true or false questions, and several multiple-choice questions could accurately portray my abstract personality and abilities. The Birkman (2019) method suggests that a person continually makes choices based on a personal perspective, and that perspective is shaped by four areas: Needs, Interests, Usual Behavior, Stress Behavior. Needs are how a person hopes to be treated and responded to by other people and the environment (Birkman, 2019). Interests are areas that I gravitate towards when interacting with others, the environment, or in self-reflection (Birkman, 2019). Usual behavior is typically areas of strength and how a person acts when successfully interacting or accomplishing a task (Birkman, 2019). Finally, Stress behavior is “how you act when your Needs have not been met for an extended period of time” (Birkman Signature Report, 2017, p. 6). While I was skeptical of the testing, I found the results were somewhat helpful in understanding my worldview.

**Interests**

My Birkman results suggest that all areas of my personality are quite balanced between people and tasks. While some areas fall on one side or the other, they are all close to the middle. Surprisingly, my interest area is very extroverted, while my other areas are all very introverted. I was initially a little confused by this, as on other tests I have taken, I am almost always considered extroverted. Lately, I have been reflecting on how I gain energy to accomplish both tasks and lead people by having time with friends and groups. I believe part of my introverted perspective on the test might have been portrayed due to the place I was at in life, overworked and exhausted, when I filled out the questionnaire. Again, my skepticism for the questionnaire arose, and I realized that I might have answered some of the questions how I thought I should answer them as a leader rather than how I actually felt at that moment. I also realized that my results on the questionnaire might change based on the situation to which I was reflecting upon. In church life, I am very extroverted and am thoroughly people-oriented. As a teacher, I am more introverted because I cannot be myself around students due to an inequality and power dynamic. I believe my answers came across as introverted because I feel I have to maintain a professional level of distance from the students both due to power inequality and the inherent dangers of being a male teacher in today's society.

**Usual Behavior**

As to my usual behavior area of personality, the Birkman Signature Report (2017) suggested that my usual behavior is yellow or task-oriented. I found this both interesting and challenging to my self-perspective. I recognize my strengths are not in the fields of organization and that I often bite off more than I can chew. I wonder if my task-oriented response is due to the fact that the field of teaching requires a direct, task-oriented approach or if it is a personal desire.

In LDRS 623, we read Donna Miller's (2011) *What's Your Style*, in which I ascribed to the Holistic and Laissez-Faire approaches. These two approaches to educational pedagogy are very open-ended and are as far from task-oriented as one can be. Teachers are required to accomplish a myriad of duties in everything from teaching the prescribed curriculum to performing regular summative assessments to justify grading. I felt that my Birkman task-oriented results might be a direct result of the profession. Yet, upon further reflection, I realized that when I hold meetings, work on a team project, or have a busy schedule, my first instinct is to know what the expectations are. When assigned to a team project in LDRS 502 in which the four members of the team had to be from different Birkman color areas, I realized that my desire for a clear set of duties is quite innate in both my hopes for group work and my approach to team meetings. When approaching this assignment, one of my first questions was regarding what the tangible requirements of the project were? Examples of this are what the required page numbers, categories covered are, and due dates of the project.

### **Needs**

My needs and stress behaviors were both in the blue quadrant and were in the exact same place. My needs results indicate that I appreciate time for complex decisions and reflection. I value people who explain the rules and encourage trust and fairness. I want others to value my input and promote the expression of one's feelings. I often use people as a sounding board for both my ideas and frustrations. When I started teaching at my current school, I immediately recognized the positive and compassionate school and staff culture. I saw all members of the staff team actively caring for one another and seeking out guidance and wisdom from God. When I experienced my first challenges on staff, I sought out the administration to talk through how I was feeling and to gain another perspective on my actions. In reality, I was hoping they

would tell me I was doing the right thing and provide moral support. I appreciated their wise council and admonitions alongside their encouragement.

Throughout my career at the school, I have always been able to express myself both openly and honestly. I wear my heart on my sleeve in order to understand how I truly feel about a situation. Sometimes this expression comes across as too honest and might be perceived as a negative or grumbling attitude. I have been spiritually convicted several times over the course of my teaching career and again through my Master's program that a leader must have control of their tongue, as seen in James 3. This spiritual conviction has taught me that even though I rely upon people to work through my thoughts and feelings, I have to be careful of how much I communicate and how my communication might influence or impact others.

### **Stresses**

My Birkman results for stress behavior is quite frightening and detrimental to the task-oriented aspect of my personality. According to the Birkman Signature Report (2017), my stress behavior, being both introverted and people-oriented, suggests that I can become indecisive, self-critical, pessimistic, and rude. When I am feeling stressed, I often withdraw from each stressful task or avoid things that might cause more stress. When I feel stressed, I procrastinate. I can somewhat agree with this assessment of my character, yet in other ways, I feel like it missed an important aspect of my personality. What the report fails to recognize is that I enjoy a challenge, and often when I procrastinate it is because I do not see the task as significant enough to require action. There comes a point every time I procrastinate that a task either becomes 'top of the list' or 'unnecessary' and this helps me to evaluate what I should be spending time on effectively.

Typically, when I do my report cards, I wait until the weekend they are due to complete them. I work well with a deadline and push myself to achieve the task regardless of the cost. I

have often spent 15 hours on a Saturday writing my report cards. The benefit of this is that I am able to be focused, grasping all of the intricacies of each assessment while creating a summative grade and developing formative comments. During one group assignment, I was challenged by a teammate who falls completely in the blue quadrant, that I was not leaving enough time to think through the abstract intricacies of reporting before completing my report cards. She implied that I might have created a summative assessment but did not necessarily understand all of the diverse facets that may have affected my bias in grading. While I valued her input, I recognized that my task-oriented personality and my procrastination forced me to put aside concern for bias. Abstract philosophizing about bias could be dealt with at a more opportune time or did not need to be dealt with at all. The most pressing factor to me was the accomplishment of the report cards. More than that, I recognized that the purpose of the report cards was to provide insight for the parent on the student's actions, behavior, learning, and growth. My bias was going to always affect my reporting, but my ability to provide insight common to all teachers was all that was needed. Whether providing parents with quantitative or qualitative data on their child, the real insight was not going to come from the report card, but from all of the dialogue and relationship involved in the teaching process. The downside of my stress behavior predisposition to procrastination is the lack of foresight for unforeseen events that might prohibit me from completing my reports.

Working well under pressure is effective as long as another challenge, that is insurmountable in the time given, does not arise. For instance, one year while working on report cards, I was hospitalized with kidney stones. I had to enlist the assistance of my wife in typing my reports while I dictated them from the hospital bed while heavily medicated. Needless to say,

though the parents understood the valid reason for my inadequate reports, the situation would not have arisen had I started sooner.

Transformational-Servant leadership requires awareness of those around us and foresight to deal with unforeseen events. Both my needs and stresses challenge me to be aware of what I say and how I plan my tasks. As a leader, I cannot openly work through my thoughts and feelings without recognizing how those may come across. I may like to hash out new ideas or play the devil's advocate for understanding, but others around me or under my management may not realize this thought-experiment is not a plan of action or a critique of their ideas.

### **Leadership Competency Assessment**

Assignment 1 challenged me to select three leadership competencies from dimension three of the Leadership Integration Project Manual (2017). I focused on three specific competencies that I thought would be applicable both to my research around technological pedagogy and useful in growing my understanding of my abilities as a leader. The first area of strength I felt applied to my leadership as a teacher and future administrator was one that I believed was innate in my personality; the competency of Adaptability and Change.

#### **Adaptability and Change**

Trinity Western University's Leadership Integration Project Manual (2017) describes the competency of Adaptability and Change as both personal and organizational adaptability. The leader must both be willing to change their behavior and willing to alter their strategy, plan, or goal to meet the changing requirements or situation.

When reflecting on my Birkman, I did not initially see the competency of Adaptability and Change (*Leadership Integration Project Manual 2017-2018*, 2017, pp. 7-8) in my results. Yet, my flexible nature, my ability to negotiate and classify task priorities go hand-in-hand with

my style of leadership. My most considerable disagreement with the Birkman classification of me as a task-driven person was my laissez-faire mentality towards curriculum. While I do admit to having an elaborate plan of what concepts I need to teach, I often teach in the moment and transition between subjects and plans as the conversation leads. When I create a day plan, it is very open-ended as I shift my direction based on my perception of the class needs. Northouse (2016) details that servant leadership requires helping followers grow and succeed through understanding the needs of the follower. When I teach, I both conceptualize where we need to go and adapt based upon the needs of the followers. This flexibility in planning requires one to have a clear perception of the follower's feelings, struggles, and goals.

Growing up in the organization of Scouts and learning to sail at a young age taught me the necessity to be able to change plans on the fly. The goal is to be prepared for all eventualities and adapt as different problems arise. Both adaptability and change rely on an awareness of one's surroundings and the people within that space. In order to move with the winds of change, a good leader must understand their followers' abilities and hopes. I experienced a situation in LDRS 623 where the teacher was unaware and, due to a lack of communication, the changes he made drastically affected the mood and learning of the class. Altering the syllabus expectations and changing project rubrics after the projects had been handed in did not allow students to properly adapt to the changes. When changing the plan, a leader must be aware of the feelings of their followers. There are times where a leader must say "we are changing, get with the plan or get out," but those times should be few if the leader hopes to maintain their position. When leaders fail to prepare their followers properly, they fail their followers and are a detriment to the organization.



LDRS 624, School Leadership and Supervision, taught me about being adaptable to a group's needs while still guiding them under a common vision. When starting our school policy assignment, several group members wanted to complete the assignment incorrectly. They saw the assignment as a systematic literature review or a strategic plan, but they did not understand that the assignment was to study and create policy. In order to both develop a relationship with them and to provide them an opportunity for leadership, I suggested rather than finding scholastic articles on policy, we should instead look for real-world examples from both private and public schools. I adapted to their need to create a notes-based table of similarities and results. I acquiesced during meetings to formatting and communication that I did not feel was necessary in order to get both trust and buy-in to my idea that we should be reviewing real-world policy. After several discussions and starting the project incorrectly, my partners finally agreed to follow my direction. We then communicated with the professor and understood that the assignment was to indeed review real-world policy and write a sample policy. When dealing with stubborn partners, sometimes, it is necessary to change the way we behave in order to develop relationships, trust, and buy-in.

### **Relationship and Collaboration**

The second competency I hoped to continue to grow in was Relationships and Collaboration, as I felt it was an area of strength. Yet, my Birkman results and several group projects suggested that though this was an area of strength, there is always room for improvement. The Leadership Integration Project manual (2017) describes the leadership competency of relationship and collaboration as “leveraging relationships with diverse groups of people” and dealing with internal and external customer requirements (p. 9). A large part of relationships and collaboration are dealing with conflict and interpersonal disagreements. The

relationship and collaboration competency places great emphasis on building diversity and leading through awareness of individuals' skills and abilities.

I tend to be a person who is capable of getting along with anyone. Though I think of myself as having an imposing visage, often strangers seek me out to talk or for emotional support. My friend group and work group is a very mixed bunch. One of the greatest surprises to my wife, when we were newly married, was to see the different ways I spoke in different groups. I try to act and speak in a manner that is relatable to those to whom I am speaking. She was amused to see the different ways I related to my uneducated friends, how I spoke to children, and how I negotiated academic dialogue. Throughout my life, I have been driven by a passage from 1 Corinthians 9. Paul says: "Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible." He goes on to describe a variety of groups that he becomes like to win as many as possible. I relate to Paul in this; to my students I am a teacher, mentor, and parent; to my colleagues at school, I am a friend, confidant, encourager, and someone with whom to brainstorm new pedagogical practices; to my non-Christian friends, I am an immature guy that they grew up with and made poor choices with, but also one who is an example of grace, growth, repentance, and Christ; to my Christian friends, I am an accountability partner; to my academic colleagues, I put on an academic air and select different language than I would with my non-Christian friends. The way in which I speak and comport myself and the example I set changes based on my awareness of those around me. I remain true to who I am and my integrity never falters but the way I reveal myself differs based on the needs of those around me. Consequently, I employ adaptability not only to my surroundings but in my relationships and collaboration, which supports the development of both.

## **Planning and Organization**

Finally, I chose to focus on what I thought was my most glaring area of weakness, Planning and Organization. I realized throughout all of my experiences that this was not as glaring a fault as I had thought. Initially, I believed that planning and organization were major weaknesses for me because of my tendency to change plans on the fly. The LIP (2017) describes the focus of the Planning and Organization competency as defining needs, objectives, and priorities as well as managing time and scheduling for both the leader and the followers to effectively meet the needs of the organization. I used to over book myself and scheduled too many meetings. I have since developed an understanding of my abilities and needs and am willing to say no to meetings I do not need to attend. I think part of my resistance towards planning and organization was that I did not see it from an organizational perspective. When looking at planning for an organization, my skills and abilities as a task-oriented person allow for both proper strategic and long-term planning. When I picked planning and organization as weaknesses, I looked at my struggle to schedule my personal time. Throughout the Master's and my teaching career, I have had to develop a structured system in which to schedule my time.

From an organizational planning standpoint, I look at my project from LDRS 501, Strategic Leadership. As a team, we were assigned to make a strategic plan to change an organization and develop both a five year and long-term vision for the future. I used a personal example of working at a GCS. In that position, I had developed a list of ten options to increase the financial revenue of the school. The strategies fell on a spectrum from highly plausible and effective to hopeful strategies to reduce the expenditures of the school. When working on the strategic plan in LDRS 501, we took these two lists and built a new vision and structure of the school to increase financial efficiency as well as remove school redundancies. Through dialogue

with board members and the chairman of the SCSBC, Henry Contant, I realized that I had a good perspective of the short- and long-term financial needs of running a private school.

On an organizational and vision level, my weakness in planning and organization was never quite the weakness I thought, just a misunderstanding of definitions. On a personal level, I will always need support planning and structuring my daily interactions. Through tools I have developed and apps I have acquired, there is support for this weakness. From a leadership perspective, I feel that I have grown in this area and am able to use it as a point of perspective to shape those around me. I used to be concerned with portraying the image of the organized teacher. I believed that the teachers who had classrooms that were organized and decorated were the best teachers. I realized that many of my students do not plan or organize in the same way I do. I do not plan and organize my class like many of those teachers I used to look as an exemplar because I realized I have a system I use that works for me and I should support students in utilizing unique systems of organization that work for them. Planning and Organization is not limited to the neatness of day plans and posters on the wall. There are many strategies, techniques, and tools to plan and organize as long as one has the foresight to plan for future eventualities and prepare solutions as problems arise.

## CHAPTER 3

## LITERATURE REVIEW SYNTHESIS

**Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership is a process by which the leader guides followers to greater achievement through inspiration and maturity (Bass, 1985). It is not connected with transactional leadership, which expects a give and take type arrangement where the follower works for reward and recognition (Longshore, 1987). Transformational leadership is aware of the followers' goals, abilities, and desires and utilizes their own hopes to inspire them to work harder and achieve greater deeds than typically expected. (Bass, 1985). Leaders who utilize transformational leadership must be both charismatic and aware (Northouse, 2016). They must have the buy-in of their followers and also be aware of how to manipulate their followers to better success. This buy-in, according to Bass & Riggio (2006), is part of idealized influence. Idealized influence is where the leader is "complied, appreciated, regarded and trusted" (Ahmad, Bakhsh, & Rasool, 2019). The leader is one who is looked on with both respect and a desire to satisfy. The idealized influence or buy-in is driven by inspirational motivation, which is a direct result of intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway, 2000). Leaders hoping to achieve buy-in or inspire greater achievement than transactional compliance must intellectually stimulate and challenge through the understanding of the individual.

Transformational leadership is a manipulation of the individual to achieve greatness based on the leaders' knowledge of the individual as well as their ability to inspire the individual.

Transformational leadership has the potential for both supreme achievement and absolute corruption based on the motivation and desire of the leader. Transformational leaders in history have often used their charisma and authority to persuade their followers to build, follow, and

destroy based on their direction. History is full of examples of leaders who used the passions or frustrations of the populace to inspire them to rise up, take control, and achieve a unified vision. Transformational leadership, when done well, sends men to the moon. Transformational leadership when abused, sends men to their death. Much moral responsibility lies in the hands of the leader but the leader cannot solely be blamed for a group of followers that choose to follow a corrupt path. It is, therefore, imperative that the transformational leader “focuses on higher-order, intrinsic, and moral motives and needs of followers.” (Sergiovanni, 2007)

Transformational leaders often place great trust in their followers’ abilities and have high expectations of compliance with the vision to the point where transformational leaders may fall into the category of laissez-faire leadership (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). While laissez-faire leadership, or letting the followers be, can be a positive method for demonstrating trust in the followers’ abilities, laissez-faire leadership can cause followers to lose motivation without regular reminders of vision and inspiration (Breevaart & Zacher, 2019). Charismatic leaders who inspire greatness in their followers must be willing to regularly remind those around them of the vision and reason for the drive to success. Without regular inspiration and check-ins with followers, leaders will lose the connection that builds trust and allows for interpersonal understanding that is necessary to influence and inspire their followers to achieve greatness (Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011).

### **Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership theory was coined by Robert Greenleaf in his work *The Servant as Leader* (1970). The theory was built upon the notion that leaders are servants first and “driven by the inner compassion and conscious choice of serving others in a variety of capacities” (Greenleaf, 1977). Leaders who practice servant leadership are concerned about the growth and

development of their followers, leading by example as mentors and guides in maturity. Servant leadership shares the “individualized consideration component of transformational leadership” (Kiker, Callahan, & Kiker, 2019). Like transformational leadership, servant leadership is built upon both trust and persuasion in order to achieve success:

“This view is supported by a belief about the nature of humankind, a belief that leads to a view of persuasion as the critical skill of servant leadership. Such a leader is one who ventures and takes the risks of going out ahead to show the way and whom others follow, voluntarily, because they are persuaded that the leader’s path is the right one—for them, probably better than they could devise for themselves.” (Greenleaf, 1988, p. 44).

Servant leaders are concerned with the development of their followers both within the vision of the organization and without as human beings in general (Northouse, 2016). Spears (1995) categorized servant leadership into ten characteristics: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, growth, and community building. In order to understand the needs and hopes of the followers, the servant leaders must listen first. Servant leaders acknowledge and validate the viewpoint of their followers to create both trust and understanding (Northouse, 2016). Empathy builds the acknowledgement of the followers’ perspective into a mutual relationship built upon common experience and understanding, while also placing the leader in the role of wise councilor or experienced guide. The characteristic of healing provides room for both the leader and follower to be healed, while also allowing the trusting relationship to flourish (Northouse, 2016). Awareness is the ability to step out of oneself through self-reflection and view how the actions of the leader impact all groups around them (Spears, 1995). Awareness is one of the most pivotal abilities a leader

requires; it is an understanding of the needs and desires of the followers, society, the organization, and all stakeholders that the leader might impact. It is through this understanding that the leader makes intentional decisions about how they will act (Northouse, 2016).

Persuasion is “central to getting others to modify their behaviours and attitudes, and embrace a new agenda” (Sibanda, 2016). Maslow’s Hierarchy of human needs, as seen in Appendix D, is a five-tiered motivational theory that explains why humans choose to act the way they do (McLeod, 2018). Persuasion is often closely tied with several tiers of Maslow’s hierarchy. Leaders who persuade through inspiration must understand the self-actualization or self-fulfilment desires of the follower. They must also understand the followers basic and psychological needs in order to persuade in a way that convinces the follower that their leadership will help with self-fulfilment and actualization.

While transformative leadership provides an opportunity for charismatic leaders to manipulate their followers through negative persuasion to achieve destructive results, servant leadership is held in check by the humility required in the premise of the theory. For a servant leader to persuade their followers, they must exhibit an understanding of their followers and put the growth of their followers first. It is very difficult for a servant leader to intentionally lead their followers down a destructive path. The struggle of servant leadership is that if there is not a foundation of respect and trust, often the leader is seen as weak. Mentors and servant leaders who fail to portray themselves as worthy of respect are often seen as weak or not capable of real leadership (Liu, 2019). Even with the practice of servant leadership, one must convey a sense of authority and provide inspiration for those that one is intending to lead. In summation, servant leadership requires experience, authority, and a desire for follower growth and development through the provision by the leader of careful, wise guidance.



### **Adaptability and Change**

The competency of Adaptability and Change is more relevant than ever in a world with rapidly advancing technology and political turmoil (Burke, Pierce & Salas, 2006). The ability to alter the course of an organization while still remaining consistent to the vision is paramount to transformational servant leadership (Zaccaro & Banks, 2004). Often adaptability is researched in relation to task performance and the ability to respond to “changing environmental situations” (Burke, Pierce & Salas, 2006). While adaptability is related to the ability to alter one’s response to a task, adaptability in leadership requires more than the ability to merely come up with an alternate reaction. Adaptability in leadership is both an awareness of the needs of the organization and foresight to plan a response to an approaching change (Atchison, 2017). A leader must be aware of the organization’s vision, mission, and values and should guide all decision making from within the realm of that compass (Loewen, 2019). In order to properly prepare an organization for change, two elements must be prevalent. First, the organization’s vision must radiate throughout all members of the team, so that everyone understands the purpose of the organization. Second, the strategic leadership team, or leader, must reflect on the organization’s strengths and weaknesses to be aware of potential areas of resistance to change. Hughes, Beatty, and Dinwoodie (2014) provide a Strategic Team Review and Action Tool [STRAT] to assess an organization’s effectiveness and preparedness for change. Self-reflection on the part of the leadership team, and an ability to hear the concerns of the followers are key components in developing a flexible, adaptive and change ready culture within one’s organization (Lepsinger, 2010). Organizational adaptability is different than leading an organization through change. Organizational adaptability requires all team members to be

“flexible, agile and adaptive in response to changes associated with a volatile and often unpredictable world” (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018).

Interpersonal change or the ability to adjust personal responses to a wide range of situations and stimulations is also an important component of the adaptability and change competency (Kaiser & Overfield, 2010). Leaders are situationally aware and able to judge the balance opposite strategies such as being forceful versus enabling or operational versus strategic (Kaiser & Overfield, 2010). Interpersonal adaptability in great leaders balances the vision building nature of leadership versus the task-oriented, organizational nature of management (Ungerer, Ungerer & Herholdt, 2016).

A leader must model adaptability and change through their actions and through intentional dialogue with their followers to demonstrate appropriate response to change. According to the LIP (2017), the competency of adaptability and change is applicable to both personal and organizational change. A leader must be able to strategize, plan, and develop goals or projects that meet the need (Leadership Integration Project Manual, 2017). The leader must also be able to adapt personal styles and approaches to meet the changing needs (Leadership Integration Project Manual, 2017). Ultimately, adaptability and change rely upon the awareness and foresight required in both transformational and servant leadership.

### **Relationship and Collaboration**

In order for there to be leadership, there must first be a relationship. The constructionist approach to leadership views relationships as the foundation upon which the entities of leadership and follower are built (Ospina, & Uhl-Bien, 2012). The “interdependent nature of the relationship” gives meaning to both parties. “[R]eality is constructed when individual subjectivities meet in an inter-subjective (collective) world, and objects attain meaning” (Ospina

& Uhl-Bien, 2012, p. 18). Without a relationship, there would not be a leader or a follower. When leadership is being built through relationships, then the participants must prioritize relationships as much as the organization. One cannot be a leader of none. In order to facilitate relationship development, leaders must be led by the needs of their followers (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009).

Collaboration is the meeting of minds to work together in order to produce something new or better. It is similar to Covey's sixth leadership principle of synergy (Covey, Covey, Summers & Hatch, 2014). Both collaboration and synergy imply that when two or more people come together, they can produce something greater than they would have produced alone. There is benefit in this meeting and through that there is a measurable success (Coleman & Levine, 2008). Relationship and collaboration in the transformational servant leadership model as described in the LIP manual (2017) uses diversity of skill and perspective to build interconnectivity. Through trust and mutual respect, the competency of relationship and collaboration can manage disagreements, work/non-work-related goals, expand awareness and build more respect and trust.

Relationship and Collaboration is an essential part of the ethical use of persuasion and inspiration for leadership. The strong Transformational Servant Leader not only uses relationships for growth, but also relies on relationships for their authority.

### **Planning and Organization**

Planning and organization are the strategic designs that are structured around the organization's mission, vision, and values (Klapwyk, 2018). They look both at the past and plan for the future. According to the LIP (2017), the competency of planning and organization is defining objectives, needs, and priorities, as well as managing time to meet demands and make

progress. In order to manage time and adequately define the needs of an organization, a leader must demonstrate foresight. As mentioned previously, the world is rapidly changing and technology is advancing in ways that seem both fantastic and worrisome. “Foresight analysis is robust, cross-disciplinary, scientific research” is used to create a framework for observing and predicting “megatrends” (Vielmetter & Sell, 2014). Planning and organization is built upon a foresight and understanding of the outside forces that will challenge the vision and productivity. Planning and organization is everything from a managerial command of the structure, hierarchy, and implementation of the strategic plan, to a systemic strategy for creating a unique product that is in high demand (Ungerer, Ungerer, and Herholdt, 2016). Planning and organization require intentionality and rigorous implementation. Burghardt and Tolliver (2009) describe the challenge of transformative leadership as the difference between a “weekend warrior and a professional athlete” (p. 188-189). The competency of planning and organization is like the professional athlete; it is principled, practiced, structured and dedicated.

When planning and organization is vision building, foresight and understanding of the needs, hopes, and wants of the stakeholders within the organization are taken into consideration. When planning and organization is structural or task and time centric, the leader must also be adept at understanding stakeholder perspective and aware of potential unforeseen events (Bell, Power & Sykes, 2015). In order to plan for the daily needs of an organization, scenario planning and strategic workforce planning are two ways to prepare both a leadership team and an organization as a whole (Goldberg & Boyes, 2019). Scenario planning begins by understanding the formal business strategy and company vision. Then leaders consider “trends and uncertainties the organization is facing in order to help refine their plans for a specific issue” (Goldberg & Boyes, 2019). Strategic planning assesses priorities, roles, responsibilities, capabilities, high and

low risks, and develops both a short- and long-term plan for the organizational and personal change (Heger & Aulbach, 2019). Planning and organization is a structured approach to ensure all possible potential risks are prevented and the highest possible efficiency is produced (Kesler, Kates & Oberg, (2016). Finally, Betz (2016) stated: “Strategic thinking is about (1) imagining a future world and (2) taking a sequence of short-term tactical actions to achieve it. It requires both an idealism (to imagine a better world) and a realism (to acquire the resources, skills, and organization to get there).” The competency of planning and organization is an essential component of transformational servant leadership in that it both brings leadership from an abstract concept to a concrete practice and provides measurable ways to achieve success.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Through the LDRS 500 course, I developed a tool to evaluate my interests and provide clarity of purpose in my research. Initially, I broke down my interests into teaching, technology, outdoor education, and special education. My subcategories under technology were coding/programming, graphic design, and hardware integration. The figure representing my planning can be seen in Appendix E. I was challenged to pick a category that would provide room for study and research while also being new and useful to my profession. My further reflection drew me to an area of research that had been a recent passion. While I had always been drawn to technology and am quite adept at mastering both new software and hardware in order to keep up with the rapid advancement of technology, I had never researched the implications this advancement was having on education. I understood the pedagogical need to provide students with the skills to adapt in a changing educational environment and later in life, a rapidly altering world of career options but did not truly understand the implications therein.

I developed a research question to begin the process, which I felt would provide me with a framework to share my findings with my fellow teachers, especially those who were less technologically inclined. My formal research question was: “Can new teaching techniques that are collaborative and flexible provide a means to transfer computational thinking ideas across subject matter and thereby support teachers in overcoming the obstacle of rapid technological advancement?” In this research question, I hoped to use my findings to develop a system that might help teachers provide technological instruction to students without being technologically proficient. I work with many teachers that struggle to use their computers and phones as anything more than merely a communication device, and even then, they struggle to reach the full

potential of the device for communicating. As someone who was often called upon to teach the teachers to use a new program or problem solve an information technology [IT] issue, I hoped to provide a foundation upon which they could teach themselves. As I had used virtual learning environments like Khan Academy and Codecademy to teach myself various programming languages while teaching students those same coding languages, I felt that there was a strong implication for teacher training and professional development.

## **Assignment 2**

### **A Systematic Literature Review of the Affect of Coding Curriculum Across Disciplines**

#### **Purpose**

With rapidly advancing technological development, educational environments and the pedagogy surrounding them are being shaped quickly and often without thorough research to justify the changes. The new curriculum in BC (2015) indicates a move toward concept-based, transferable, and authentic learning (BC's Ministry of Education, 2015). The use of big ideas and project-based learning [PBL] puts the onus on the teacher to provide an environment of self-directed learning and self-reflective learning. The teacher has ceased to be the purveyor of facts and knowledge and is now relegated to the duty of guiding and directing the students in following their own passions for learning. My formal research question for assignment 2 was, "does teaching coding and programming skills benefit student development in areas that reach across disciplines and subject areas?" Through this research I hoped to gain insight into current pedagogical practices surrounding coding and programming both in technology classes and across disciplines. As an Applied Design, Skills, and Technology [ADST] teacher as well as a generalist intermediate elementary school teacher, I often saw cross-curricular opportunities for many of the skills students acquired in my classes. I hoped that through my research I would be

able to develop a perspective on teaching technology in a way that all teachers, regardless of skill level, would be able to embrace and apply across all teaching disciplines.

## **Method**

In order to develop an in-depth understanding of current research, a systematic literature review was undertaken using the guidelines outlined by Plano-Clark and Creswell (2015). Parris and Peachey's (2013) systematic literature review on servant leadership theory was used as a template for research and analysis. Published articles were identified through searches of a variety of databases including JSTOR, Sage, and Science Direct, ArXiv.org and Google Scholar. Search results came from the use of the following key-words, and combinations therein, using the Boolean AND: coding, computational thinking, cross-curricular, digital literacy, digital fluency, education, elementary education, and programming languages. The final search resulted in over 10 000 results, of which the most relevant 220 were selected for further analysis. All results were limited to English only, peer-reviewed journal articles. 220 articles were screened for relevance based on the defined inclusion criteria and the final selection was limited to the 20 most relevant sources. All articles were appraised using a seven item 0-3 item rating scale developed by Plano-Clark and Creswell (2015). All articles selected met the "High Quality" rating defined in Plano-Clark and Creswell (2015) and were then categorized based on their relevance to computational thinking, the sciences, mathematics, and the arts. Most of the articles selected were current, 2015 or newer. However, three articles, which were published before 2005, were selected to provide foundational definitions to the historical perspective of computational thinking so as to see how much it had changed and how its influence across disciplines might have changed. Each of the three outdated articles was cited as a significant



source in the field of computational thinking and technology education and provided valuable insight.

### **Results and Analysis**

In assignment 2, I chose to narrow my focus to coding and programming specifically in regard to computational thinking and digital literacy to develop a better understanding of the field of technological education. While computational thinking and digital literacy are not technically the same thing, for the purpose of this summary, I will use them interchangeably as they are similar enough for the review of findings. This assignment was to help me gain a perspective on current research and provided me with a great foundation of knowledge around current practices and reasoning. Through assignment 2 I developed strong definitions for computational thinking, digital literacy, and a good perspective of pedagogical practices surrounding technology and programming in both an elementary and high school setting.

There were many interesting findings regarding the cross-curricular nature of computational thinking and its implications for other subject areas. As one would guess, computational thinking is already widely viewed as a substantial part of mathematics education (Good & Howland, 2017; Gokce, Yenmez, & Ozpinar, 2017). It is also widely regarded as beneficial and an essential aspect of science education (Fox, Thompson, & Chan, 1996; Güneş, & Bahçivan, 2018; Lafée, 2017). Interestingly, there were several researchers that theorized a connection between computational thinking and arts education (Yadav, A., Hong, H., & Stephenson, C. 2016; Wing, 2008). However, they did not provide substantial qualitative or quantitative evidence for that connection. Only Saez-Lopez, Roman-Gonzalez, and Vazquez-Cano's (2016) article on visual programming provided any true, evidential connection between arts education and computational thinking.

Additionally, their findings were based on a sequential approach to Bloom's taxonomy and as a result limited the application for the cross-curricular implications of computational thinking (Case, 2013). In essence, they determined that in order to progress in computational thinking, one could not use it to create before one had first used it for application, then analysis, then evaluation. This linear or sequential view of learning fails to consider the abstract and experiential nature of arts education. Unfortunately, this perspective on learning and education was common to most articles about computational thinking. Due to the logical and analytical nature of computational thinking and digital literacy, the research surrounding it tends to relegate itself to subjects that follow similar logical and sequential learning patterns (Snow, 2008; Palumbo, 1990).

While the assignment called for more research around the cross-curricular implications of computational thinking and digital literacy in arts education, it also provided me with a foundation upon which to build my next research assignment. Though I did not find research for the evidence of the application of computational thinking in all areas of curriculum, two changes to my thinking arose. First, I realized that to reach technologically inexperienced teachers, I would need to provide a system or platform that would give them the knowledge they were missing. Second, I realized that though computational thinking is in essence systematic, sequential, and logical, that does not prevent it from also being abstract and experiential.

### **Assignment 3**

#### **A Review of Alternative Teaching Methods and Transformational Servant Leadership**

##### **Purpose**

After developing an understanding of computational thinking and digital literacy, I hoped to research potential tools, platforms, or teaching methods that would provide educational

support to teachers who struggled to implement technology in their curriculum. My overarching goal of creating a tool to support teachers opened my learning to a vast multitude of teaching techniques. I had previously utilized many of these teaching techniques without understanding the philosophy behind them. Some of these methods were new to me, yet they seemed to integrate well with the BC Ministry of Education's new curriculum (2015). The formal research question of assignment 2 was: "Are alternative teaching methods effective instruments for educating the next generation of students and how they relate to principles of transformational and servant leadership?" My hope was to find a system that could be used to help teachers import technological learning into all aspects of their curriculum by providing them with a platform of knowledge upon which they could guide student learning. The teacher would cease to be the purveyor of knowledge and begin to be a shepherd leading to knowledge. As stated in several of my previous assignments, the teacher would stop being Wikipedia, an encyclopedia of facts, and would start to become more like Google, a search engine directing the students to resources.

### **Method**

Assignment 2 took the form of a systematic literature review. Several Electronic databases were accessed to find articles on topics of Blended Learning, Problem-Based Learning, Inquiry-Based Learning, Flipped Classroom, Self-Directed Learning, Self-Guided Learning, Virtual Learning Environments, Servant Leadership, and Transformational Leadership. The databases included: ERIC, JSTOR, Research Gate, SAGE, Science Direct, Springer, and Taylor & Francis, and most were accessed through Trinity Western Universities library. After scanning abstracts from thousands of articles, the most relevant 250 articles were chosen for further critical selection. The 250 journal articles were manually screened for relevance through a brief

analysis of the abstract, introduction, and results of each article. The twenty most relevant articles were selected from the 250 journals reviewed. Each of the twenty chosen articles was then further evaluated using Plano-Clark and Creswell's (2015) scale for evaluating articles and found to be meeting the "High Quality" definition. All articles selected were published between 2011 and 2019 and were a mix of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research articles. The twenty articles were then categorized based on their relevance to problem-based learning [PBL], flipped classroom [FC], virtual learning environments [VLE], as well as servant leadership and transformational leadership.

### **Results and Analysis**

The intent to find correlations between alternative teaching methods such as PBL, FC, and VLE with servant leadership and transformational leadership was quite successful. Several articles provided research that supported the need for principles of servant leadership such as compassion, shepherding/guiding, or the ability to elevate students to leadership roles (Brears, et al., 2011; Chellapan, van der Meer, Pratt, & Wass, 2018; Hack, 2013; Jespersen, 2018; Lane, 2015; Nazarenko, 2015). Much of the positive correlation between alternative teaching methods relied strongly on the positive leadership traits found in both servant leadership theory and transformational leadership theory. The articles pointed to examples of both leadership theories as integral in the implementation of alternative teaching methods. For instance, Brear, et al. (2011) suggested that PBL was reliant on teacher input and students consequently felt more successful under a positively implemented example of servant leadership guidance. Lane (2015) found a positive correlation between FC and servant leadership, stating "empowerment and development of leadership skills cannot take place in a passive learning environment with the lecturer playing the dominant role." The implication is that leaders must act as guides to learning

by directing students to resources and inspiring them in their success, rather than giving them rote facts, and a teacher standing at the front lecturing cannot accomplish this. FC requires a teacher who is willing to allow students to find the knowledge independently and provide support for their successful interaction with that knowledge (Lane, 2015).

Most of the research utilized a VLE to support student learning. Hao (2016) indicated that the VLE was a useful tool for alternative teaching methodologies as long as teacher modelling and support were prevalent. As a whole, VLE's were a useful tool for students to find knowledge and learn new skills, though they required teacher support and often went hand-in-hand with FC practice. Nazarenko (2015) indicated that regardless of the teaching method, the greatest factor influencing student success was the successful implementation of servant leadership and transformational leadership methods.

There was ample evidence indicating the success of transformational servant leadership practice in the implementation of various alternative teaching methods. The research in assignment 3 combined with assignment 2 made me question the impact my teaching methods had on my students.

## **Assignment 4**

### **Listening to Students Voice about Self-guided Learning and Leadership**

#### **Purpose**

In assignment 4, I initially hoped to gain insight into how effective my teaching had been for my students. After reflecting on the research in assignments 2 and 3, I wondered how much knowledge retention the students had from my ADST classes, and curious to discover what kind of skills they had taken away from my classes. In order to gain insight into what they had learned, I wanted to study their collective perspective on their learning through several surveys.

Initially, I hoped to do a qualitative research article in which I could evaluate their retention of knowledge. However, after reflecting both upon the student-directed and self-reflective nature of the new curriculum, I realized it was more important to obtain the students' own perspective on their learning experience (BC Ministry of Education, 2015). Regardless of the field of education, there is a pedagogical push toward both a more self-guided and self-reflective practice for learning (Hamilton, 2018). The two formal research questions were: "What do students think about self-directed learning within the realm of ADST?" and "What do students think about leaders and leadership in education?" To remain unbiased towards the students' experience and provide them with a voice for their own learning, I had to select an appropriate medium to conduct my research.

### **Method**

In order to properly prioritize the students' experiences, I utilized a phenomenological research method. Phenomenology studies individual perspectives in experiences and allows for common understanding through mutual understanding of the experience (Smith, 2018). I recorded former students' experiences in ADST in which they utilized VLE's, FC and PBL. Creswell (2007) provided the foundational strategies and guidelines for participant interaction and data collection from a qualitative standpoint. Yüksel and Yıldırım (2015) modelled the framework for conducting a phenomenological study and provided strategies for grouping the participant's experiences into horizons.

A group of fourteen participants was selected based on their shared experience taking ADST 6 and ADST 7. All participants were between the age of 12 and 16 and were English language speakers from British Columbia, Canada. As suggested by Yüksel and Yıldırım (2015), three interviews were given to collect data. These interviews were conducted through digital

mediums in the form of email, Google Forms, and over the video communication platform Zoom. Through Google Forms, students were given an open-ended survey to evaluate several quantitative and qualitative stimulations to reflect on their experience. They had the opportunity to express themselves freely through paragraph answers to prevent social desirability bias (Dodou & de Winter, 2014). In an attempt to eliminate researcher bias, the researcher collected all communication from participants and stated them as direct quotes. Classification of experiences were placed in ten horizons based on collective responses by the students. The categorization of these horizons was discussed in the final interview in order to ensure the student perspective was being portrayed through these horizons and that all participants agreed to the relevance and appropriateness of the horizons.

### **Results and Analysis**

Through the research, the ten universal horizons were grouped into two categories based on the two research questions. The first category was: “What do students think about self-directed learning within the realm of ADST?” It included the following seven horizons: challenges of motivation, need for teacher support, understanding of personal needs in education, self-monitoring learning speed, transferable skills, environmental needs for learning, and conscious memory of their experience. Within this category, students expressed their experiences in the course and reflected on their learning. Student answers were both honest and candid, not holding anything back from their experience and demonstrated an appropriate maturity towards the reflective process. They reflected on their learning challenges and how the skills could possibly transfer to other areas of study. After the assignment was complete, one of my former students emailed me and thanked me for the ADST experience. They explained that it had prepared them for their current high school level ADST course which covered many of the same

concepts I taught them, thus, giving them an advantage over the other students in their class. As a result they an “Extending” grade on their report card. Extending is defined on their report as: “The student demonstrates a sophisticated ability to apply concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning outcomes.” Another student commented on the struggle of learning alone, indicating a failure of leadership on my part, to adequately guide and support them in the experience.

The second category, “What do students think about leaders and leadership in education?” included the following three horizons: teachers, leaders, and servant leadership. Students indicated a greater struggle to evaluate leadership theory as it was not something they had intentionally experienced. I did not provide them with clear definitions so that they would have to define the roles and responsibilities of both a teacher and a leader themselves. Their thoughts on servant leadership were both encouraging from a Christian worldview and challenging from a teacher’s perspective. More often than not, students defined the term servant leader in reference to the example of Jesus washing his disciples’ feet (John 13). They struggled to express clearly what implications that would have for a school teacher. Moreover, they all expressed that a servant leader would be someone who “loved”, “cared-for” or “supported” their students and several students expressed that a servant leader teacher would put their students’ needs above their own.

Across both sets of horizons some common themes developed. The students saw many of the ten characteristics of a good teacher, as described by Miller (2012). They identified attributes of this type of leader as being caring, compassionate, and having awareness as the key to both the leader’s successful guidance and the students’ potential for success. The students’ comments on a teacher’s ability to learn alongside them were profound. This indicated a greater concern for



relational experiences than to be solely taught by a knowledgeable professional. The students placed greater emphasis on a teacher's intent, style, and presentation than their functional ability or experience in a subject area. This led to an interesting development in my perspective and priorities of leadership which will be expanded upon in chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Leading from the Front**

My initial research took the leadership perspective that the teacher is the most important component in the learning experience. I hoped to provide teachers with a means of gaining a tool to help them overcome their inabilities regarding technology and technology education. While researching ideas of computational thinking and digital literacy, I developed an understanding that models much of the new curriculum around different types of learning models (BC's Ministry of Education, 2015). I began to formulate a theory that teachers could cease to be purveyors of knowledge, and they could stop being a database of facts like Wikipedia. The role of the teacher was not as a source for knowledge through which students should search. The role of the teacher was not to give students a set of facts to learn and then assess them based on summative, quantitative assessment methods. Teachers and leaders needed to move into a more shepherding and mentoring mentality. Teachers could provide more effective learning experiences by being a guide in the learning process rather than a fount of knowledge. Teachers must become more like Google, providing students directions for learning and research rather than all the answers to their questions.

Following my literature review of computational thinking and digital literacy, I realized that many of the components of technology education could potentially transfer across educational domains should the right teaching method be implemented. I began to seek out ways an inexperienced teacher could teach technology to students in a way that could be implemented regardless of ability and subject area. I hoped to connect ideas of awareness and inspiration from transformational servant leadership theory into a pedagogical practice that would allow teachers

to explore computational thinking regardless of their skill level and give students an opportunity to excel. I hoped to find an approach where teachers could inspire students to surpass their teacher's ability and even their own imagined ability without requiring the teacher to become formally educated in the field of technology. My literature review on computational thinking and digital literacy inspired the idea that teachers could effectively teach students from the back of the classroom. Teachers no longer had to be a purveyor of knowledge; they could be a guide in seeking out knowledge. Teachers no longer had to be Wikipedia; they could become Google. This understanding also challenged my perspective that there was a difference in value between the teacher and the student. I began to realize that leadership need not be hierarchical and that there was inherent value in respecting the follower's abilities to achieve greater success than the leader.

### **Leading from the Back**

I realized that effective learning could come from an inexperienced educator. I began to recognize that the followers' success could be gained by direction in the learning process rather than the direction of factual acquisition. These realizations inspired my research in types of learning methods. I hoped to gain strategies where teachers could provide guidance for learning, much like the new curriculum challenged (BC's Ministry of Education, 2015). I used my second literature review to study methods of teaching where an inexperienced teacher or a teacher unfamiliar with technology could still inspire their students to achieve greatness. Where the new curriculum pushed for project-based learning and assessment as learning, I studied methods such as flipped classroom theory, problem-based learning, and virtual learning environments. Through this process, I developed greater awareness for the need for humility in leadership. Teachers who pridefully have all the answers do not allow students to struggle and achieve the solutions

themselves. My value in education became more student-focused and began to realize that successful education might come despite the teacher, not as a direct result of a knowledgeable teacher.

For one to become a great educator or a great leader, transformational-servant leadership qualities must first begin to shine through. To embrace the uniqueness of each individual that Robinson (2015) describes as one of the most significant omissions of the industrialist education system, we currently work within, is the foundation of servant leadership. I had previously placed too much emphasis on the necessity of a teacher and through assignment 3 was convinced that students could take on the responsibility of educating themselves. In order to step back from my biased impressions of education and embrace the new mentality of giving students voice and choice in their learning, I elected to conduct a qualitative research report for assignment 4.

### **Leading from Beside**

Leading from beside is about leading through collective experience and growth. The BC Ministry of Education (2015) places great value in students having a self-reflective voice in their learning. Core competencies are not just a curricular tool for teachers to guide education; they are also a platform upon which students can think metacognitively about their learning. After completing assignments 2 and 3, I was curious as to what my former students thought about their learning experience with technology and ADST. Initially, my instinct as a summative teacher was to be more concerned with how much they retained. I had to step back from my personal bias around education and just listen to their voice. This intentional listening convinced me that I had far too little appreciation for the students' voice in their learning and too much value in the role of the teacher. As much as I have repeated my key theme of the teacher becoming Google

and ceasing to be Wikipedia, I instinctively see the role of the teacher and the role of the leader as a higher, more significant, and more powerful than the role and position than that of the student or follower. By quieting my voice and placing my former students in a position of equality, I realized that despite there being experience, age, or role inequalities, there should not be inequality of respect. The students' voice around their education was as meaningful and significant as my own.

Through listening to the students' voices I was challenged to re-evaluate my perspective on teaching. I reflected on Miller's (2011) four styles of education and realized that while I do not fully advocate the laissez-faire approach to education, I do value the notion that "true learning comes when initiated and pursued by the learners; all people are creative if allowed to develop unique talents." The holistic approach outlined by Miller (2011) also provides room for the servant leader to guide the learning through self-directed inspiration. My students' responses in the phenomenological study gave me encouragement that sometimes all students need for success is a teacher that respects them for who they are and cares enough about them to listen. I still revert to the notion that the teacher has a significant role in the learning process, but now place far more value in the students' experiences, reflections, thoughts, and perspectives. We cannot completely escape the content- and teacher-driven, industrialist, mass-produced educational system we work within (Robinson, 2015). However, we can introduce a change that values learners over rote learning.

### **Goals for the Future Research**

While the developments of my learning have caused me to value student input and voice in their educational experience, it would be remiss of me to completely eliminate the relevance of the teacher in the educational process. The Transformational-Servant Leader model places the

leader in a position of humility where they can use their personal experiences, wisdom, and understanding of the follower to provide wise counsel and direction within the vision. In a teaching setting, the teacher has more experience and is able to provide the same direction to their students. It is important to value the students' voice, but we cannot forget the wisdom of our elders. This leads me to possible future research around the use of elders in First Nations culture as a model for leadership. The second principle of the First Peoples Principles of Learning seems very applicable to both my current perspective on leadership and learning as well as being pertinent to future research. "Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)" (FNESC, 2014). It would be interesting to research the notion of elders being respected for their experience and as a source of guidance to keep the learning process from forgetting the lessons and wisdom that only history can provide. It would be valuable to study the reciprocal relationships and see the correlations that both students and elders, followers and leaders, bring to the relationship. Leadership is not about directing, guiding, manipulating, or controlling followers. Real transformational-servant leadership is about learning from one another and growing through relationships.

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## Appendix A

### *Strategic Planning Notes for GCS*

- 5 year and 10 year plans must include financially feasible budget and redesigned leadership structure to create accountability in reporting finances.
- We are certified to teach up to and including grade 12. We need to develop a grade 10-12 program to provide parents with an alternative to public high school.
  - This can initially be done as a combination of home school and extracurricular activities on our campus as students can legally be enrolled in 2 schools
  - Optimally we will provide a space and teacher to assist in the home school education of these students until such a time that we have a high enough enrolment to justify a full time class and teacher
- We should be planning to develop our own school facility on property owned by Gibson's Christian School
- We should look into school uniforms as it elevates our student image above that of public schools while providing well documented increases in student learning and achievement. It is also a good promotional tool during student outings. This uniform need not be complicated but could be as simple as a school polo shirt and individually purchased khaki pants. This uniform should also be priced to provide the school with both an income and a security fund for students of lower income.
- A parent volunteer group or required volunteer hours could take some of the burden off the underpaid staff members and save money in some maintenance areas.
- In the near future the school will need:
  - 2 more projectors
  - 5-6 new computers
  - a portable or a larger facility
  - several new items of science equipment including chemistry equipment and biology equipment
  - several new desks
  - a minimum of \$1000 for new books for the library
  - a new fridge for the office which has a working freezer to keep ice packs cold
  - 2-3 fully equipped first aid kits
  - replacement of expired items in the earthquake kit
  - \$500 in class novels/phonetic reading packs
  - A new phone system with caller ID and Voicemail as the reception of our current phone does not even cover the office.

## Appendix B

### *Ten Strategies for GCS Balanced Budget*

- Increase Tuition to a minimum of \$3800 per student this year, increase tuition to \$4000 next year and increase tuition to \$4250 the following year. We are in the three lowest schools on the SCSBC board in regards to tuition cost. The Private Schools in BC generally charge between \$4500 and \$12,000 per student per year.
- Include extra surcharge to cover unforeseen costs in all events and activities, for example, if a field trip costs \$25 per student, \$30 will be charged. This extra \$5 can be used to cover unforeseen costs, or provide support for students of lower income families that cannot afford the activity/event.
- Move to a significantly cheaper facility, none is known of at this point, or re-negotiate the current facilities contract, especially in areas of custodial requirements
- Recruit a minimum of 4 international students. This would require a board member or member in good standing to monitor, on a bi-monthly basis, students in each home stay to ensure their well being and their behavior.
- Increase student population by a minimum of 10 students. The problem with this is that in our current building we can only take approximately 3-4 new students in the senior class and 8 new students in the intermediate class. There is very little room for new students in the primary class aside from Kindergartens.
- Lay-off Staff
- Find significant and immediate donors willing to cover the deficit.
- Sell off any school assets.
- Merge with another Christian school like Powell River Christian and share financial burdens
- Fundraise through alternative means such as: selling school artwork, music, bumperstickers (Proud parent of a GCS student, etc)

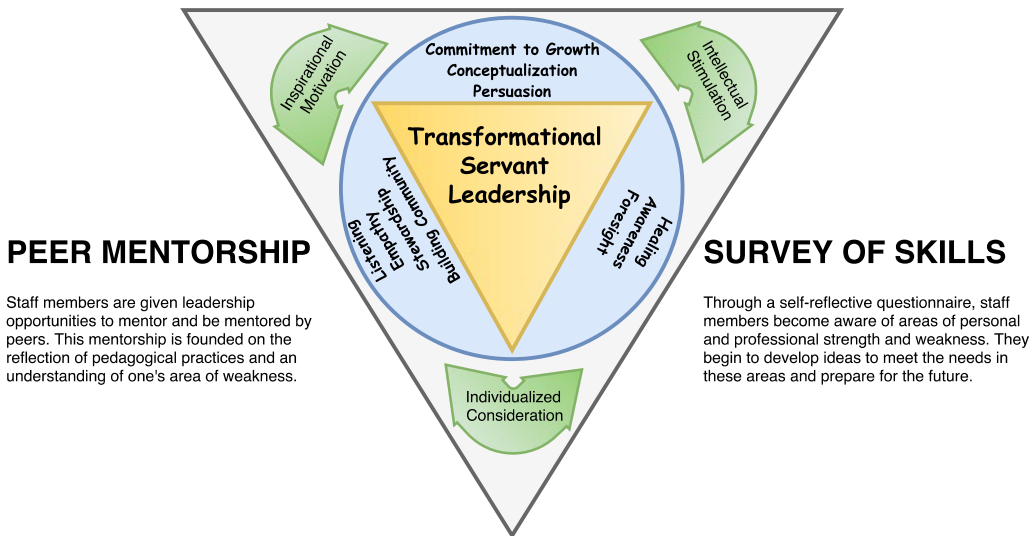
## Appendix C

TSL Tool For CCA

# Transformational Servant Leadership Opportunities for Cornerstone Christian Academy's Professional Development Policy

### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Staff members will be given leadership opportunities to develop an area of their weakness through presenting a lesson to their students, then their fellow staff members, and finally to an outside group of peers. The challenge being they develop a lesson in an area they feel incapable of teaching but wish they could.



**PEER MENTORSHIP**  
Staff members are given leadership opportunities to mentor and be mentored by peers. This mentorship is founded on the reflection of pedagogical practices and an understanding of one's area of weakness.

**SURVEY OF SKILLS**  
Through a self-reflective questionnaire, staff members become aware of areas of personal and professional strength and weakness. They begin to develop ideas to meet the needs in these areas and prepare for the future.

**Intellectual Stimulation**

"This factor includes leadership that stimulates followers to be creative and innovative and to challenge their own beliefs and values as well as those of the leader and the organization."  
Northouse, 2016. p.169.

**Individualized Consideration**

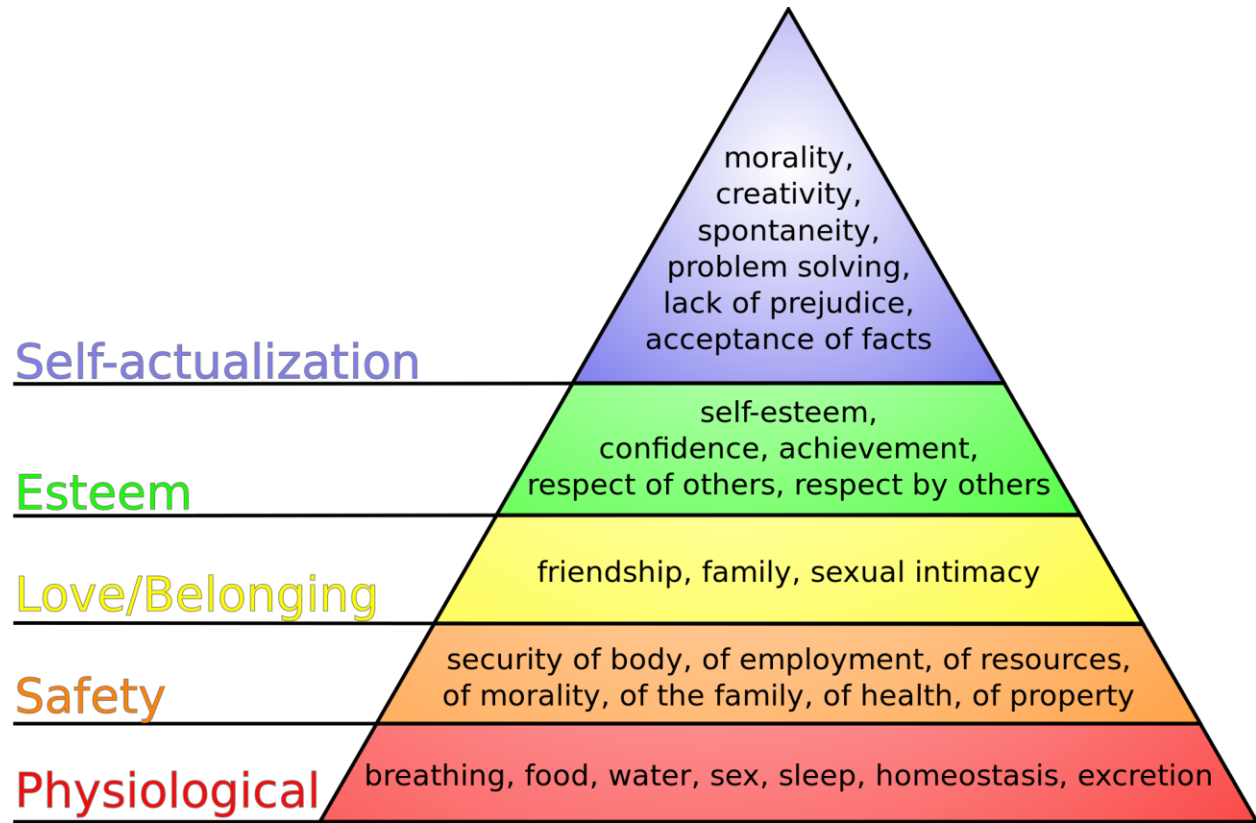
"This factor is representative of leaders who provide a supportive climate in which they listen carefully to the individual needs of followers. Leaders act as coaches and advisers while trying to assist followers in becoming fully actualized."  
Northouse, 2016. p.169.

**Inspirational Motivation**

"This factor is descriptive of leaders who communicate high expectations to followers, inspiring them through motivation to become committed to and a part of the shared vision in the organization. In practice, leaders use symbols and emotional appeals to focus group members' efforts to achieve more than they would in their own self-interest "  
Northouse, 2016. p.169

**Appendix D**

*Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*



### Appendix E

#### Graphic Design of Areas of Interest

