**Respond to Michele**

The Five Practices are based off of the most effective and desired leadership skills. These skills have been tested as important to followers throughout numerous LPI assessments. Therefore, those who use these practices more frequently will generally be assessed as a better leader by their constituents than those who do not use the practices.

Too much of anything can be bad, and this is also true with leadership skills. During our previous class discussions, honesty was singled out as the most important of all of the leadership characteristics. However, honesty is best when discretion is used. Last year at the annual retirement dinner, a coworker introduced me to someone, explaining that she used to work for the district and had applied for my current position, quitting shortly after she didn’t get the job. While this was a true statement, there was no benefit to sharing that information. The dinner became somewhat uncomfortable for me, and probably the other woman as well.

In order to prevent the leadership practices from bringing the team down, moderation should be exercised. In Modeling the Way, keep the perspective that setting a good example is something that will come naturally when following the team’s shared values rather than making it a focus. While Inspiring a Shared Vision, leaders will be wise to recall that the chapter recommended a well-rounded approach of looking to the past for historical information, keeping your finger on the pulse of the organization in the present, and scheduling time to consider the future (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Also, thinking too much about inspiring others with a strong vision can make leaders forget that the vision belongs to everyone, and input should be welcomed. Challenging the Process is important for driving innovation that will improve the future, but too much change can lead to anxiety and a less productive workforce (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). In Enabling Others to Act, giving increasing decision-making authority and more challenging work to the constituents can help develop their own leadership, but the people must have the tools in place to be ready for the challenge, or this ends in setting people up to fail (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Too much coaching in a team that does not need as much will end up wasting time that could have been spent increasing efficiency ([Buljac-Samardzic](https://search-proquest-com.centhsally.centenaryuniversity.edu/indexinglinkhandler/sng/au/Buljac-Samardzic,+Martina/$N?accountid=9997) & van Woerkom, 2015) Finally, in Encouraging the Heart, recognizing employees with celebrations is great for keeping up morale in the office, but at some point, the work needs to get done (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Re-reading the book periodically will be helpful to remember the examples, and the spirit, of the practices. I believe this is one of those books that, as you progress and gain experience, you will find new aspects in the book to consider. Leadership is a lifelong process.

References

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**Respond to Kimberly**

The leader that has been the most influential to me is our Vice President of Compensation and Benefits. I have worked with her for the last ten years and learned many valuable lessons. She takes the time to personally recognize her staff for various accomplishments. She utilizes hand written notes to convey personalized messages of appreciation. Additionally, she continually shows her appreciation, it is not just a once in a while occurrence. I believe this is critical for building good relationships and trust with your team. Employees need to know that they are doing a good job and that their work is fulfilling the expectations of their manager.

There were also many lessons learned by listening to her discuss the questions and reactions of the executive team that occurred in the board meetings. In essence, she allows us to learn from her mistakes and truly wants us to learn and grow from the additional knowledge. It is important to be well prepared in these meetings and to be able to answer any and all questions. I’ve started to put myself in her shoes and think about how she prepares for these meetings so that I can learn the process and become as effective as she is in these meetings.

Continuous self-development is a process that every leader must be dedicated to. As you gain exposure to different leadership styles, you have the opportunity to select the characteristics that you admire in other leaders and focus on incorporating them into your own style to help you grow as a leader. Throughout this course we have discussed that leadership is all about being able to influence others. While leaders accomplish this through a variety of styles, my preference is to develop trust and mutual respect with my team members. I believe that the best way to encourage your team’s support is by showing an interest in their needs and following through on your commitments to them.

Aside from building trust, it is important to inspire and motivate your team, display patience, determination and commitment, have emotional intelligence, and communicate a clear vision of what the future holds (Coughlin, 2016, p. 24). A good leader has a way of showing strength without being overpowering, showing dedication to their team while not losing sight of accountability, and showing compassion for helping them achieve their personal goals without jeopardizing the attainment of the company goals.

References

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