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Utilizing the Innovative Leadership Behavior Inventory and Relationship Marketing as Critical Elements for Teaching/Learning Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL)

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper will be on utilizing the five-factor Leader Behavior Inventory (LBI) as the structure, and various teaching or learning pedagogy and related processes and relationships as the intervening variables in order to help entrepreneurs assess then enhance their potential leadership behavior. In turn, this should foster the decision process necessary to accomplish enterprise building or organizational development thus enhancing the cycle time for critical change. Should the LBI and associated assessment tools and processes indicate such, the best practice strategies may involve bringing in professional management, slowing the growth of the enterprise to allow for leadership development, or an appropriate exit strategy.

INTRODUCTION

This paper utilizes the Leadership Behavior Inventory or LBI as the framework or structure and various teaching/learning pedagogy or tools and critical relationships they depend on in the teaching of entrepreneurial leadership best practice to undergraduate students. These relationships range from (a) a team teacher or Executive-in-Residence who has extensive Entrepreneurial Leadership or EL experience as well as ongoing relationships within the b-school to (b) school colleagues and Executives or Entrepreneurs-in-Residence who provide related “Essentials of EL” expertise to (c) entrepreneurs (including alums) who provide either “Essentials of EL” or “Lessons in EL” and even to (d) “alumni” who have utilized entrepreneurial leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities since graduating from the college in some kind of useful application that students can readily relate to. These individuals and their

relationships are critical for accomplishing course learning objectives as well as for amplifying and relating these to junior and senior students through shared experience or at least shared environment thru use of Best Practice examples. Our experience has shown that a pedagogy that is multi-faceted is typically more effective due to the wide variety of learning styles (Kolb) of traditional students who come from increasingly diverse majors and backgrounds. Not to be forgotten, each of these conversations provides a benchmark for success for others that follow if the entrepreneurial leadership course is to continuously improve. Finally, we believe the pedagogy can be more easily assessed as to whether successful entrepreneurs are able to transform their behavior from a wide variety of entrepreneurial behavior to the five kinds of leadership behavior defined by the Leader Behavior Inventory or LBI as Best Practice and in turn that are deemed essential for enterprise building and related organizational development. Figure 1: Throckmorton's Entrepreneurship and Leadership Curve is illustrative of this concept, while the LBI includes five behaviors that follow (Kent, 2004 and Rudd, et. al., 2009).

THE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR INVENTORY OR LBI

The Leadership Behavior Inventory or LBI includes the following transformational leadership behaviors: 1) Visualizing Greatness; 2) Empowering the "We"; 3) Communicating for Meaning; 4) Managing One's Self; and 5) Care and Recognition (Kent, 2005). Visualizing Greatness involves behaviors related to creating and communicating an inspiring vision. Empowering the 'We' includes behaviors that create a sense of "oneness" among followers. Communicating for Meaning focuses on getting across the value or worth and relevance of important ideas, decisions, strategies, etc. Managing One's 'Self' is related to the leader sustaining his or her perseverance, focus, and self-discipline. Care and Recognition behaviors demonstrate a genuine concern and gratitude for peoples' hard work and effort (Kent, 2004).

THE CONCEPT OF RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

"The concept of a relationship approach to studies of interactions among customers and product or service providers is comparatively recent, considering that the phenomenon itself is as old as trade itself (Gronroos, 2004). Gummesson argued that relationships are "contacts between two or more people, but they also exist between people and objects, symbols and organizations," (p. 33) and that interactions were the activities performed within relationships (Gummesson, 1996). This relationship view of marketing encompasses aspects of control, trust, and risks that are not always apparent in studies focused exclusively on transactions and exchange among the parties. As opposed to a simple, dyadic relationship or marriage between supplier and consumer (Dwyer, Schurr et al., 1987), the concept of relationship marketing may be expanded to include all stakeholders involved in the activities, or "neo-relationship marketing," (p. 185) acknowledging that more than one dyad may be involved in any given exchange situation (Healy, Hastings et al., 1999). In sum, relationship marketing is a perspective based on the premise that additional value for both customer and provider is created by the relationship, one that exceeds the value of the products exchanged (Gronroos, 2000). In this paper, we are focused on the professor/instructor and his/her "colleague."

Despite finding more than 26 definitions of relationship marketing in his content analysis study, Harker found that seven conceptual categories for the constructs emerged (Harker, 1999). The first two of the seven categories, creation and development, are the focus of this paper as it was the previous AMTP papers. ‘Using the frameworks developed for studies of relationship marketing, we analyzed best practice or success factors that either were or should be in place in order to design, develop, and implement a transformational leadership course that enhances all five factors of the LBI while also appealing to traditional students with a variety of learning styles.

LEARNING STYLES

The Kolb inventory of learning styles or the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) is based on experiential learning and consists of four elements: AC or Abstract Conceptualization (as in theory/concepts which may come from textbooks or the like), AE or Active Experimentation (similar to the use of structured laboratories in science), CE or Concrete Experience (learning by doing the work sample or experiential exercises in organizational behavior), and RO or Reflective Observation (learning from what might be called 20:20 hindsight or reflecting on what one did and the lessons learned in so doing). LSI is also a cycle where faculty typically start with theory (AC) then go to AE then to CE and finally to RO. However, in many of the pedagogical approaches used in teaching transformational leadership, the entry point in the cycle varies with the desire to take advantage of all learning styles (Osland and Kolb, et.al.).

LBI, RELATED COURSE PEDAGOGY & RELATIONSHIPS, LEARNING THEORY/ASSESSMENT

As noted previously, the LBI includes five factors or behaviors that have been found to be elements of transformational leadership. The teaching/learning tools or pedagogy consists of a wide variety of tools even on occasion within the context of a semester theme such as “Entrepreneurial Leadership” with our dedication to people that have made signal contributions to this realm of leadership such as Peter Drucker, Jeff Timmons, Jerry Zucker, Bob Brinson and more recently, Tommy Baker. A sub-theme or social responsibility footprint (and an AACSB expectation of “Leadership and Giving Back” or “Social/Civic Responsibility”) is also integrated throughout the course each and every semester. These tools, which become in essence a multi-dimensional mosaic, range from: 1) non-traditional books that research world class entrepreneurial leaders vs. those that did not accomplish the essential transformation which in some cases also includes elements that provide for a degree of self-assessment (self-awareness) instruments that are utilized individually and as part of the (self-managed) team process in the classroom; to 2) specialty books that provide key tools tied to course objectives like Covey and vision/mission statements; to 3) live case studies including the EL team teacher’s as well as biographies on successful ELs; to 4) articles and colleague PowerPoints that provide practical insights thru examples that can easily be related to typical student experience; to 5) videos or films that provide historic insight into the critical elements of success and what can be called context of leadership for individual ELs and the development of their leadership team and enterprise; to 6) a variety of skills development including critical thinking through journaling and

communication skills that includes both written analyses as well as briefing/presentation skills that can be practiced in students' role as team spokespersons; to 7) research projects on entrepreneurs that require considerable critical thinking relative to an entrepreneur who successfully or not-so-successfully transformed her/himself to a successful EL of a great or nearly great enterprise based on the LBI as well as other analytical tools provided to students and viewed as Best Practice models; to 8) use of colleagues, alumni, and entrepreneurial leaders who provide "Conversations" with our students that could be categorized as "Essentials of EL" and "Lessons of EL;" to 9) use of an experienced and highly successful entrepreneurial leader as a team teacher whose story is evidence of successful EL as well as reinforces Best Practice while developing a sense of accountability through the use of Socratic method; to 10) results of colleague research on transformational leadership of entrepreneurs; and to 11) even the sharing of announcements and current events that reinforce the importance of being "in the know" as to what is going on in one's entrepreneurial venture, enterprise or organization, industry, profession, community, nation, and world. The latter is helpful for business or leadership literacy as it is sometimes called. In addition, to be effective as an entrepreneurial leader, it's important to understand trends and develop the ability to "see around the corner" so as to anticipate problems as well as opportunities and "reset" for the new economy.

VISUALIZING GREATNESS, RELATED PEDAGOGY & RELATIONSHIPS, LEARNING THEORY/ASSESSMENT

As mentioned previously, this is the "vision thing" as is often said. There are many tools and related relationships that are essential to convey this picture and begin to put together the mosaic of transformational leadership. A selected few include the following:

- 1) Internal-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. One faculty member who co-developed the LBI and has published numerous articles on leadership has been a colleague for almost 25 years. This colleague provides the in-class version of the history of leadership research or the context for understanding how transformational leadership came to the fore as well giving a greater appreciation of the in-class version of the LBI that is used for training and development purposes. This colleague also gives some insightful examples of the importance of visioning to all five LBI factors and relates it to entrepreneurial, corporate, sports and personal examples that students can readily identify with. Learning Theory/Assessment. The typical classroom visit involves Abstract Conceptualization when talking about the history and elements of the LBI, Active Experimentation when the LBI is utilized outside the classroom where a student's peers may be encouraged to evaluate his or her leadership, Concrete Experience when each student uses the training version of the LBI thus imparting to the student his or her preference for a leadership element vis-à-vis EL development, and Reflective Observation when the peer evaluations or assessments can be compared from the beginning to the end of the semester. In addition, one tool provided by the colleague is an example of how to enhance Care and Recognition by utilizing an index card that specifies what leadership behaviors a person wants to enhance then the person counts both the opportunities to do so each day as well as the number of times the thank you was provided. This can readily be incorporated in the daily journal required of each student.

This, in essence, utilizes all four elements of the Learning Cycle Inventory most effectively and can be readily measured and assessed on a daily basis;

- 2) **Internal-Course Pedagogy & Relationships.** This course requires each student to research an EL vis-à-vis the “text material” required and related principles of transforming from an entrepreneur to an entrepreneurial leader and a venture thru enterprise development. The team-teacher, a highly successful EL, provides the personal example or story of the successfully personal, professional, and enterprise development thru the transition from entrepreneur to EL. This individual is both a visionary and an inspiring (and passionate) leader that has a tremendous conversation with our students while integrating EL principles covered in the text material into a life story. He also provides personal examples in a touching way as well as serves up other ELs from the community that are exemplary models. Learning Theory/Assessment. The “Lessons of EL” clearly personifies an exemplary EL by using all the elements of LSI. He shares EL principles (AC) then discusses how he has experimented with them and in turn used them effectively (AE and CE). Since it has been several years since the sale of his venture (and he his leadership team has bought it back for pennies), he is also able to use RO to enhance his effectiveness and complete the students’ learning cycle. Then he provides his personal mission statement (CE) then finishes the cycle by giving an overview of how he intends to go forward thru his learning process (AC based on RO); and
- 3) **External-Course Pedagogy & Relationships.** The “model” leaders that provide our “Lessons of EL” include entrepreneurs who became CEOs when their venture did not outgrow them as well as some that exited or brought in professional management when they accepted the fact that their venture was outgrowing them, academic entrepreneurial leaders, and entrepreneurial leaders through history such as Sam Walton and Bill Gates. Their selection is typically based on their vision for their organization, their message to our students, their ability to relate a story and related entrepreneurial leadership principles to traditional students, their long-term relationship to the instructor and/or b-school or college, and their reputation for “giving back.” Learning Theory/Assessment. Certainly the role models are a combination of AC as well as CE when they tried new approaches to problem solving or decision making or worked effectively to enhance their leadership abilities to match their entrepreneurial abilities. In addition, some of the ELs gave examples of “just doing it” as that trite saying goes until they got it right but upon learning a new concept or approach (such as SWOT), they discussed how through RO they would have done it differently and are doing same going forward due to a combination of RO and AC. It always seems that the conversation with the class creates an assessment for both the EL presenting as well as students’ assessment of the EL’s vision of greatness as well as how they might rate on the other four LBI factors as well as principles covered in text material.

EMPOWERING THE WE, RELATED PEDAGOGY, AND RELATIONSHIPS

As mentioned previously, this involves behaviors that create a sense of “oneness” among followers and certainly creates a sense of commitment to the EL team and to the vision/mission.

A selected few of the tools and related relationships that are used to create the “We” include the following:

- 1) Internal-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. The use of teams and both self-assessments as well as team process assessments throughout the course. This is a developmental process that involves research and application of principles to entrepreneurs and spokesperson as well as leader and follower roles. The ultimate goal is to create self-managed teams through extensive use of teams, to create an appreciation for the kinds and value of diversity, and to solidify positive and beneficial relationships that carry beyond the classroom and hopefully into a variety of organizational environments where entrepreneurial leadership is valued. Learning Theory/Assessment. These processes involve all elements of the LCI since the chapter theory is discussed (AC), experimented with (AE), provides CE in turn, then we use written or after action reports with feedback that allows for appropriate RO;
- 2) Internal-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. The use of a team-teacher in the classroom also creates a better appreciation of the value of different entrepreneurial leaders and leadership styles with varied experiences that bring different gifts to the table or in this class the classroom. As mentioned previously, these relationships or teaching teams have had high quality, long-term relationships for many years. Learning Theory/Assessment. Both the standard end of course student evaluations and feedback during (thru Socratic approach and through conversations) and following each session and semester with a focus on accountability has provided considerable continuous improvement that inevitably focuses on all elements of the LCI; and
- 3) External-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. There are two entrepreneurial leaders that have more recently added value to the class while the relationships have been extraordinary for such a short time. One is a graduate of the university and became CEO of an Atlanta based firm at 29 years of age. He passionately talks about partnerships with employees, business-to-business relationships or customers, and stockholders and the importance of the “We” in the continuous improvement processes while the other is in the trading business that emphasizes the criticality of selection and on-going relationships with employees and certainly would hope that working for this go-go organization would be both serious as well as have elements of “Fun is Good” (Veeck and Williams). Learning Theory/Assessment. In the first case, the leader goes the extra mile by incorporating concepts of relationships or partnerships (AC), gives examples of the actions taken to insure these are of high quality (both AE and CE) and the degree of success with lessons learned in the process through RO. This also includes the ongoing assessment of the quality of the relationship and action taken to address same. In the latter, the personal history of various ventures as well as employee selection processes initiated while differentiating those that were successful from those that were not are presented in concept (AC) from the book as it would be in a training session while lessons learned

from AE and CE are typically provided in a reflective or RO way. In addition, a discussion always seems to follow on path forward based on an assessment of positive and negative outcomes.

MANAGING ONE'S SELF, RELATED PEDAGOGY & RELATIONSHIPS, LEARNING THEORY/ASSESSMENT

This involves the leader sustaining his or her perseverance, focus and self-discipline and not having a temperament that is like a proverbial yo-yo. Two of the selected tools and relationships that illustrate this leader behavior include the following:

- 1) Internal-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. Certainly the various self-assessments including the LBI, observation and post-conversation discussion of ELs by team teachers, and research and analysis of ELs chosen by individual students as well as teams utilizing principles on entrepreneurial leaders leads to a better understanding of this important behavior. Due to the nature of this course, both fellow students as well as the team-teachers in their ongoing relationships enhance this element. Learning Theory/Assessment. Initially, the self-assessments combine AC, AE, and CE in a personal or applied way. In addition, their ongoing use as they are applied to ELs chosen to come to class (and coached beforehand) and those chosen for the individual and team research projects provide experience (CE) as well as the opportunity for reflection (RO) through assessment and summarizing the principles used or those that should have or could have been used; and
- 2) External-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. The Executive-in-Residence who team teaches this EL class has had careers as both an executive and an entrepreneur. He too has had long-term, high quality relationships through his support of our b-school and his hiring of b-school graduates in his previous role as co-founder and CEO of a private software firm. Through his "Lessons of Leadership" story as he rose through the corporate hierarchy, he discovered that he was "too entrepreneurial" for that global company environment and left the "halls of indifference" in order to be his own person. This, in essence, became a powerful story of transformational and entrepreneurial leadership and can be applied to any kind of leadership course. Learning Theory/Assessment. The concepts embodied in his story can be related to all five elements of the LBI and utilizes all four elements of the LCI as well. Certainly, lessons learned from reflection (RO) is the dominant mode while application to personal mission/vision, inspiration, career plan or development, and change processes are key and assessment is provided within each of these story elements as well as through question and answer.

COMMUNICATION FOR MEANING, RELATED PEDAGOGY & RELATIONSHIPS, LEARNING THEORY/ASSESSMENT

The next to last behavior involves getting across the value or worth and relevance of important ideas, decisions, strategies, etc. Two examples selected to illustrate the tools and relationships follow:

- 1) Internal-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. The leader who is a volunteer team-teacher utilizes the Socratic approach to insure the students listen effectively as well as understand the concepts and how they relate to each and every element or Best Practice in a systematic way. In addition, the faculty instructor uses the echo communication technique to insure students understand both course requirements as well as underlying expectations, and the EL principles embodied in both live cases as well as current events involving ELs. Learning Theory/Assessment. In the former, a Socratic approach is used not only to insure all elements of LCI are utilized but also to enhance assessment of critical thinking while the echo technique is used for similar purposes to insure learning thru use of effective listening; and
- 2) External-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. Selected students who previously have graduated are asked to return to the class to share how they have utilized the LBI and EL knowledge, skills, and abilities to their entrepreneurial ventures. In order to do this properly, a lunch or breakfast meeting to discuss key principles is undertaken with each EL or entrepreneur who is in the process of (hopefully) transforming him/herself to an EL. Inevitably, they create a sense of value added to current students. The stories from these graduates selected are excellent, ongoing, and inspirational and they become a defacto assessment in themselves. Learning Theory/Assessment. When coached properly, the graduates provide wonderful examples of all elements of both the LBI and in such a way that they provide snippets utilizing AC, AE, CE, and RO through EL Lessons Learned.

CARE AND RECOGNITION, RELATED PEDAGOGY & RELATIONSHIPS, LEARNING THEORY/ASSESSMENT

The last behavior involves the recognition as well as genuine concern and gratitude for peoples' hard work and effort. In some cases, a thank you is an example of what there is never enough of. Examples include:

- 1) Internal-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. Two short examples of this include the dedication of the course to an EL with the weaving of his/her contributions to leadership throughout the semester. The other is to insure insightful questions, a verbal thank you, a gift when appropriate, and applause for each speaker is provided by the class with a follow-on thank you note by the instructor. Learning Theory/Assessment. Obviously in this case, this LBI element is incorporated in both theory and practice while AC and CE are emphasized. A speaker assessment instrument is utilized at semester's end; this exemplifies RO; and
- 2) External-Course Pedagogy & Relationships. Since each speaker is asked to incorporate how she or he "Gives Back" to the community as well as provides

recognition to stakeholders, this is clearly visible. Learning Theory/Assessment. This is assessed for all leaders in class discussions as well as in examinations utilizing all five elements of LBI and all four of LCI.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the importance of partnership and relationship marketing was expressed clearly in the Upton report. In the interview at Baylor University, center director Donald Sexton offered the following suggestion (Rudd and Clarkin):

“...work hard to make everyone understand what you are doing and how it benefits not only the institution as a whole but how it can benefit the various stakeholders. It makes a lot more work but it is important in the long run. The worst thing to become is either prima donna or an island of your own” (p. 76) (Upton, 1997).”

Another testimony of the importance of relationship marketing comes from a recent article:

“I’ve come to believe that the strongest businesses are relationship-based, not transaction based. We work to develop relationships with our customers to build loyalty and lifetime value. It’s the same with the B2B deals we strike: Long-term relationships in which both sides benefit and profit trump short-term, transactional plays when it comes to the investment they require and the dividends they pay.” (Kiyosaki)

The authors of this paper have attempted to utilize this framework to share some of the relationship marketing elements that are critical success factors in the design, development and implementation of an innovative entrepreneurial leadership course that focuses on transformational leadership utilizing the LBI while at the same time discussing the connection between pedagogy and learning theory/assessment using the Learning Cycle Inventory or LCI with specific examples or illustrations of key relationships.

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Figure 1
Throckmorton's Entrepreneurship and Leadership Curve

