WORKING FOR THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW: AN EVALUATION OF THE EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM AT BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

An Honors Thesis
HONORS 499
by
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Purpose of Thesis

This thesis is an evaluation of the Emerging Leaders program at Ball State University. Several different evaluations are included in the paper, as well as an analysis of the evaluations. Also included is a discussion about the structure and purpose of the program. The program is intended to help and encourage students to develop their leadership abilities. This thesis was written the first year the program was initiated.
I. INTRODUCTION

Dwight D. Eisenhower said that leadership is "the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it." (1, pg. 15). Odysseus, a character from Homer's Iliad, said that leadership must consist of "shrewdness and cunning" (2, pg. 15). Webster's College Edition dictionary defines leadership as "the ability to lead" (6, pg. 831). From the diversity of these definitions, it is obvious that leadership is a complex and sophisticated concept. It is also apparent that the term "leadership" connotes different meanings to different people. Individual traits, interaction patterns, behaviors, influence over others, role relationships, and perceptions of others are all parts of one's leadership (5, pg. 2).

The study of leadership is an ancient art. Discussions on the subject can be found in the writings of Pluto, Caesar, and Egyptian kings. So, it is really no surprise that scholars today are still intrigued by this intricate phenomenon that is called leadership.

It has been debated for centuries as to whether leadership is a characteristic one is born with, or whether it is a trait that can be learned. "Leaders are born, not made" is often stated by advocates of the former theory. However, even those who claim that leadership is something one can only inherit, still believe that one's leadership skills can and often need to be developed. The number of leadership traits that clearly distinguish leaders from non-
leaders is very small (3, pg. 139). Also, the positive correlation of behaviors of leaders to non-leaders is not "earth-shattering" (4, pg. 283). In one situation a leader with certain traits could be very effective, yet completely ineffective in a different situation (5, pg. 68). It is this belief that has led to the creation of many types of leadership development programs all over the United States. One such program has been developed at Ball State University. The program was created under the direction of Ms. Kay Bales, Director of Student Activities at Ball State and is entitled the "Emerging Leaders" program. It is this program that is the focus of this thesis and previous evaluation. The importance of the program to Ball State and its students shall be discussed as well as an evaluation of the program by its participants.

The Emerging Leaders program was developed in the fall of 1991 by a committee comprised of faculty, staff and students. Students apply to the program at the beginning of their freshman year. The program consists of four different phases (one for each year of a student's undergraduate career). During the first year participants attend a one day retreat. They may also choose from several workshops to attend throughout the year. Participants work with two mentors throughout their first year. One mentor is a student who is experienced in leadership activities and the other mentor is a faculty or staff member. Students also keep journals dealing with their experiences in the program.
Participation in the second year focuses mainly on group leadership skills. By this time, students are expected to be a member of one student organization. Attending seminars on various topics and working on a group project are also part of the second year activities. Students in the third year will work on learning to apply the skills they have learned. Serving as mentors, coordinating workshops, and serving the community through service are a few of the activities students can expect to participate in during the third year. The "final phase" of the program, or fourth year, will help students apply what they have learned from being student leaders to community and career expectations.

The original goals of the program are as follows:

1. Provide students with a vision of how involvement in campus organizations and governance prepares for citizenship after college.

2. Create an opportunity for individuals to learn skills and ethics needed to help groups progress and achieve goals.

3. Develop a curriculum that would prepare students for leadership at Ball State University.

4. Implement a reward system that would recognize the achievement of the individual participants.

(Obtained from the original Emerging Leaders proposal.)

The first "class" of students was accepted into the program in September 1992. Thirty-two freshman were originally
accepted into the program. In January 1993, it was decided that an evaluation of the program needed to be performed in order to assess whether the needs of the students were being met and to make adjustments or changes to the second phase (year two) of the program if necessary.

In March 1993, participants in the program were asked to meet and perform a written evaluation. A copy of the evaluation, as well as the results of the evaluation are shown on pages 8-16. In addition to the evaluation done by the participants, the Emerging Leaders committee and mentors also met and discussed the program and those results are included as well.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was created in order to assess all aspects of the program, including the mentor program. The evaluation questions were obtained from suggestions from the Emerging Leaders committee.

Students met with the author for approximately one hour. The evaluation and its purpose were explained. It was stressed that the evaluation material would be kept confidential and names would not be attached to specific remarks. Honesty and specificity in filling out the evaluation were also emphasized. It was also explained that the evaluation would not only assist the Emerging Leaders program, but would also be included in a thesis for the author.
III. RESULTS OF THE EVALUATIONS

The results of the author's evaluation are attached and are pages 8-16. The results of the mentor's evaluation are as follows:

1. Mentors say that they made the effort to meet with students, although there was not a lot of response from the students.

2. Make the small groups begin earlier in the Fall semester. Invite the mentors to the retreat and match the groups up at that time.

3. Make the workshops and small groups more interactive.

4. Assign small groups specific tasks throughout the year.

5. Need to apply more of what the participants learned.

6. Have set times/places to meet each time.

7. Have the small groups pair up with each other and meet two or three times a semester to create more participation.

8. Develop a resource list of all materials available in the Student Activities office and send to mentors.

9. Have more social events in order for students to get to know each other better.

10. Students need other students as mentors.

The results of the committee's evaluation are as follows:

1. Application process needs to be improved.

2. Recruitment needs to begin earlier, like at summer orientation.

3. Have more programs at the beginning in order for group
members to get to know one another.

4. Start the mentor groups earlier.

5. Have a service project each semester.

6. Have more "hands-on" experiences for the participants.

7. Include a discussion on traditions at Ball State.

8. Have each participant bring a student who is interested in learning about the program.

9. Since almost all of the first year participants live in the residence halls, have different residence halls sponsor programs in order to allow a more active role for the participants and to vary the site of the programs.
EMERGING LEADERS EVALUATION
Spring Semester 1993

1. When you applied to become a participant of the Emerging Leaders program, what did you think the program would entail? In other words, what did you expect to be doing in the program?

2. Now that you have been an active participant in the program for six months, has the program lived up to what you thought it would be? Explain.

3. What are some aspects of the program you would change? What were some of the most positive aspects?

4. List any ideas you think would make the program more successful or that would make the program meet your needs or expectations more successfully.

5. How has the program helped you develop as a leader?

6. How do you feel about the "small group" environment? Your mentor(s)?

7. What type of time commitment do you feel the program should be able to expect from you (i.e. once a week, every two weeks, etc.)?

8. Would you like to have more social events in order to be able to know more people in the program? Would you participate? BE HONEST!

9. Would it have been helpful to have each of the workshops occur on the same night of the week (i.e. first Tuesday of month at 7:00)?

10. PLEASE give any other comments or ideas that you feel are relevant to the program. These can be positive or negative.
EMERGING LEADERS EVALUATION
Spring Semester 1993

1. When you applied to become a participant of the Emerging Leaders program, what did you think the program would entail? In other words, what did you expect to be doing in the program?

- I expected some program that would be based on developing leadership skills, but I also expected to be doing more "hands on" things rather than just workshops and lectures.

- I expected programming similar to what has been done.

- The application and information following was very specific as to the requirements and expectations of the program. I expected to learn a great deal about myself and how to become a better leader in today's society while working and learning about my peers.

- I expected to have more hands on experience in leadership. I hoped to have more contact with campus leaders - to be able to tap their minds for information.

- Learning more about how to be a leader.

- First, I thought the program would be better organized and more structured than it was. This fact did not bother me once I found out this was the first year. I did think we would be doing more things together. I have enjoyed the meetings; however, I want more than meetings from this organization. I had hoped we would do a service project. I also have been disappointed with the mentor project so far. I would rather break into small to talk and get to know each other.

- Basically what we are doing.

- I expected to attend meetings which would help me become a better leader. I also expected to be involved in a group projects and working with some of BSU's faculty.

2. Now that you have been an active participant in the program for six months, has the program lived up to what you thought it would be? Explain.

- No. I expected a planned, intense program that would gradually be built upon, starting with basics then growing into something that would enable us to "emerge" as leaders.
- No, there has been a great lack of organization, and I have been very disappointed in how some things have been handled.

- Yes. The program has been a very interesting challenge. We were always given a very formal schedule about upcoming meetings. I had many expectations also from the program and the group itself. I feel that the leaders (Amy and Kay) were always living up to their expectations, but I wish that the group had done more.

- No. Although I have found the workshops to be beneficial, it hasn't carried the intense training that I had hoped for.

- Yes, it was really great.

- Yes and no. I would say yes because I have met great people and the workshops have been helpful. I would say no because I feel we should have been more effective and used the leadership talent more effectively.

- Yes and no. I myself have learned a great deal but others in the group have not gone to any (maybe two) meetings and still will get recognition for being in EL. Not fair.

- Yes it has. I have attended the meetings and have found them rather educational.

- Yes, in some ways. The workshops are somewhat interesting, but we really don't share ideas with each other.

3. What are some aspects of the program you would change? What were some of the most positive aspects?

- I would change the structure of our meetings. Just seeing these people once in a while in workshops isn't enough.

- Some of the lectures were very beneficial, although some topics were repeated. In the lectures/workshops I feel that there needs to be more interaction with our skills, such as working on case scenarios.

- I had hoped that we could be more involved in the programming of our events.

- The retreat at the very beginning of the program was very impressive! It was a great way to get everyone acquainted and off to a great start. I think that a few more "rewards" need to be given as a part of the program. Some students were afraid of joining the program because they weren't sure how the program would benefit them. Possibly after this year, we can talk to next year's new members or prospects.
and show them how the program helped us to get involved on campus and in other beneficial leadership roles.

- I would definitely improve communications. I would also provide for more diversified programs—trips, big name speakers, etc.
- I liked the speakers and all material was relevant.
- I would make sure the members got to know each other better, much sooner in the year. That would make things a lot easier. I would leave the selection of the workshops the same.
- I would make sure that everyone is informed about the meetings in advance (some times I got the letters too late).
- I would leave the meetings/lectures the same. The way the staff communicates needs working on though.

4. List any ideas you think would make the program more successful or that would make the program meet your needs or expectations more successfully.

- Hands on interaction. Put us in a situation that deals with multiculturalism, for example, and have us work it out. Give us a chance to be leaders.
- I think that this program needs to be much more organized. I have felt very uninformed many different times, i.e. finding out that others have received phone calls or letters that I haven't.
- I thought that the program would have been more successful if there hadn't been so many schedules conflicts. I realize that this is mostly unavoidable.
- I don't.
- I wish we could do some sort of hands on projects. I don't have specifics but I think people get really sick of just attending meetings, no matter how motivated they are. I would be partial to a service project.
- Let the freshmen get more involved. After a while, you get tired of hearing speakers. Projects to let us prove our talents and gain recognition as active members.
- It's good for the first year.
- I think we should meet on a more regular basis and do activities and break into discussion groups.
5. How has the program helped you develop as a leader?

- About the only thing the program has done for me is opening my eyes to a variety of topics; however, many of these things I already knew pretty much about.

- I have been asked to think about things differently than I have before, which has been very helpful in "learning" to be a leader.

- I have gained more self-confidence in myself. It led me to other groups on campus. It really showed me that I could make a difference on this campus. Being a freshman can be very intimidating. This program helped me by way of networking to other groups.

- It has given me some insight as to how some situations should be handled. It has also allowed me to use this program for contacts.

- Multiculturalism: learning about other races and points of view.

- I have gained confidence here. I feel it enabled us to go at our own pace and learn info as the year progressed.

- It has taught me basic fundamentals needed to be an effective leader.

- It has helped me see myself as a person and what type of person that I am. That is very important in being a leader.

- It's helped me establish some contact with other people from other organizations.

6. How do you feel about the "small group" environment? Your mentor(s)?

- It would be great if we did more with them. This would be a good place to be put into situations. The one time I met with my mentors, there were two mentors and two participants. In that session we only did things that we had done in previous workshops.

- I have received only two letters. One said that there was information enclosed about who my mentors were and it really wasn't enclosed, and one which had information about us
getting together for lunch as a group, which I wasn't able to attend.

- Well, I was sick unfortunately at our first meeting, so I was unable to attend. I don't believe that my group has met since then, though. I have heard many things that other groups are doing, and it sounds very exciting.

- I have yet to meet with my small group.

- I haven't met in my small group.

- I like the idea of a small group project. That would enable greater interaction. I have been disappointed because we have met only once. I hope it improves.

- I like the small group, but feel we should do large groups also.

- I have not met with my group yet. I'm worried about how this aspect of the program will unfold.

- I liked it, but we have only met once. I wish there was more consistency. I wish we would discuss leadership issues; thus far, we have only talked about ourselves.

7. What type of time commitment do you feel the program should be able to expect from you (i.e. once a week, every two weeks, etc.)?

- Definitely once a week. We are getting Exped credit for this although we get no credit hours. I feel there should be a significant commitment for what we should be receiving.

- Every two weeks would be very reasonable and I would feel more involved. However, due to class schedules, not everyone would be able to do this.

- I think that the program would probably have better results if it met only every two weeks because so many of us have gotten involved in other activities.

- Once a week. But make sure I know when and where.

- Every two or three weeks.

- Every two weeks.

- I think the ideal organization would be once a week. We should have people who are motivated and enthusiastic, who want to attend. The problem with having all leaders is that we are so busy with other organizations on campus. Maybe people should be weeded out during the selection process.
- Every 2 weeks.
- Once a week provided something productive gets done.

8. Would you like to have more social events in order to be able to know more people in the program? Would you participate? BE HONEST!

- Yes, yes. Out of all of the participants, I may know five or six by name and four of those live in my residence hall.
- I probably would not try as hard to make time in my schedule for social events as I would other programming.
- Yes. I personally am interested in getting to know other people, so it would certainly be something that I would enjoy. I don't think that it would also be a bad idea to have more activities which would help us to be recognized more on campus.
- Yes - have weekly meetings at Greek's. This would be in addition to our workshops.
- Yes, I would participate.
- Absolutely! I think this would have been beneficial early on. This would also help all of us network together for help. We have members from almost every hall on campus. This would help tremendously.
- Yes!!! I believe if we had that, friendship bonds would form and increase attendance.
- Yes. I believe that you can't work with people you don't know. And I would attend if I had not prior engagements.
- Yes. No question about it. I want to get to know these people.

9. Would it have been helpful to have each of the workshops occur on the same night of the week (i.e. first Tuesday of month at 7:00)?

- I did not have much of a problem with scheduling. Having a set time and day would enable people to schedule around it, for the most part.
- No, in fact I was very disappointed to find last semester that a majority of the programs were on a Thursday night because I had class on Thursday at 7:00. One of the few meetings that was on a Wednesday, after I spent 25 minutes of my time walking there was cancelled, because only two of us showed up. When I got there, there was no one at the room letting me know that it was cancelled. So, I spent
another 15 minutes wandering the halls of the Student Center only to end up in the same place to have the person who was the head of the program come walking down the hall on her way to leave at which time she let me know what had happened and that I could come the next day which I couldn't because I had class. I guess my point is by the time I got back to my room, I had wasted an hour of my time. I don't feel that programming should be cancelled with that short of notice. And if it is, a note should be left.

- Certainly. This was we could schedule our night classes on other nights, and have other activities planned at other times. Plus, it would be much easier to remember when the meetings are, and they wouldn't have to waste time reminding us all the time.

- YES!!!

- It doesn't matter to me. If I can't attend a meeting then I won't.

- This would help to some extent. This way we could plan around that time. With the number of people we have it would be difficult ot get a "good" time for everyone.

- No, because other events might conflict with the date. I'm fine if given a list of dates.

- No. Some people have night classes and are unable to attend on some nights.

- No. I think having the nights vary is good.

10. PLEASE give any other comments or ideas that you feel are relevant to the program. These can be positive or negative.

- There seemed to be many things that fell through or have not been very successful, i.e. the journal, mentors. There also seemed to be a lack of a goal for the program, exactly what was to be accomplished. The initial Saturday workshop was GREAT! I wish there could have been more things like that. As I said before, I think that there should be more opportunities for us to use the skills that we are learning. The knowledge we possess is nothing without experience to go along with it!!

- More care should be taken in making sure that the dates on the programming schedule are accurate. At least twice they have been wrong. Also, as far as programming goes, it would be helpful if campus wide events were taken into consideration. We had a program on the same night Atallah Shabaz came to speak. I have enjoyed this program and plan to be involved again next year. There are some changes that
need to be made however. Maybe we, as future leaders, could help with the changes.

- Firstly, I would like to thank Kay and Amy on doing an excellent job. They have been very inspiring. Not only have they helped directly with this program, but they have also help many of us with our other campus programs.

  Secondly, I think that part of the second semester could focus some on becoming an experienced leader. For example, some members of the groups should have to plan and conduct a meeting. They can be creative, educational and fun! Plus, I think that EL is a program which could challenge other organizations on campus to be better leaders and to help BSU become a premiere university for campus unity and leadership excellence. I believe in this program. I think that it will survive. Most new programs and organizations take some time to become recognized and to build up group population. For example, we could talk to some of next year's freshmen during Fall Welcome Week, explaining the program and how it helped us on campus our first year.

- I cannot stress communication enough. I also feel that participants should plan our activities.

- I really can't because it was all beneficial to be honest.

- Overall, I have enjoyed the program. This has been mainly because I've met some great people. Amy and Kay both do a great job. Amy is especially nice and very understanding. I enjoy her input. I also feel that as we go on in the process, a greater time commitment should be required. This would help to elevate the organization to a better and more effective level.

- The essay to get into EL was a good idea, but I was mad to find out no one was refused, because it sounded like an elite special group. Don't get me wrong - I'm glad they wanted to join - but I think if it was a special group with more restrictions and rules enforced, it would be better. People should not be allowed to stay if they don't follow the rules. I think many members have joined EL just for the recognition, just because it looks good. I don't think this is fair.

- If it is possible, let people know of cancellations or postponements before the meeting, not after.

- I think that there should be some sort of consequence for not attending events. Some people come to everything, others go to nothing, and it doesn't make a difference. I think that is wrong.
Responses from the students were generally very positive. Most students indicated that they believed the program had improved or enhanced their leadership skills. Some students indicated preference for more in-depth presentations. A few students felt that more time should have been permitted during the workshops in order to encourage discussion and participation. Only two students stated that the topics could not be easily related to their specific situations.

Many of the results of the committee evaluation and the student evaluations were similar or the same. Both wanted to meet earlier and more with the mentor groups. It seems that the students are very interested in being active with the mentors, but there needs to be some definite structure to the meetings. Perhaps pre-arranged times and places would be helpful. Also, some participants expressed concern that some workshops were cancelled without prior notice. A definite schedule needs to be set prior to the retreat and handed out there so that students will know exactly what is occurring at what time. Students want more experiential activities to in which to participate. Both groups agree that there needs to be more of a "planning" role for the students; they need to be more active in order to stay interested.

All in all the students were pleased with the program. They believe that Emerging Leaders is a very worthwhile and prestigious program in which to be involved.
IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY


