

SERVICE

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Service is the rent that you pay for room on this earth.

-Shirley Chisholm

March

Servant Leadership Key Concepts

For most of us, whenever we think of a leader, we think of the person that stands up in front of the room, the one that takes charge and is in clear control of the situation. Although these people are exhibiting behaviors of a leader, these are only but a few of the examples of leadership.

Consider the person that sits in the audience. They sit patiently, listening to what the person in the front of the room has to say. However, when given the chance to ask a question or make a comment, they say something so simple yet so profound that everyone turns their head to listen. Is this person not just as much a leader as the speaker at the front of the room?

Or think of sports team. Think of the team member that is always giving 110%, never misses a practice, never complains about what is asked of him, that works his tail off for the team and pitches in where he sees someone needs help. Is this person not just as much a leader as the coach?

Leaders are everywhere. In front of us, leading us on to victory. Beside us, supporting us in tough times. Behind us, pushing us, motivating us to be more than we thought we could be. They are friends, family, co-workers, neighbors, some are people we don't even know. But they impact the lives of others by giving of themselves. They volunteer to do jobs no one else will do. They do things when no one else has the time to do them.

The focus of this section is to help students understand, everyone can be a leader. Leadership is more a matter of perspective than geographic location. Through volunteer service, they can make a difference in our communities and in our schools.

Servant Leadership Activity 1

Who Makes a Difference?

Materials Needed: Paper, pencil.

Total Time Required: 15 minutes

Group Size: Entire class

Instructions:

Let's take a little quiz:

1. Name the 5 people with the most money in the world.
2. Name the last 5 Super Bowl winners.
3. Name the last 5 World Series winners.
4. Name 5 US senators.

How did you do?

Not many people would do very well.

Let's try again:

1. List a few teachers who have helped you in school.
2. Name three friends who have helped you during a tough time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Who has made you feel special?
5. Who do you like to spend time with?
6. Name some heroes who have inspired you.

DEBRIEF:

Was this easier?

The lesson? The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones that care.

Tell them thank you!

Servant Leadership Activity 2 Living Examples

Materials Needed: Colorful index cards, pencils

Total Time Required: Ongoing

Instructions:

Our goal is to become servant leaders. To do this, we must

- know what servant leadership is
- identify servant leadership in others
- make it a part of our own behavior and life

Servant leaders

- put others before themselves
- help to change things for the better
- try to understand others
- try to see the best in everyone
- listen
- include everyone
- try to create a community
- dream great dreams

Look for acts of servant leadership at home, in school, at Wal-Mart, etc.

Write them down on your card.

Don't wait for major acts only—look for the little things that people do to help a group, help to include others, and to serve others. For example, the student who introduced the “new kid” to friends, the brother who shared the last cookie, the person who made sure the same person wasn't last again in choosing sides for the game, etc.

After the designated period of time (maybe even at the beginning of every session), sit in a circle, and share some of the acts they have observed. This should be spontaneous-don't call on everyone.

Challenge them to remember putting others first as a way of life.

Servant Leadership Activity 3

Create a Leader

Materials Needed: Flip chart or dry board to record ideas, marker, paper and pencil for each group

Total Time Required: 20-25 minutes

Group Size: Class will work in groups of 5-6.

Instructions:

Have students discuss the following characteristics of a servant leader. They should talk about why these qualities are important, if any are more important than others (prioritize if they wish), and then “create a great leader” based on their discussion. They can give examples of famous people or people in their lives who have these qualities. They can share with the larger group why they feel these examples are true servant leaders.

Characteristics of a Servant Leader

- *Puts the group or organization before the needs of self
- *Listening
- *Empathy (putting themselves in someone else’s shoes)
- *Healing (trying to make things better in the group)
- *Awareness (knowing what is needed by others)
- *Persuasion (use skill to bring others to agreement on what is best)
- *Vision (what is the long term goal for the group)
- *Stewardship (being ethical to keep trust of the group to be able to pass on knowledge, resources, etc.)
- *Commitment to growth of others (empowerment—helping others to grow by not keeping information, etc.)
- *Building community

Debrief:

Why is servant leadership important?

Who can be a servant leader?

What are some of the characteristics that you thought were most important?

What are some examples of these characteristics? (i.e. Building community, working with different people in different groups to do something for the community as a whole, such as United Way, or volunteering with Big Brothers Big Sisters, etc)