

Leadership Qualities Inventory Synopsis

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The strength that I currently possess that can be utilized immediately in a leadership position that jumped out at me right away was humor. I am able to make people feel comfortable through the use of humor, and I can utilize sarcasm appropriately to connect with both students and staff. I also carry the strength of relaxation. This does not mean I'm lazy; rather, I understand that it is important to know yourself well enough to know when you need a break in order to avoid burn-out. An administrator I respect very much has always said, "Family first." My first year teaching my dad had a massive stroke. Being a first year teacher I was worried about making sure everything in my classroom was as perfect as I could make it, and was still establishing myself as a professional. My principal at the time came up to me after he had heard through the grapevine what happened to my dad and told me, "First of all, you should have come to me and told me. Don't ever be scared to come to my office to talk to me, that's what I'm here for. Second, go home. You need to be with your family and relax and do what you need to do." I had about 50 different excuses as to why I couldn't just up and leave in the middle of the day without making lesson plans, and I also didn't know how long I would be gone. But again, my principal reassured me that everything would be ok and taken care of, not to worry about school, just focus on myself. This was the biggest lesson I have learned thus far in my teaching career. And while I'm not happy it happened, I'm happy it happened early in my career and that I learned the importance of relaxation early on.

Out of the strategies we discussed in class, I am "perfecting" quite a few of them, but two that jump out at me are foresight and communication. Foresight involves having the next steps already mapped out and ready to go. I try my hardest each and every day to do this, but in education the day can change in the matter of seconds. As a leader, one needs to be able to see the whole picture and make plans for years down the road and see the roadmap for the future. I have trouble seeing this future roadmap right now – I know that it is important and that it should be there, but I need to sharpen my skills with foreseeing what an entire school will need. The second strategy I am

perfecting is communication. Believe it or not, I tend to be a bit on the shy side and have a hard time putting my feelings and opinions into words. If I am upset about something I will clam up rather talk it out and discuss the different viewpoints and solutions to the problem. In order to make these two strategies strengths, I need to become more self-aware and self-criticizing when I react to situations that make me act the way I do. With foresight, I would model my vision design after a trusted and veteran administrator that has found a way to envision the future for the school. Why reinvent the wheel if someone has found a way that already works? Additionally, in order to improve my communication I will make sure to be open with staff and students from the start, and inform them that the feeling is mutual; I want them to be able to come to me just like my old principal did my first year teaching.

Finally, one strategy that I marked as “developing” is networking. “It’s not *what* you know, but *who* you know,” is a very popular phrase within the education world. Unfortunately, I don’t know many people in “high places,” and it’s something that I need to work on. I just haven’t had enough exposure or opportunities to make connections and network because I have been so focused on what goes on inside of my classroom. Now that I am in graduate school, I can tap into my professors as networking resources, and I can create positive relationships with my administrators in my building. Chances are that my administrators are friends with or former colleagues of other administrators in different districts. I also need to be more open and talkative at conferences I attend. There are people from all over the state that attend these conferences and have access to all kinds of resources that I might be able to use. Finally, I need to keep my ears open wherever I go. You never know when you might run into someone at an airport or a restaurant that has connections to someone who may help you advance in your career in the future.

No administrator in a school is has perfected all of the strategies that we have discussed in class, but it is helpful to identify these strategies in order to self-reflect. Everyone has traits about them that they can improve, and learning never stops. As administrators, we should take advantage

of every opportunity that comes our way in order to improve ourselves, and keep an open mind in order to continue learning.