LDR 807-12: Leader Development: Transforming Self-Concept

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Professor

Dr. Curtis McClane

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Weekend Residency: Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited

sources) during the week of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage

with other students during the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL.

 b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade

assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

**Leader Development: Weaving Together Leadership and Adult Development Theories**

The journey of leadership development is a rich and intricate tapestry, shaped by the myriad theories of adult development. In "Leadership and Adult Development Theories: Overviews and Overlaps," Allen and Wergin (2009) illuminate the confluence of these realms, asserting that the essence of leadership cannot be grasped or nurtured without a lens on adult growth. Their exploration reveals how adult development theories infuse leadership development with profound insights into the ways individuals evolve, adapt, and hone their abilities through the passage of time.

Adult development theories celebrate the ongoing psychological, cognitive, and moral evolution of individuals across their lifespans. Allen and Wergin (2009) emphasize that as adults advance in years, they cultivate heightened cognitive complexity, self-awareness, and emotional regulation—crucial traits for effective leadership. These advancements resonate harmoniously with transformative leadership models, which champion personal growth, visionary thinking, and the capacity to inspire and uplift others. As individuals traverse the stages of adult development, they become increasingly adept at managing the complexities of leadership roles, which often demand the navigation of uncertainty, the fostering of collaboration, and the promotion of positive organizational change.

A pivotal intersection between adult development and leadership lies in the notion of self-authorship. This concept, as articulated in Kegan’s (1982) developmental framework, embodies an individual’s capacity to derive meaning from experiences autonomously, transitioning from external validation to internal comprehension. Such a developmental journey empowers leaders to craft a personal vision and make decisions that resonate with their core values, rather than merely responding to outside influences. Leaders who attain this level of self-awareness can cultivate organizational cultures that are rich in significance and aligned with shared values.

In conclusion, the integration of adult development theories into leadership development paradigms enriches our comprehension of the pathways through which leaders evolve and mature. This holistic approach fosters a deeper understanding of psychological growth and maturity, laying the groundwork for leadership that is more adaptive, reflective, and impactful.

WORKS CITED

Allen, S. J., & Wergin, J. F. (2009). Leadership and adult development theories: Overviews and overlaps. *Kravis Leadership Institute, Leadership Review*, *9*(Winter), 3-19.

Kegan, R. (1982). *The evolving self: Problem and process in human development*. Harvard University Press.