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

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Omega Graduate School

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Professor

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Assignment

### *Developmental Readings*

Review Assignment #3, the course essential elements, assigned readings, and recommended readings to identify selections of books and scholarly articles to identify and select developmental reading sources and entries.

* Refer to the “[Student Guide to Developmental Readings](https://drive.google.com/file/d/161V_FaYR2BnNGCSFUlWPjUSIQzcH04Hq/view?usp=share_link)” for updated information on sample comments, rubrics, and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:** McLeod, J. D., & Sullivan, L. T. (2020). Self-concept clarity and leadership success: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 27*(1), 55-67. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051819890998>

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Sullivan and McLeod (2020) define self-concept clarity as the extent to which individuals have a clear and consistent sense of who they are. Research has shown that leaders with high self-concept clarity are more effective in decision-making, demonstrating consistency and confidence in their leadership roles. These leaders are better equipped to manage stress, maintain clarity during crises, and inspire trust in their followers. Conversely, those with low self-concept clarity may struggle with decision-making and leadership consistency. (p.63)

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element self-concept.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** A variant perspective may suggest that self-concept clarity could be overemphasized, leading to rigidity in leadership. Leaders who are overly focused on maintaining a consistent self-concept might become resistant to feedback or stuck in outdated models, failing to adapt to new challenges. While self-concept clarity is important, leaders must also remain open to growth and be flexible in response to feedback and evolving circumstances.

**Contextualization:** In my leadership, this variant view has encouraged me to stay flexible and responsive to God's guidance. As a leader, I should be grounded in my identity in Christ but also open to evolving in various contexts. I want to avoid self-concept rigidity, as God may periodically require changes in approach within my leadership style, without sacrificing my leadership identity. Flexibility in my leadership ensures I remain adaptive, always willing to learn and grow, yet still in alignment with God’s will for maximal effectiveness.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Sullivan and McLeod (2020) also discuss self-concept fluidity, which refers to the extent to which an individual’s sense of self is adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances. Leaders with high self-concept fluidity can adjust their self-perception in response to the latest information, challenges, and external feedback, which enhances their capacity for personal growth and leadership effectiveness. This fluidity is a key aspect of the dynamics of ever-changing leadership development and success. (p.60)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element self-concept.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** While the fluidity of self-concept is emphasized in this quote, a variant understanding shows that too much focus on change and adaptability could result in a **lack of stability** in leadership. Leaders who are constantly shifting their self-concept may appear indecisive or unreliable to their followers. A leader’s ability to adapt should be well-**balanced** with stable **core values** and **integrity**.

**Contextualization:** As a church leader, I have always attempted to balance openness to growth with rootedness in biblical principles. While I learned to adapt and grow, I did not always do so in ways that were consistent with my faith in God’s word. As I began to model personal changes, I remained grounded in the truth of the gospel and my calling in Christ. Thus, my leadership remained effective, relevant, yet grounded in God’s unchanging truth, while still being open to feedback and development.

**Source Two:** Scarfone, P. J., & Harper, T. R. (2021). Stage theories in leadership development: A review of applications in contemporary organizational contexts. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 42*(4), 467-482. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2556>

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Scarfone and Harper (2021) show that stage theories have long been applied in leadership development to help organizations assess the growth of leaders over time. These theories are based on the premise that leadership abilities evolve through distinct stages, with each stage representing various levels of skill and awareness. Integrating stage theories into leadership programs can enhance leadership development efforts for the long-term. As leaders progress through these stages, they learn to manage more complex challenges and build deeper relationships with their teams. (p. 470)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element developmental stage theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This quote is additive to my understanding of the importance of stage theories in leadership development, emphasizing that leadership evolves through distinct developmental phases. As leaders progress through these stages, they are equipped to oversee increasingly complex challenges. Stage theories offer a framework to place an established structure in long-term leadership development.

**Contextualization:** Just as Jesus developed in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people, I am also called to grow in wisdom, emotional maturity, and moral integrity as I progress in leadership. The stages of development in Christian leadership should be viewed as part of my ongoing sanctification process, where I grow more capable of serving others. Stage theories can guide Christian leaders to recognize that they must develop not only spiritually, but also intellectually, morally, and emotionally.

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase**: Scarfone and Harper (2021) suggest that leadership development progresses through distinct phases, each with specific challenges and developmental tasks that must be completed before advancing to the next stage. These theories highlight that as leaders mature, they move from simple, tactical approaches to more strategic, complex decision-making processes. When leaders can integrate the lessons from earlier stages into their leadership approach, they adapt to the increasing demands of an organization.(p.480)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element developmental stage theory.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** A variant understanding of this quote can show that hyper-focus on stages could be limiting, as it may imply that leadership is a strictly linear process and fails to account for the individual variability in how leaders grow. Some leaders may experience leaps or setbacks, and their growth may not always follow a pre-defined pattern. Overemphasizing stages could restrict the development of leaders by encouraging them to fit into rigid categories rather than dynamic non-linear growth.

**Contextualization:** This has been an area of difficulty in my leadership. This variant perspective has called for uncomfortable flexibility, and I recognize that my spiritual growth and leadership development will not always fit so neatly into these theoretical stages. Christian leaders should be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, which may guide individuals along different paths and at different paces. While stage theories are useful, God’s plan for growth is very uniquely tailored, which is how I became a student at Omega Graduate School.

**Source 3:** Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. W.H. Freeman and Company.

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Bandura (1997) states that self-efficacy is the belief in one’s ability to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. These judgments of capability are influenced by personal accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states. The greater the belief in one's self-efficacy, the greater the effort expended, and the more persistent one becomes in the face of challenges. This belief also influences the goals that individuals set for themselves, and the persistence demonstrated toward achieving them. A high level of self-efficacy is associated with a greater likelihood of success, as individuals will persist longer and put forth more effort toward goal accomplishment. (chap. 3)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element self-efficacy.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Bandura’s quote is additive to my understanding as it outlines the relationship between self-efficacy and perseverance. The key insight here is that the higher an individual's belief in their abilities, the more effort they will expend and the longer they will persist through adversity. This reinforces the belief in self-efficacy as a driver for success, motivation, and achievement of goals.

**Contextualization**: My self-efficacy is rooted in my dependency on God. This belief has helped me to remain focused and persistent, even when the tasks of managing people are difficult. As I study self-efficacy, I am realizing that I have often been overconfident and self-reliant. I have often overestimated my abilities which led to risk-taking behavior without consideration for external factors or seeking necessary help. This is problematic if my self-efficacy is rooted in myself and not God.

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Bandura (1997) shows us that low self-efficacy refers to the lack of belief in one’s ability to accomplish tasks or achieve desired outcomes, which often leads to a fear of failure and avoidance of challenging situations. Individuals with low self-efficacy typically see difficult tasks as threats rather than challenges, and as a result, they may procrastinate or avoid taking necessary action. (chap.4)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element self-efficacy.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** A variant understandingmay show that while low self-efficacy is a significant barrier to effective leadership, it could be argued that some degree of self-doubt is not necessarily harmful. A moderate level of self-awareness and humility can lead to thoughtful decision-making, ensuring that leaders do not become overly confident or neglect to assess risks carefully. Low self-efficacy might even serve as a motivator for personal growth, encouraging leaders to seek support or mentorship. This perspective suggests that self-reflection and modesty may help balance out the negative effects of low self-efficacy by prompting leaders to improve without becoming paralyzed by fear.

**Contextualization:** I have had to find balance between self-efficacy and faith in God’s empowerment. I aim to be humble and acknowledge my limitations, but I will not allow self-doubt to prevent me from stepping into the leadership roles God has called me to. The Bible teaches that even the most unlikely individuals, such as Moses and Gideon, were called to leadership despite their initial feelings of inadequacy. By recognizing my dependence on God's strength rather than my own abilities, I am now continuously overcoming self-doubt by seeking help from mentorship and counsel as needed.

**Source 4**: Maxwell, J. C. (2018). Developing the leader within you 2.0. HarperCollins Leadership.

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Maxwell (2018) shows us that leadership is not a one-time event, but a lifelong process of growth and self-improvement. It requires a continual focus on developing one’s personal and professional skills. Effective leaders are not born but are made through a deliberate process of development and practice. By focusing on improvement, leaders create environments where others can succeed as well. (chap.10)

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element leader development.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** A variant perspective may argue that focusing too much on continuous development could lead to burnout or an overemphasis on self-improvement. If leaders are constantly focused on growing and developing, they may lose sight of the importance of rest, reflection, or spiritual renewal. The pressure to keep improving could create an environment where leaders feel they are never enough, leading to exhaustion and ineffective leadership.

**Contextualization:** Rest is a tool in my development as a leader. I consider rest to be an integral part of improvement.There will always be a necessary balance between growth and rest. Christian leaders are called to serve diligently but also to find rest in God’s presence (Mark 6:31). Furthermore, physical renewal is just as important as spiritual renewal, and leaders should model a rhythm of work and rest that prioritizes both physical and spiritual health. This ensures that development is sustained by God’s grace and renewal, not solely by human effort.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Maxwell (2018) says that leaders who are underdeveloped often hesitate to take risks because they are uncertain about their abilities and are afraid of failing. This fear of failure leads to stagnation and prevents them from growing. However, leadership requires taking calculated risks, stepping outside of one’s comfort zone, and making decisions even when the outcome is not guaranteed. Underdeveloped leaders often miss growth opportunities because of avoidance. On the other hand, developed leaders embrace risk, knowing that growth comes from trial, error, and learning through the process. (chap.5)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element leader development.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** While risk-taking is essential for leader development, a variant perspective might suggest that undisciplined or uncalculated risks could be harmful. Leaders with underdeveloped judgment may take risks that are reckless or unwise, leading to negative consequences. Therefore, the highlighted key here is not just risk-taking, but strategic, informed risks that are aligned with the leader's goals and the organization's vision. Leadership requires well-informed discernment, ensuring that risks are manageable, and the potential benefits outweigh the potential harm.

**Contextualization:** There have been holes in the connection between my faith and acquisition of wisdom. I have repeatedly acted in poor judgement during my career. I have both taken and avoided risks. While my mentors push me to take bold steps and embrace risk, I do so with prayer and God's guidance. Seeking godly counsel and using biblical principles to assess risks ensures that decisions are made in alignment with God's will, but also in faith, because my life and the lives of others are at stake with every risk taken.

**Source 5:** Day, D. V., & Fleenor, J. M. (2020). Advancing leadership development through feedback: The role of 360-degree assessments. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 28*(4), 358-372. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051819897639>

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Day and Fleenor (2020) state that 360-degree feedback is a powerful tool in leadership development, as it provides leaders with valuable insights into their strengths and areas for improvement. By gathering feedback from peers, subordinates, and superiors, leaders can gain a comprehensive understanding of their leadership effectiveness. The use of feedback facilitates continuous learning, helping leaders adapt their behaviors to enhance their impact. This method encourages leaders to engage in self-reflection and self-improvement, which are essential for their ongoing development. (p.362)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element leader development.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** A variant understanding of this quote is that 360-degree feedback might lead to conflicting or biased evaluations, especially if leaders do not critically analyze the feedback they receive. Feedback from peers, subordinates, and superiors may sometimes reflect personal agendas or subjective biases, which can distort the accuracy of the leader’s self-assessment. Feedback-driven development could inadvertently reinforce a leader’s weaknesses if not properly interpreted.

**Contextualization:** Feedback from mentorship is an invaluable weapon in my leadership arsenal. However, I have learned to filter all feedback through God’s word irrespective of its source. I have seen secular feedback work well in spiritual environments. I have also seen spiritual feedback work well in secular environments. Yet in my personal development I prioritize honest inner reflection and prayer when receiving feedback to ensure that it is free of bias, and relevant to the context in which it will be used. The first context for it to be used is within my own self.

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Day and Fleenor (2020) share a striking difference between leadership and leader development. Unlike leadership development, which centers on the actions and behaviors that influence others, leader development is about the personal and internal transformation of the leader. This transformation is often achieved through a combination of experiential learning, self-reflection, and formal training. Effective leader development requires the leader to recognize and cultivate their strengths, address their weaknesses, and develop the necessary skills to lead effectively in complex environments. Leadership development, by contrast, focuses on how leaders influence others, build teams, and manage organizations. (p. 359)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element leader development.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This quote is additive to my understanding that leader development is focused on internal growth, including emotional intelligence and self-awareness, and the acquisition of leadership competencies. The difference between leader development and leadership development is made clear: while leader development targets personal transformation, leadership development centers on the external actions that leaders take to influence and manage others. This process requires self-reflection, recognizing one’s strengths and weaknesses, and cultivating the necessary skills for success. (p.7)

**Contextualization**: Intrinsic development has been incredibly necessary in my life as a leader. My intrinsic development created powerful inner qualities like humility, compassion, and wisdom. The inner qualities then created strong external environments, which increased my ability to lead others. The balance of both intrinsic and extrinsic fulfillment should be rooted in leader development, not leadership. I have been able to preach on personal transformation to others who lead in my church context. The sermon was titled, “Shepherds are sheep too,” highlighting the focus on a Church under-shepherd as one who still needs to be led.

**Source 6**:

**Comment 11:** Neroni, J., Linders, D., & Kam, D. (2022). Academic self-efficacy, self-esteem, and grit in higher online education: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 114*(3), 432-448. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000580>

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Neroni et. al (2022) state that the relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic success has been consistently demonstrated in both traditional and online learning environments. Higher self-efficacy has been linked to greater engagement, better time management, and higher levels of academic achievement. Students who believe in their ability to succeed in their coursework are more likely to persevere through difficulties. Conversely, students with lower self-efficacy are more likely to disengage, leading to poorer academic outcomes. (p.440)

**Essential Element:** This comment is associated with the essential element self-concept.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This quote is additive to the idea that self-efficacy is a key factor in academic success. Higher levels of self-efficacy create increased class participation and better use of study time. Students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to remain engaged with challenging tasks, while those with low self-efficacy tend to disengage. The higher self-efficacy, the longer their academic achievement.

**Contextualization:** Having been an adjunct professor for many years, I encountered many students who presented with low self-efficacy. During the first two weeks of each class and semester that I have taught, I intentionally offer resources and tools, with myself as the main resource, which will assist students to engage the entirety of the course with confidence and a belief that they are fully capable of succeeding. I proudly provide resources to support their self-efficacy. I have also seen this approach be presented as a student at Omega Graduate School with its overarching andragogical values in the courses.

**Source 7:**

Alhadabi, A., & Karpinski, A. C. (2020). Grit, self-efficacy, achievement orientation goals, and academic performance in university students. International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 25(1), 519-535. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2019.1667003>

**Comment 12:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Alhadabi and Karpinski (2020) suggest that self-efficacy is an important determining precursor of academic success because it enhances a student’s ability to set mastery and performance-approach goals, both which positively influence their academic performance. High self-efficacy enables students to feel confident in their ability to tackle assignments and encourages persistence when obstacles arise during the course. Low self-efficacy is associated with performance-avoidance goals, which can lead to poorer academic outcomes. (p.524)

**Essential Element:** This quote is associated with the essential element self-efficacy.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This quote is additive to my understanding in that it shows that when students believe in themselves, they are more likely to set goals that focus on learning and showing what they know, rather than just avoiding failure. These students are willing to face their schoolwork because they trust they can succeed. On the other hand, students who do not believe in their abilities often worry about failing, which makes them avoid hard tasks altogether.

**Contextualization:** As a student, during this sub-term B, I have encountered many personal challenges that have caused me self-doubt in my ability to be successful in my courses. I recently purchased a new book called “The Compound Effect” by Darren Hardy to help me better manage my time and habits despite many recent personal and professional surprises and challenges. This book is becoming a personal tool for both my leader development and self-efficacy. I initially thought of reducing my course load to part time, however, I do not want to reduce my course load because my success in Sub-term A continues to remind me of my continued potential for high self-efficacy.

**Works Cited**

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