TEACHING THE FUNDAMENTALS OF LEADERSHIP: THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPHASIZING SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the implications of focusing on leadership education as a process of developing fundamental skills, like the way fundamental skills are developed in sports. Effective leaders need to develop high levels of proficiency in relation to increasing awareness, making decisions, managing attention, building relationships, and communicating. Like the fundamental skills associated with sports, these skills require sustained and intentional practice over time. This demands educational processes that place greater emphasis on affective and behavioral outcomes with an emphasis on deeper learning. Consequently, learners need to move through levels of proficiency from acquisition to compilation to automaticity. To support such progress, educators need to place more emphasis on teaching processes, providing more opportunities for scaffolded practice, and encouraging and supporting greater application beyond the classroom. This necessitates greater collaborative efforts in program design across the curriculum and with cocurricular partners that challenges the current emphasis on academic freedom.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a complex skill, an art and a science (De Pree, 1987). Like many sports, it requires that an individual develop the capacity to read a situation and intuit a response based on knowledge, experience, and competencies built over time. Great leaders, like great athletes have developed habits of greatness (Covey, 1989, 2004). These habits of greatness are rooted in the practice of fundamental responses and behaviors that represent the foundation of individual greatness (Duhigg, 2014). They do the most basic things extremely well. Then, they develop the capacity to apply these basic skills in different situations through the application of processes that become habitual responses (Kraiger et al., 1993). At the same time, they develop the wisdom and insight to recognize when the context is changing enough to require adaptive responses and intuitively and creatively make these adjustments. How do athletes do this? What are the implications for leaders? How does this impact the way we teach others to practice leadership? This article identifies the fundamental skills of leadership and explores how education and development processes might need to be adapted to better promote fundamental leadership skill development. Implications and challenges associated with making these adjustments are also examined.

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

Fundamentals are the basic skills that represent a foundation for greatness in any sport. They are the habitual patterns of behavior that individuals develop through sustained practice of repetitive behaviors. Individuals who master them are easily distinguished from those who do not and will achieve higher levels of success in their athletic arena. But how do we know what is fundamental to a specific field of endeavor?

What is most fundamental is often most frequent. If one breaks the play of a sport down into its individual moments, the fundamentals will be those things that are performed most frequently and repetitively across these moments. Consider the example of basketball. If one asks the question, what is the most fundamental skill of basketball, what does one do most frequently in every moment, the answer is not what many people may think. When people think of basketball, they often think of scoring: shooting, layups, slam dunks. However, while the process of squaring up to the basket and taking a jump shot does represent a fundamental skill in basketball, it is not something that happens that often. Most players spend little of their time on the court shooting and most take very few shots, if any, in an actual game. What is most fundamental then are those things that most players do most frequently in most moments throughout a game. These include running, sliding, dribbling, passing, jumping, and, to a lesser extent, jump shots, free throws, and layups. These behaviors are foundational to most moments and great coaches make sure players are skilled in these and make them habitual. This occurs when players intuitively operate based on these fundamentals. For example, when the offensive player moves towards the defensive player, the former drops into a stance that protects the ball while the latter naturally moves into a wide defensive stance and slides to stay in front of the offensive player. The question of course, in any field of practice is "what are the fundamentals?" and "how do we recognize and develop them?" In sports, these are identified by looking at what happens in each moment and identifying the behaviors that allow one to make the most of each moment. The same is true of leadership.

LEADERSHIP AS A MOMENTARY PHENOMENON

The scholarly world of leadership has been undergoing a paradigm shift. Traditionally, leadership has been viewed through the lens of the great man theory of leadership (Carlyle, 1973; Spector, 2016). The essence of this theory is that great men drive history. Their ability to lead others and achieve success determines the course of human events. This basic assumption represents the foundation of much of the early study and practice of leadership. It led and still leads researchers to study traits, behaviors, skills, styles, and approaches of effective leaders to replicate these to achieve success (Northouse, 2019). And, to some extent, it has been successful. Scholars and practitioners know more now about leadership effectiveness than at any other time in history. However, its success has not contributed to the creation of a society that is dominated or even characterized by widespread evidence of effective leadership (Burns, 1995). In fact, Kellerman (2004, 2016) argued that the leadership industry has failed to deliver on its promises and that to better understand leadership, it is essential to shift the focus away from the leader to the leadership system. The essence of this argument is that leadership is an activity that emerges through the

interaction that takes place in any given moment between the leader, the follower, and the context (McClellan, 2021b; Rost, 1993; Tourish, 2014; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009).

As leaders and followers mutually influence each other in complex interactions within contexts that contribute to and shape these interactions, processes of influence are shaped and formed. From this perspective, leadership becomes an emergent, momentary phenomenon. Consider the following example provided by McClellan (2021a), "A leader is asked to meet with an employee to address his or her decline in performance and to influence him or her to improve" (p. 613). In this example, a leader enters a moment of interaction with a goal to influence the behavior of a follower within a specific context via a process of influence based on a relationship, as these are perceived by the leader. Likewise, the follower brings to the moment his or her own goals, influence processes, perceptions of the relationship and context, etc.

If one looks at leadership from this paradigmatic perspective, as an emergent momentary reality, then one can examine these moments to identify what they have in common and, consequently, identify what fundamental skills are foundational to success. While this, of necessity refocuses attention on what the leader is doing, it does so with an awareness that this refocusing is part of a negotiated creative interaction as opposed to a simplistic emphasis on just the actions of the leader. There is value in learning from what an effective leader does, even if one recognizes that the leader's behavior is only part of the leadership process. Thus, one can focus on what the leader brings to the leadership moment and learn from this. This is what McClellan (2021a) did to develop the cognitive process model of leadership. Consider how he describes these fundamental skills in relation to the leader's cognitive processes in the previous example:

The leader's neuro-network actively approaches the moment by collecting information via the senses and reviewing and bringing to awareness the relevant information regarding the moment that is about to occur. Information regarding the person, their performance, the leader's feelings and preferences for leading and the context are all reviewed consciously and subconsciously to determine how best to approach the situation. As this occurs, this information is vetted by neural processes based on its relative importance to the situation and attention is directed toward the most salient information. This information is then used to make decisions about what to do and how to do it. At this point, in time, the leader then captures the attention of the follower and engages in a process of directing and managing his or her attention through the process of communication to influence his or her actions. As the leader does so and based on how he or she does so, the leader builds, maintains or harms the relationship that exists between the leader and the follower. The result is the enactment of an influence process that is unique to that moment. (pp. 613-4)

This description of what happens in this moment, provides insight into six fundamental practices of leaders that apply to all leadership moments: increasing awareness, making decisions, capturing, directing, and maintaining attention, relationship building, communication, and action. Furthermore, because these are rooted in basic cognitive processes, they are consistently important across cultural contexts, even if the relevant practices associated with them vary from culture to culture (McClellan, 2021a).

COMPETENCIES FOR EVERY MOMENT

Associated with each of these momentary practices are competencies that leaders can be trained to develop and practice. The first practice, awareness, suggests that leaders need to enter each leadership moment with an awareness of themselves, others, and the context in which they find themselves (McClellan, 2022). Critical competencies that allow a leader to do this include listening, environmental scanning (informed by systems thinking and cultural intelligence), and mindfulness. Decision making involves developing and practicing skills in critical thinking and problem solving based on an understanding of intuitive and rational decision-making models. Managing attention, capturing, directing, and maintaining it, involves the ability to engage in effective perception management, create a shared vision, and engage in strategic planning and leadership. Relationship building requires competencies in trust formation and interpersonal skills. Effective communication requires that a leader develop the capacity to encode, convey, and decode messages to facilitate understanding. Action involves the ability to engage in active learning: developing knowledge, planning action, acting intentionally, reflecting on outcomes and repeating to deepen learning. See Table 1.

TABLE 1. THE FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS OF LEADERSHIP

Fundamental Practices	Fundamental Skills
Awareness	Listening Environmental Scanning Mindfulness
Decision-Making	Application of Intuitive and Rational Decision-Making Models
Attention: Capture, Direct, Maintain	Perception Management Vision Creation Strategic Planning and Leadership
Relationship Building	Interpersonal Skills: Bidding & Responding (Gottman, 2011; Gottman & DeClaire, 2001) Trust Building
Communication	Encoding, Conveying & Decoding Messages
Action	Active Learning Process

These competencies represent the fundamental skills of leadership and are applicable in virtually all leadership moments. Consider the example of decision making. Decision making skills lie at the heart of leadership coaching, meeting facilitation, strategy formulation and most other leadership practices. The ability to make decisions or at least facilitate the decision-making process is foundational to the act of leadership. Listening is another example. Leaders can only gain information about themselves, others, and the world around them through the act of listening. Thus, they must listen in every leadership moment if they wish to use any of the other foundational skills effectively, as listening and receiving influence contribute to improved decision-making, better relationships, improved communication, and even the ability to manage the attention of others (Flynn et al., 2008; Lehrer, 2009; McMillam & Chavis, 1986). The same is true of each of the other fundamental skills. They are, like running in any sport, essential skills for practicing leadership from moment to moment.

TEACHING FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

Having identified these fundamental skills, it is essential to examine how such skills can be developed or trained, this is especially important since the goal is not mere repetition but rather creative expression in the interactive relationship between leader and follower. In their research on effective training, Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2016) identified four levels of training effectiveness: reaction, which means how people feel about the quality of the training experience; learning, the extent to which people develop new knowledge as a result of training; changes in behavior, changes that people make in terms of their actions as a result of training; and impact on results, the extent to which behavior change leads to measurably improved outcomes. Traditionally, higher education has focused on the first two levels, with most faculty evaluations and assessment methods focused on how people feel about the training or what knowledge they have acquired (Stolovitch & Keeps, 2002). In his study of leadership educators instructional practices, Jenkins (2020) found that the most commonly used methods (class discussions, interactive lectures, small group discussions, etc.) were very much within the realm of the traditional knowledge focused practices and that faculty actually tended to avoid "the highly experiential instructional strategies role-play, simulation, and games" (p. 52). Assessment processes focused on traditional approaches such as presentations and paper, with less emphasis on tests.

These traditional lectures, discussion, test, and paper writing approaches of higher education are very much consistent with a focus on the first two levels. Interestingly, many active learning strategies that are focused on just helping students learn, process, and memorize information are likewise focused on these areas. A traditional focus on teaching leadership theories and models is consistent with this cognitive outcome approach. However, if one wishes to develop fundamental skills, educators must move past this emphasis on reaction and knowledge acquisition and focus more on the behavioral and affective outcomes of the educational processes that result in actual changes in behavior and results. They must "create conditions in which leadership can be practiced" and skill developed (Ganz & Lin, 2012, p. 355). To do so requires an understanding of learning outcomes and how they are achieved.

One of the common approaches to developing learning outcomes is to develop them based on whether they are focused on knowledge acquisition, skill development, or shifts in attitudes and motivations (Kraiger et al., 1993). As mentioned, traditional pedagogical approaches in higher education tend to focus on knowledge acquisition, which is important. The acquisition of knowledge is a foundational purpose for seeking an education. Nonetheless, just possessing a knowledge of leadership is like just possessing a knowledge of a sport, it provides understanding to enjoy, but not skill to play the sport. This is because leadership, like any sport, is a complex field of practice. So, while "procedural knowledge acquisition" does enable "the reproduction of trained behaviors" (Kraiger et al., 1993, p. 316), it is insufficient to develop proficiency. Leadership education must, therefore, go beyond knowledge-oriented learning to provide for true fundamental skill development. As with any sport, the focus must be on helping would be practitioners develop the complex fundamental skills they need to apply in their arena of practice.

Complex skill development naturally occurs in three different stages: acquisition, compilation, and automaticity (Kraiger et al., 1993). Acquisition refers to the development of and initial attempts to apply procedural knowledge, and is dependent upon critical awareness of "facts, information, terms, and models," actionable knowledge, and guided practice (Yip & Wilson, 2010, p. 83). In basketball, this could involve teaching someone the basic steps to making a layup. With this procedural knowledge, the individual talks themselves through the steps as they attempt to complete the task. Regarding the fundamental skills of leadership, it might involve knowing the steps involved in effective problem solving or relationship development and initially practicing these in a structured learning environment. The key here is that faculty who wish to teach fundamental skills of leadership would need to ensure that these are converted first into procedural knowledge and that these can then be practiced in a "challenged and supported environment, with immediate coaching and feedback on performance effectiveness" (Yip & Wilson, 2010, p. 83).

Compilation occurs when individuals practice a behavior overtime and begin to develop basic skills beyond initial success. According to Kraiger et al. (1993), "performance at this stage is characterized by faster, less error-prone performance and by the integration of discrete steps into a single act" (p. 316). Actors cease to depend on the recitation of steps and begin to practice steps without having to mentally contemplate each step individually. Performance becomes more effective and fluid. In a sport, this occurs as the participant begins to act without having to think about what they are doing in the moment. In leadership, it might mean that they are able to engage in active listening without thinking about what active listening entails or move more fluidly through the process of developing a vision or the steps in an action plan without thinking about each stage of the process. To help students achieve this level, faculty needs to insure that sustained supervised practice occurs over time. Recent research conducted by Koedinger et al. (2023) examined how rates of skill oriented learning varied among students with differing level of prior knowledge. There results found very little differentiation in learning rate with typical students requiring 7 to 8 opportunities for practice to achieve 80% mastery. If this level of mastery can be assumed to correspond with the compilation stage, then the implication for leadership educators is that at least this many opportunities for practice would need to be provided at this stage. This is often problematic in leadership courses as content requirements push faculty to cover new content that is often not additive or even related closely to previous content.

Furthermore, skill development at this stage must be focused and intentional. When a player is working on the footwork for a new move or maneuver, practice is focused and intentional on that specific move until proficiency is established in this compilation stage. Only once this occurs, can the individual be expected to put the maneuver into practice in a game. Likewise, in leadership learning, simple skill development and application should come before more complex experiential application. However, it may be that many of the experiential activities that leadership educators use to apply leadership knowledge and skills bypass this simple skill development phase of compilation. This could account for why many such educators experience "challenges" with "highly experiential learning activities . . . with respect to student readiness" (Jenkins, 2020, p. 51). Students are not ready for the stage of complex application when they have not yet consolidated basic skill development at this level. Thus, this level and the next, automaticity, may be hard to attain in the format of traditional leadership courses, even though they are necessary if one is to develop fundamental skills because of the challenges of extensive content and limited

opportunities or compilation level practice before engaging in more complex experiential application.

Automaticity is a stage of proficiency characterized by high levels of skill, low error rates, and speed (Anderson, 1992). Generally, at this stage, skilled performance emerges as behaviors require less conscious effort and one can engage in parallel processing (Kraiger et al., 1993; Yip & Wilson, 2010). It is likely that this the level of proficiency is foundational to developing the capacity for creative, focused performance and versatility (Yip & Wilson, 2010), which is consistent with the experience of the flow state (Bergamin, 2017). Consider a basketball player who can focus on running a play while dribbling the ball as opposed to having to focus attention on just dribbling the ball. Such a player no longer needs to look at or think about the ball, as it has become automatic.

In addition, at this stage, one becomes more able to act intuitively in the application of skill and in adapting the skill to the context (Kraiger et al., 1993). For example, a skilled basketball player intuitively shifts the open approach of dribbling the ball in the open court to a more guarded approach when more closely defended. Furthermore, at this stage of skill development, creativity becomes possible as the interplay between the offensive and defensive player can result in new creative expressions of behavior. Thus, when something unexpected occurs the player may maneuver with the ball in an entirely novel way while still maintaining control, such as some players have done when falling down suddenly during play. In leadership fundamental terms, this might mean intuitively using different approaches to capture the attention of followers and build relationships or creatively developing new approaches based on the interplay between leader and follower. This level of skill is even harder to develop in a classroom setting as it requires more "real world" situation-based application and practice under varying circumstances over time. In summary, in terms of skill development, leadership educators could help students by, in relation to each of the fundamental skills: identifying and teaching the processes that should be enacted, providing opportunities for scaffolded practice that support basic skill development, and encouraging and supporting broader and intentional application in various settings to promote automaticity (Ganz & Lin, 2012; Kraiger et al., 1993). Consider the example in Table 2.

TABLE 2. FUNDAMENTAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT ROLE OF LEADERSHIP EDUCATOR

Fundamental Skill	Acquisition	Compilation	Automaticity
Interpersonal skills: Bidding and responding (Gottman, 2011; Gottman & DeClaire, 2001)	Teach processes of social interaction: bidding and responding	Provide structured practice in the classroom or applied setting for relationship building through bidding and responding. Provide feedback and repeated practice.	Encourage students to engage in the practices of bidding and responding in a variety of settings beyond the classroom. Encourage creative expression, feedback seeking and reflection on results.

In addition to focusing on fundamental skill development, leadership education also needs to facilitate the development of effective leadership attitudes or the leaders "way of being." Luthans and Avolio (2003) suggested that instead of focusing on just teaching leaders to use whatever

technique or skills are necessary to achieve one's desired results, leadership development programs must focus on fostering integrity by "creating a seamless link between [a leader's] espoused values, actions, and behaviors" (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242). Such alignment is essential because, "Personal character is the core of all leadership effectiveness. . . . ethical standards, integrity, and authenticity are extremely important" (Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 13). These elements represent the attitude or "way of being" that a leader carries with them into each leadership moment.

Research suggests that a leader's way of being is foundational to the success of the leader (Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006; Quinn, 2004). This is because people do not just respond to how leaders are behaving towards them, but also to how the leader "is regarding [them] when doing those things" (Arbinger Institute, 2000, p. 27). With regards to the kind of "way of being" that is essential to effective leadership, Quinn (2004) found that leaders needed to be purpose centered, focused on the meaningful reason for which they are leading and the related goals they wish to achieve as opposed to being comfort centered; other focused, mindful of and responsive to the needs of others as opposed to focused on their own wants and needs; internally directed, guided by core values and principles and opposed to being driven by concern for what others think of them; and externally open, open as opposed to feedback from others regarding their leadership. The importance of these kinds of attitudes is widely supported in the literature on leadership effectiveness and resilience (Arbinger Institute, 2019; Maddi & Khoshaba, 2005; McClellan, 2020; McClellan, 2021c; Stein & Bartone, 2020).

For leadership education to contribute effectively to development in the affective domain, participants must be assisted in first, identifying, clarifying, and reinforcing their sense of purpose and values. According to Zenger and Folkman (2002), a leader's sweet spot or sense of purpose is found at the point where their interests, skills, and their ability to respond to the needs of others converge. This corresponds to the "purpose for" approach suggested by Haidt (2006) which involves leaders identifying the unique ways in which they are "designed" or "called" to contribute to the lives of others. However, Haidt also advocated for a "purpose within" approach which is less focused on identifying one's overarching calling and more focused on answering the question, "what ought I to do to have a good, happy, fulfilling, and meaningful life" (p. 294). This approach is more open to an evolutionary and changing sense of purpose from moment to moment and across different life stages as what one finds engaging and interesting, one's skills, and one's opportunities to respond to others evolve over time. Regardless of the approach taken, leadership educators can nurture purpose by encouraging would be leaders to reflect on their sense of meaning as it relates to their interests, skills, and their potential for responding to the needs of others. This can be achieved through completing assessments and questionnaires, active experimentation and reflection, and journaling regarding experiences that provide a strong sense of meaning.

It is worth noting that given the emphasis on responding to the needs of others as an essential part of purpose development, the importance of being other focused is clear. To the extent that one is able to see others as fellow human beings, recognize the innate connectedness they share with them, demonstrate a concern for other's challenges, needs, and desires, and make an effort to respond to these needs, they are better able to maintain a state of being that is more deeply engaged and influential with others (Arbinger Institute, 2006, 2019). Doing so requires an effort to be mindful of how one is regarding others when leading them. Leadership educators can support this mindset by modeling it themselves, encouraging it in those they teach, and inviting them to develop

a mindful awareness of the way they are regarding others. Developing this kind of mindset management requires sustained mindfulness practices consistent with the skills-based processes outlined above (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Siegel, 2014).

Similar approaches can be taken to identifying values. One common approach is to identify and rank values from a list of values (Brown, 2018; Senge, 1994). Values clarifying activities, in which dialogue around specific issues or challenges results in the surfacing and discussion of values, can also be used (Fritz & Guthrie, 2017). However, values can also be identified by examining how people spend their time, money, and effort (Covey, 1989) and, even, by examining what inspires and upset them (Kegan & Lahey, 2001), as values represent a hierarchy of emotional responses (Goleman, 1995). Once values and purpose are identified. The next step is to reinforce these values. This is often done through story telling. Just as the strength of an organizational culture relies on the quality of the stories that are told within the culture to reinforce its values (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Schein, 1992; Zepeda, 2014). So, too are values reinforced in the individual. By reflecting on the stories and connecting with stories that reinforce and strengthen values, would-be leaders can increase their commitment to their own personal values. Having increased one's commitment, it is then important to explore how one is manifesting one's values in one's life and to look at ways to increase this alignment. As Brown (2018) explained, we must first become "clear about what we believe and hold important," then, with this clarity, we must make the effort to insure that "our intentions, words, thoughts, and behaviors align with those beliefs" (p. 186). Leadership educators can do this by inviting participants to explore the gaps in their own behavior and encouraging them to reflect on ways they can better create this alignment. However, this is not a one-time thing. Values must be constantly revisited, reaffirmed, reinforced, and realigned. Furthermore, values are not enough to assure success. Bad values will lead to bad behavior. Thus leaders must insure that their values are aligned with principles that lead to success (Covey, 2015).

While clarifying and repeatedly aligning one's behavior with one's purpose and values allows one to become more purpose centered and values oriented, and monitoring one's mindset to ensure a focus on others contributes to being other focused, being externally open is critical to maintaining one's state of being. Openness inspires trust and creates a context for feedback to be provided and received, without defensiveness, in a way that produces greater personal alignment and growth (Bradford & Robin, 2021; Gottman & DeClaire, 2001; Willemyns et al., 2003). Leadership educators can promote greater alignment by teaching students how to give and receive effective feedback, as part of the skill development associated with communication, and providing them with the practice they need to be able to do this well. Once again, development of this skill occurs consistent with the skill development processes outlined above. Consequently, the same approach of teaching processes, providing scaffolded practice, an encouraging broader application and reflection are essential.

IMPLICATIONS AND CHALLENGES

While the approach to educating leaders outlined here is consistent with many efforts to promote engaged or experiential learning, which is a commonly espoused and advocated for approach to education today (Chapman et al., 1992; Downing, 2020b; Hutchings & Wutzdorff, 1988), the

emphasis on specific skills as fundamental to leadership practice and, therefore, essential to leader development, in the same way fundamental skills are to any sport, requires a significant rethinking of the way leadership is taught. Together, this calls for a greater emphasis on integration of curricular and cocurricular experiences (Downing, 2020a). Doing so means altering paradigms about the importance of these different activities and creating alignment regarding approaches to educating across these different realms. Boundaries between the classroom and its processes and those of clubs, organizations, jobs, and other leadership experiences need to be blurred and integrated even more than they are now. It is not possible, within the structure of a typical course, for a student to gain all the practice and experience necessary to move from novice to expert in relation to any of these skills. Students need both scaffolded and less structured opportunities to practice. For this to occur, increased alignment between the content and structure of these disparate learning environments would need to occur. Faculty and staff would need to align around the curriculum of both realms and increase communication to support student learning and development.

In addition to this curricular and co-curricular alignment, there would need to be a greater emphasis on learning outcomes and aligned instructional practices across program level curriculum as opposed to just within individual course curriculum. As individual courses would have to become more focused, with less emphasis on theory and more on practice, in course curricular foci will naturally narrow. Courses would have to be designed to build upon each other by reinforcing previously developed skills while also expanding the breadth of skills learned. Doing so would require greater collaboration within departments and programs and universities to support student development.

To achieve greater collaboration, more alignment would be needed around a commitment to educational practices that emphasize applied learning. These would run counter to the traditional emphasis in higher education that is placed on educating for reaction and learning as opposed to emphasizing training and development that leads to changes in behavior and results. Such educational practices would place more intentional focus on altering academic content to facilitate teaching of processes, providing scaffolded practice, and encouraging broad and frequent application amidst reflection.

All of these aligning efforts present threats to the deeply engrained values of individual academic freedom of faculty, as collaborative processes and structures would need to replace independent and individual faculty-controlled processes and structures that are the foundation of the current approach taken to curricular design and implementation. These structures and processes that have been implemented over the years to protect individualism within the halls of higher education represent significant barriers to change that might result in educating up-and-coming leaders in the fundamental skills of leadership.

An even greater challenge comes from the question as to whether this is what higher education should be about. Defining the purpose of higher education amidst the competing interests of students, faculty, staff, employers etc. is an ongoing challenge (Chan, 2016). Many in the academy bemoan the increasing emphasis on career preparation over the traditional emphasis on a broad liberal arts education for its own sake. For many this kind of skill focus is just the kind of thing that would appear to cater to this career orientation. And, truthfully, it does. Indeed, the kinds of

competencies outlined here are similar to those hiring managers and the career world seem to be looking for and requesting from higher education programs (Burning Glass Technologies, 2015; Tynjala et al., 2008; Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2018; Workforce Solutions Group, 2019). However, leader development has a much broader focus than the narrower career-oriented emphasis and is not mutually exclusive to liberal education. Indeed, the preparation of citizens to serve as leaders has always been a priority in American higher education (Durden, 2007; Lucas, 1994). However, there is a great need for more effective and skilled leaders and it has been argued by some that higher education and the leadership development industry are not succeeding in this effort (Burns, 1995; Kellerman, 2016; Owen, 2013; Rowland, 2016). Consequently, there is a need for more of an intentional and focused effort on developing fundamental leadership skills. This approach merits consideration and intentional efforts as it possesses the potential to contribute to the intentional development of leaders in new ways.

CONCLUSION

Just as with any sport, effective leadership is based on the development and acquisition of fundamental skills. To be effective, leaders need to develop high levels of proficiency in relation to their ability to increase awareness, make decisions, manage attention, build relationships, and communicate. These skills are part of what leaders do in every leadership moment. Making the most of these moments depends upon a leader's ability to cocreate effective leadership with followers based on mastery of these basic competencies. Like the fundamental skills associated with any sport, these skills are developed through sustained and intentional practice over time. This requires educational processes on the part of faculty that place greater emphasis on the affective and behavioral outcomes of the educational process with an emphasis on deeper learning at the levels of behavior change and outcomes. Consequently, learners need to move through levels of proficiency from acquisition to compilation to automaticity. To support such progress, educators would need to place more emphasis on teaching processes, providing more opportunities for scaffolded practice, and encouraging and supporting greater application beyond the classroom. This focus will require greater collaborative efforts in terms of program design across the curriculum and with cocurricular partners that will challenge the individualist emphasis on academic freedom.

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