

SPRING 2018 FELLOWS LEADERS

Servant Leadership

Instructions: Complete all portions of the worksheet and send to fellows@ofa.us by Tuesday, March 20.

Servant leadership: “The natural feeling that one wants to serve first. This conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant—first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely to become servants?”

Robert K. Greenleaf (1970, pg. 15)

10 Characteristics of servant leadership

(Peter G. Northouse, Leadership: Theory and Practice 7th edition, 227-229)

Listening: “Communication between leaders and followers is an interactive process that includes sending and receiving messages (i.e. talking and listening). Servant leaders communicate by listening first. **They recognize that listening is a learned discipline that involves hearing and being receptive to what others have to say.** Through listening, servant leaders acknowledge the viewpoint of followers and validate these perspectives.”

Empathy: “Empathy is ‘standing in the shoes’ of another person and attempting to see the world from that person’s point of view. Empathetic servant leaders demonstrate that they truly understand what followers are thinking and feeling. **When a servant leader shows empathy, it is confirming and validating for the follower.** It makes the follower feel unique.”

Healing: “To heal means to make whole. **Servant leaders care about the personal well-being of their followers.** They support followers by helping them overcome personal problems. Greenleaf argues that the process of healing is a two-way street—in helping followers become whole, servant leaders themselves are healed.”

Awareness: “For Greenleaf, awareness is a quality within servant leaders that makes them acutely attuned and receptive to their physical, social, and political environments. **It includes understanding oneself and the impact one has on others.** With awareness, servant leaders are able to step aside and view themselves and their own perspectives in the greater context of the situation.”

Persuasion: “Persuasion is clear and persistent communication that convinces others to change. **As opposed to coercion, which utilizes positional authority to force compliance, persuasion creates change through the use of gentle nonjudgmental argument.** According to Spears (2002), Greenleaf’s emphasis on persuasion over coercion is perhaps related to his denominational affiliation with the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).”

Conceptualization: “Conceptualization refers to an individual’s ability to be a visionary for an organization, providing a clear sense of its goals and direction. **This characteristic goes beyond day-to-day operational thinking to focus on the ‘big picture.’** Conceptualization also equips servant leaders to respond to complex organizational problems in creative ways, enabling them to deal with the intricacies of the organization in relationship to its long-term goals.”

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Foresight: “Foresight encompasses a servant leader’s ability to know the future. It is an ability to **predict what is coming based on what is occurring in the present and what has happened in the past**. For Greenleaf, foresight has an ethical dimension because he believes leaders should be held accountable for any failures to anticipate what reasonable could be foreseen and to act on that understanding.”

Stewardship: “Stewardship is about **taking responsibility for the leadership role entrusted to the leader**. Servant leaders accept responsibility to carefully manage the people and organization they have been given to lead. In addition, they hold the organization in trust for the greater good of society.”

Commitment to the growth of people: “Greenleaf’s conceptualization of servant leadership places a premium on **treating each follower as a unique person with intrinsic value that goes beyond his or her tangible contributions to the organization**. Servant leaders are committed to helping each person in the organization grow personally and professionally. Commitment can take many forms, including providing followers with opportunities for career development, helping them develop new work skills, taking a personal interest in their ideas, and involving them in decision making (Spears, 2002).”

Building community: “Servant leadership foster the development of community. A community is a collection of individuals who have shared interests and pursuits and feel a sense of unity and relatedness. Community allows followers to identify with something greater than themselves that they value. Servant leaders build community to provide a place where people can **feel safe and connected with each other**, but are still allowed to express their own individuality.”

1. Out of these these characteristics, what are the top 3 that come naturally to you? Explain why.

2. Out of these characteristics, which are the top 3 that you need to work on?

3. How will you actively work on them in this program?

4. Who is a servant leader who you admire? What characteristics do they demonstrate?

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Homework (Due Tuesday, March 20)

- **Read:** [Larry C. Spears on servant leadership](#)
- **Watch:** [Bryan Stevenson on injustice](#)
- **Enter your orientation location:** [In this Google Form](#)
- **Recruitment:** Recruiting fellows is an important part of being an OFA Fellows Leader. As such, take some time to think through the following questions and inventory your own personal network, as well as where you need to reach out.

1. When describing the OFA Community Engagement Fellowship, how would you personally explain it to someone who has no idea what it is:

2. What individuals do you know that you should ask to join the fellowship (family, friends,etc)? By when will I ask them?

3. What organizations and communities are you involved in that you can use to recruit for the fellowship (progressive groups, colleges, churches, unions, etc...)?

