

Andrews University

School of Education

A SYNTHESIS OF MY LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Leadership Program

by

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Introduction

As my formal learning in the Leadership Program comes to a close, I feel a sense of sadness along with a feeling of completion. My learning and growth during the program has been immensely satisfying and challenging. I look forward to continued learning at a slower pace, using the tools I have gained.

In this synthesis paper, I reflect on the changes in my views on leadership and how this change in thinking affects my work. I consider my growth in understanding of using research to improve my practice; and how I have integrated a conceptualization of theories into my thinking and daily work. I contemplate implications of the new habits of learning, reflection and writing that have been built into my life. Finally, I focus on future paths of learning and leadership that I will follow.

Changed Views of Leadership

“I don’t really think of myself as a leader.” With this attitude, I began the Andrews University Leadership program. One might wonder why I applied for the program in the first place. I was actually attracted to the flexibility of learning; the self-paced and self-directed format; and the interdisciplinary approach of the Leadership Program. I was undeterred in my pursuit of my studies; even though it seemed at first that I did not fit in with obvious and amazing leaders in my cohort and Learning and Leadership Group.

The change in my views on leadership began a year into the program with LEAD 638, Dr. Baumgartner’s class on Leadership Theory. In this class, I began to identify my

leadership roles in work, the boards on which I serve, in my collaboration and work with global videoconferencing peers, in my church, and in my small group Bible study. Suddenly I realized I was offering leadership in many areas of my life; whether or not I had an official leadership position. I learned that my view of leadership was much too narrow. I had believed leadership could only happen in traditional positions of power. But then I learned about referent and expert power. I discovered that I lead with referent power through my relationships with others and with expert power through my knowledge and expertise (French & Raven, 1959). With this revelation, I was able to finally see my own leadership so that I could improve and polish my practice through the rest of my studies.

Throughout my journey in the Leadership Program, my classmates and Leadership and Learning Group members have repeatedly affirmed my leadership. “You are always a resource person and ready to help. You are a real servant leader,” (Wu, 2008, September 6). Another classmate said,

A leader by the simplest of definitions is one who influences at least one other (follower). From the flood of affirmations I trust you now realize that you have many more followers than you imagined even in the Leadership programme, not to mention your church, workplace and professional circles. What is even more important than the number of followers and/or people served is that you are clearly (by acclamation) a servant leader - with the hallmark of humility. I have been the personal recipient of your servant leadership on several occasions since we first met in Summer 07” (Kostka, 2008, September 8)

When I began my Andrews Leadership journey, it was not long before people were telling me that I was a servant leader. But I did not really understand what that meant until I began to read the literature on servant leadership. With further study, I realized that the concept of servant leadership best fits my beliefs and leadership situation. This change is evidenced in the changes in my definition of leadership.

When I started the Leadership Theory class, I created a definition of leadership heavily based in the textbook concepts:

Leadership is a process of influencing others to meet goals through creating positive interactions between the leader, the followers, and the situation.

Yet as I now reflect on this definition, it sounds to me like a facilitator. A great facilitator can “create positive interactions” by designing the environment and processes for meeting goals. However, it seems to be missing some of the components of servant leadership that I found so attractive in my studies; concepts such as the goal of service; persuasion, and leadership from a sense of purpose or *entheos* (Greenleaf, 1998a).

Laub (1999) attempted to operationalize a definition of servant leadership and create a tool to measure servant leadership in organizations. He organized the concepts of servant leadership into six areas: valuing people, developing people, building community, displaying authenticity, providing leadership and sharing leadership. Servant leaders value people by believing in them, putting them first, and by listening receptively. Servant leaders develop people by providing for their learning and growth, by leading by example, and by encouraging them. Servant leadership means building community by enhancing relationships, working collaboratively, and valuing the differences of others. Servant leaders are authentic by being transparent, by being learners, and by maintaining integrity. They provide leadership by envisioning the future, taking the initiative, and clarifying goals. Finally, servant leaders share leadership by sharing both power and status. They lead from personal influence rather than positional authority (pp. 46-48).

Based on this understanding, which is further elaborated on in reflection papers for competencies 3c and 5, I amend my definition of leadership to the following:

Leadership is a process of influencing others with a sense of purpose and enthusiasm by serving their resource, community, and situational needs so that they can meet organizational and personal goals.

This definition is drawn from concepts of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1998b), motivation (Pink, 2009), situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1995), and of course the bases of social power (French & Raven, 1959).

So how has this changed understanding of leadership affected my work and life? Acknowledging my own leadership has been a huge step. Now that I understand and see the areas where I am a leader, I am much more deliberate and conscious on how I use my influence and power. The leadership theories that I have learned now are applicable to my leadership situations; I have been and continue to carefully examine my practice in light of theories such as situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1995), transformational leadership (Einstein & Humphreys, 2001), interactive leadership (Rosener, 1990), and the Team Effectiveness Leadership Model (Ginnett, 1990). Detailed thinking of how these theories and others impact my practice are scattered throughout my reflection papers. I am not using the Leadership PhD as a stepping stone to a new position of power (French & Raven, 1959); instead I am using it to examine and improve my current practice in work that I find interesting and exciting. I am using my new understanding of leadership to better serve (Spears, 1998) my church and my followers in all areas. I do not yet see how God will use my new skills; yet I feel more prepared and ready for the next challenges that will come my way.

Roots of Research

One of the concepts from Orientation in the summer of 2007 has been firmly rooted in my thinking. Dr. Covrig, in opening to us the world of research literature, encouraged us to find the “roots and fruits” of research. He described how we could find the roots that inform a research article; and how to trace the fruits of a concept through

research that followed the original article; and in doing so, provided a foundation for our reading and use of research in our PhD studies.

The concept of roots fits well with my theme of “out on a limb”. I use this theme in my studies and my work, as I continue to stretch beyond what seems possible. In contemplating the effect of learning about research, I realize that research provides the foundation for going “out on a limb”. Before the Leadership Program, I went out on a limb from sheer bravery and experimentation, usually with success based in experience and intuition. However, my understanding of research and its application to my work has provided the “roots” to my “limb”. A solid foundational understanding of what others have studied and learned before hand, strengthens my position “out on a limb” and provides better credibility to my work. A clear understanding of how to use action research and evaluation research in my work provides better evidence and methodology to my projects. In short, research provides “roots” so that the branches I walk out on will be strong enough to hold me up. My learning in research has affected my reading of research, my use of research in my own presentations and projects, and my thinking on the nature of knowledge.

Reading Research

Learning to read research has affected how I evaluate information, understand and apply research, and create new projects and programs based on research and theory. My connection to reading research to apply to my work and practice began with becoming familiar with journals, article databases, and sources of published research (Galvan, 2006). I learned the difference between an opinion article and a research article (Hart, 2003) which has significantly changed how I think about the information I ingest daily. When I hear a study quoted in the news, on a blog, in a presentation or a conversation, I

wonder about the research methods, the sample size, the methods of measurement and analysis (Galvan, 2006).

Before my in-depth study of the research process, I found it easy to fall into the popular trap of believing that a research study offers “proof” for a particular concept. As I continue to learn more about statistical methods and the challenges of qualitative research, I realize the tentative nature of research studies. Challenges to data analysis, sample selection, observation methods, and measurement methods make research messy, difficult, and therefore imperfect (Pyrzczak, 2008). The multiple ways to analyze and report numbers makes it easy to provide misleading results (Huff, 1993). In addition, research results can be biased by sponsorship, the institutional affiliation of the author, or lack of a juried process (Pan, 2004).

Finally, I have begun to grasp the depth of knowledge and understanding that is found in research databases. The plethora of articles and research reports is mind-numbing but also inviting. Reading research expands my knowledge on many topics, including all the leadership competencies. Reading research informs my thinking and my work as I learn to connect theory to my practice (O’Leary, 2005). Reading research improves the quality of my presentations and workshops because the research provides a foundation for my claims and recommendations. Reading research has become a habit and the foundation to my work.

Research in My Presentations and Work

As a growing researcher, I am learning to communicate research findings from articles, books, and dissertations in my presentations and workshops. I am also learning to share my own research in published peer reviewed articles as well as presentations and workshops (Pyrzczak & Bruce, 2007). I have begun to share my research in published

articles and have created a list of future publications to pursue. I have begun sharing the results of my dissertation in short blog posts, referencing the pages in my dissertation, and inviting discussion and reflection on the results. This continued conversation on my work is valuable to further understand my research and also provides fodder for future research.

Integrating research into my thinking has changed my work practices. I now try to include more research findings in my presentations, and I look for research support of my practices. In addition, I am improving my support of videoconferencing based on my dissertation research.

I often present to schools in my area, nationally, and internationally about using videoconferencing in the curriculum. A direct change in my presentations is the regular inclusion of research studies on videoconferencing and the benefits in the classroom. My PowerPoints now have bibliographies, in addition to appealing slides and video clips. Others' research now undergirds my recommendations and assertions. I find that others ask me for research studies, and having them easily accessible in EndNote and referenced on my videoconferencing blog has increased my expert status in the field (French & Raven, 1959).

From my own research (Lim, 2009), I am applying the results in my support of videoconferencing in my schools. I have updated my coordinator training to include more supports and suggestions on working with teachers, since teachers' are so key to the use of videoconferencing in schools. I have already used the results on the coordinator's position to discuss a possible change in coordinator in one school where videoconferencing is rarely used. My results are assisting my recommendations to principals. I plan to use my new Scale for end of the year evaluations, to further discover

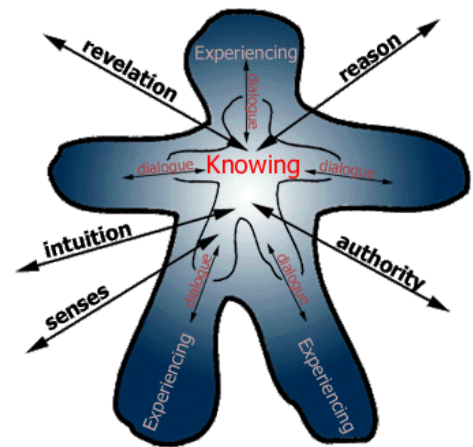
how I can assist the growth of my videoconference coordinators. I continue to recommend to others that the design of an effective videoconference support structure includes the school level videoconference coordinator, the teachers, principal, tech support, and support from an educational service agency.

The Nature of Knowledge and Research

Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted." - Albert Einstein

My dissertation work caused me to reflect on the nature of knowledge and research. In some ways, my dissertation results confirmed my own experience in supporting videoconferencing. While some results were surprising, they were explainable from my experience with schools. The K12 Curriculum Videoconferencing Implementation Scale arose from the conversations of educators in my online class, and was polished based on my work and experience with videoconferencing educators internationally. This foundation in real life application resulted in impressive reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .851), test-retest validity (.950), and cross validation (1% shrinkage). The tension between experience and research is strong and challenging.

Freed's Epistemological Model (March 1, 2009) helps me make sense of the sources of knowing, including experience and research. In the model, the person accepts several different sources of knowing: revelation, reason, intuition, senses, and authority. My reason and senses are used to observe, collect data, analyze it, and reach conclusions. Authorities such as other research and theoretical frameworks guide my



reason and senses in creating my research studies. My intuition and experience contribute to my understanding, and are evaluated and confirmed or modified based on reason and authority. My experience is the window through which I accept knowledge from authority, reason, and my senses. My dialogue with colleagues across the nation, via my personal learning network (Downes, 2006; Shirky, 2008) of blogs, real-time communication tools, and Twitter, allow me to expand my understanding and learn new ways of utilizing and evaluating sources of knowledge. Belenky (1986) suggests that this type of knowing is “constructed” as a person integrates intuitive knowledge with “knowledge learned from others” (p. 134). Michael Gold shares that, as in jazz, combining intellectual rigor with the intuitive somatic creates new polyrhythms (Gold, 2009) which complement and challenge each other.

As a researcher, I continue to consider the philosophical ideas behind different methods of research. Knight (2006) notes philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research, especially the forms of qualitative research that address power and oppression. I enjoy both qualitative and quantitative research. I find satisfaction in "solid" numbers; but I also the value of thick personal descriptions of various perspectives in a given issue. I realize the value of considering the frame of reference and the potential ways to examine, question and develop systems for research and constructing knowledge (Belenky et al., 1986).

A Passion for Research

My understanding and passion for research has been ignited during the Leadership Program. I have generated lists of potential research, articles to write, and ways to apply research in my work. I have learned to think like a researcher. I see research questions in the world around me. When someone asks a research question, I begin thinking about methods, samples, and instrumentation. When I hear reports of research, I question the methods, samples, and instrumentation. When I begin a new presentation, workshop, or program, I examine the literature for recommendations, theoretical frameworks, or models to assist my practice. Clearly research has been embedded into my practice and leadership.

The Usefulness of Theories

When I began the Leadership Program, I was not sure what a theory was. Several times in the Leadership Theory class, I commented that I did not know if I would recognize a theory if I met one walking down the street. I did not know how to identify one or what defined it. I had no confidence that I could understand or use a theory.

Several hundred theories later (it seemed) during the Leadership Theory class, I have a much better grasp of theories and how they apply to my practice. My favorite explanation of using theories in practice is Fullan's concept of "theories that travel" (Fullan, 2008). Fullan recommends

traveling with a good theory because theories never assume absolute certainty and are humble in the face of the future. Good leaders are thoughtful managers who use their theory of action (such as the six secrets) to govern what they do while being open to surprises or new data that direct further action (Fullan, 2008, p. 8).

I have learned to use a theory to examine my practice. The theory may suggest an area of reflection that I had not thought of before. There may be parts of the theory that

don't apply, yet the theory provides a construct for considering my practice. The theory may not even be supported by consistent research (Johansen, 1990), yet it is useful for thinking about a particular area of my work. In this section, I share some of my favorite theories from my competency work and how these theories apply to my practice.

Change Theory

In my study of the process of change, I searched long and hard before I found a theory that I liked; one that fit with my understanding of people, instructional technology, and leadership. Change is so embedded into my work in educational technology. It is so constant and prevalent that I do not even think of it as change. I think of it instead as continuous improvement. I think of it as implementation. When I read Kotter's work, the process of change seems so large and position-leadership driven that it seems that I am not involved in any change (Kotter, 1996; Kotter & Rathgeber, 2005). Kotter's work is an example of how uncomfortable I am with the general change literature focused on business. It does not fit my understanding and experience of change in education.

The change theories that really vibed with my work were those written by Fullan. I read several of Fullan's books during my investigation into change, yet I want to read much further. His definition of change makes more sense to me. Fullan suggests that the "implementation of educational change involves a change in practice" (Fullan, 2007, p. 30). Implementing an innovation is multidimensional and occurs in at least three components:

(1) the possible use of new or revised *materials* (instructional resources such as curriculum materials or technologies), (2) the possible use of new *teaching approaches* (i.e. new teaching strategies or activities), and (3) the possible alteration of *beliefs* (e.g., pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programs) (Fullan, 2007, p. 30).

Fullan (2007) argues that change in practice must occur in these three dimensions to make an impact on educational outcomes. Within educational technology, this means in addition to using new technology tools, teachers must change instructional strategies and beliefs to a more constructivist mode. Without the change in instruction and beliefs, teachers may just continue their old practice with new tools.

Fullan (2005) challenged my thinking on sustainability. He describes a reform program in the United Kingdom where results hit a plateau after a few years of success. Fullan suggests that sustainability has eight elements: (1) public service with a moral purpose, (2) commitment to changing context at all levels, (3) lateral capacity building through networks, (4) intelligent accountability and vertical relationships, (5) deep learning, (6) dual commitment to short-term and long-term results, (7) cyclical energizing, and (8) the long lever of leadership. While some of these areas seem out of reach because I do not directly influence all levels or the whole system, the framework provides a guide for considering my work and making sure that continuous learning and growth is happening for videoconferencing in my service area.

Fullan's (2008) six secrets of change uniquely apply to the process and culture for change within the Jazz workshop community which I participate in. The "Jazz Workshop," as affectionately nicknamed by the participants and facilitators, is a unique blend of collaboration and constructivist learning, mediated by videoconferencing and Web 2.0 tools. The workshop is collaboratively presented and shared with sites across the United States, Canada, and Wales. As an informal grassroots organization, it may appear that Fullan's theory does not apply. Fullan himself suggests that the six secrets theory for change is best for large organizations or systems; however, it seems to apply well to the relatively small informal organization of the Jazz workshop. It is truly a theory that

“travels,” further than even Fullan might imagine (Fullan, 2008, p. 8). The six secrets are: love your employees, connect peers with purpose, capacity building prevails, learning is the work, transparency rules, and systems learn. These secrets are dynamically and powerfully at work within the informal Jazz collaboration, as described in artifact 3d-E in the change competencies work. The six secrets are broad and acknowledge the complexity of organizations and people. They are not a simplistic view of the process of change. For these reasons, Fullan’s work informs and inspired my implementation and change processes.

Sustainability Theory

When I began my dissertation research, I struggled to find an appropriate theoretical framework. I did not clearly see how the theoretical framework could assist my research. However, when I did find a model for sustainability of a technology innovation in schools (Owston, 2007), the connections to my own research were strong and compelling. My focus on the videoconference coordinator as key to the implementation of videoconference was superseded by the importance of the teachers in the innovation, and this result, foreshadowed in Owston’s framework was confirmed in my study (Lim, 2009). Since I found my theoretical framework late in the study, I missed including the perspective of the students, which Owston considers another important element to the sustainability of the innovation. In subsequent research on the top teachers using videoconferencing in my service area (See Artifacts in section 4c-D), the importance of the student perspective became clear and convincing. This experience, along with analysis of my current practice in light of theories for other competencies, has also solidified my understanding of the usefulness and practicability of theoretical frameworks.

Learning Theories

Since I work in education, my time spent in learning theories was instructive and interesting. Two theories were especially intriguing and applicable to my work: situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 2005) and connectivism (Downes, 2005).

Situated Learning

Situated learning theory thoroughly intrigued me, for the obvious and amazing connections to the collaborative workshop mentioned earlier, 123 VC: Jazzing Up Your Curriculum with Videoconferencing (For full detail, see the 1c Learning competency). Hanks (1991) suggests that “learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework, not in an individual mind” (Lave & Wenger, 2005). Lave and Wenger (1991) describe learning within a situation, within a community, as situated learning. A key component of situated learning is “legitimate peripheral participation”, which means that newcomers to a world of knowledge or skill begin by participating with an old-timer (expert learner), and by virtue of that peripheral participation they grow to become an old-timer. The peripheral participation is legitimate in that the relationship is either formalized (i.e. apprentice) or informally understood by expert and newcomer. This framework of situated learning for learning communities uniquely applies to the “Jazz workshop.”

To support this workshop, 5 lead facilitators each mentor a group of 3-4 facilitators. The lead facilitators organize the activities, delegate tasks such as leading a simulation, preparing materials, and mentor the facilitators in best practice. The work of preparing for the workshop and delivering the workshop is accomplished together. This way the newcomers have “access” to the old-timers and learning occurs as the work is accomplished. Preparation for the workshop includes several meetings beforehand where

we walk through the each part of the workshop. During the workshop, newcomers may lead a section, with the lead facilitator on hand in case questions arise. After each day, the facilitators debrief with their lead facilitator. As we talk through how the day went, each facilitator is learning, reflecting, and refining her training practice.

Lave and Wenger suggest that in a learning community, there is a set of relations between the newcomers and old-timers through the cycles of learning. “The community of practice encompasses apprentices, young masters with apprentices, and masters some of whose apprentices have themselves become masters” (p. 57). The learning occurs across the layers of relationships, between near-peers, and across learning cycles. Within the Jazz Workshop, the knowledgeable skills in facilitation, technology training, and collaborative technology tools move in and across each circle of learning. Everyone contributes to the continual improvement of the workshop and therefore our continued practice of implementing videoconferencing in the curriculum.

The connections between situated learning and the Jazz workshop are striking and strong. I found this theory exciting and stimulating to learn about; and studying the theory helped me realize the strength of the Jazz community and why it works so well.

Connectivism

The other learning theory that caught my interest and attention is a developing theory called Connectivism (Siemens, 2005). A new type of learning appears to be emerging in the online environment. With the access to knowledge, people, and learning tools provided by the Internet, are people capable of learning differently? Is a new theory of learning required to accommodate the new methods of learning available via the Internet? Siemens (2005) suggests the answer is a resounding yes. Connectivism is the name of the new learning theory designed for the digital age. Knowledge is spread across

nodes, which can include ideas, communities, fields of knowledge, and people. Even within people the knowledge is distributed across the brain. In a startling new idea, learning may even reside in non-human appliances. Learning and knowledge rest on a diversity of opinions. Learning is a process of connecting specialized nodes of information sources to make sense of the knowledge. Decision making is an integral part of learning. The learner chooses what to learn and how to make meaning of the incoming information. In this new learning mode, the core skills of the learner include the ability to see connections and to nurture and maintain connections to provide continual learning. The goal of these knowledge networks is to find and maintain current and accurate knowledge (Siemens, 2005).

Four components are critical for distributed or connective knowledge (Downes, 2005). Openness is essential and must provide a mechanism that allows all perspectives and ideas to be heard and interacted with by others. Knowledge is produced by interactivity, not just aggregated. Together, people interact to create and produce knowledge. Diversity is indispensable so that all view points are heard with the widest possible spectrum. Within this connected framework, individual knowers contribute with autonomy. They choose to contribute on their own according in the context of their own knowledge, values and decisions.

An example of this kind of learning online is the concept of tagging. Tagging allows people to tag posts, pictures, links, and many resources with a tag. Aggregation tools such as RSS readers, Technorati, or Google Alerts allow the content to be aggregated. From this aggregated data individuals can seek patterns to gain understanding (vs. individual elements) (Siemens, 2006). Learning is based on conversation and interaction, on sharing, creating and participation and is embedded in

meaningful activities such as collaborative work (Downes, 2006). Connective learning includes the concept that knowledge is stored in your network of knowledge sources instead of one person trying to “know everything” (Tracey, 2009, March 17). A person stores knowledge in people within their network or within networked resources.

A critical response to this theory suggests that connectivism isn't the only way to learn. Instructivism is still alive and well because it is efficient. Sometimes specific knowledge is required and must be passed on quickly (Tracey, 2009, March 17). Tracey suggests that the three types of learning, instructivism, constructivism and connectivism are complementary and required at different times and in different learning scenarios. Each type of learning has its place.

Connectivism is an exciting learning theory as it integrates the digital learning I am immersed within in my work. My learning is currently occurring in four major fields: leadership, education, educational technology, and videoconferencing. Learning within these fields includes book learning, group and community learning, and networks such as my Leadership and Learning Group, professional organizations such as TWICE, ISTE, and MACUL. The technology tools that bring my learning networks together include Skype, Twitter, blogs, Ning communities, as well as the email, phone, videoconferencing, and face to face conferences and workshops. My learning is stored across these networks. Some knowledge I am aware of but is stored in colleagues with expertise in various areas. When I need this knowledge, I interact with them to find how that knowledge applies to my need. Connectivism aptly describes my wide network of learning.

The Appeal of Theories

These examples of exciting theories are just a taste of what can be found in my reflection papers. In my work in the Leadership Program, I have thoroughly discovered the usefulness of theories, and have found the appeal of a truly fascinating theory that explains my work and interaction with others. I did not expect to gain an appreciation for theories in my studies; that sounds very dry. However, I certainly found some really cool theories that I get excited about.

New Habits of Writing

For better or for worse, writing has become part of my life, and part of my practice (Bolker, 1998). Writing reflection papers and my dissertation has changed me, my writing, and my reading. I have changed in my view on learning and knowing. My writing has improved; and I read with a more research-aware view. I have been amazed at how much of my learning actually took place while writing my reflection papers. The act of writing out the connections between theory, research, and my practice has deepened and solidified what was only surface knowledge when I was reading. The amount and time I have spent writing during the Leadership Program has created a habit of writing. I do not plan to continue such an intense schedule; however I do plan to continue writing. Writing on my blog, writing articles, even writing books are ways that I will continue my learning after I graduate. I have already created a writing task list to capture the writing momentum and keep it up with future articles, research, and learning. Fullan (2008) suggests that “implementation is the study of learning (or failing to learn) in context” (p. 89). This is why Fullan keeps writing about change. It is why I plan to continue writing about educational technology, specifically videoconferencing, as connected to the various areas I have learned about in the Leadership Program.

Questions Raised

A final major effect of my Leadership studies is the plethora of unanswered questions. Questions and curiosity raised while investigating the various competencies. In many areas, I feel that I have just scratched the surface, and so many new questions have been raised. My study has raised questions that I had to dig to answer; and some that are not yet sufficiently answered. A sample of these questions will illustrate:

What are the connections between types of assessment and a constructivist philosophy of learning?

How do I measure effectiveness in my videoconferencing program? How is effectiveness in my program actually defined?

How do educators connect the current push for using student data to strategies such as differentiated instruction?

How do beliefs about learning and knowledge influence research methods in the research that I read and value?

Questions about the nature of knowledge, knowing, and the views of others around me will continue to challenge my thinking and learning in the future. Practitioners around me implicitly trust numbers. The accountability and data driven decision making movements in K12 public education are driving certain types of knowing and research. Yet other sources and methods of knowledge provide answers to questions not answerable by quantitative methods of research. How are these types of knowledge balanced in my work, my learning, and my relationships with other researchers and colleagues?

These questions will continue to simmer in my brain in future learning and thinking.

Future Paths of Learning and Leadership

When I picture my work in the 15 competencies, I see each competency as a path. With some paths, such as learning and technology, I was already part way down the path when I began the Leadership program. I already had some of the tools and resources necessary to follow the path even further. The path was so exciting and interesting that I followed it over hills and through valleys and up the mountain on the other side. Yet when I crested the mountain, I discovered still more hills, valleys, and mountains to explore as I continue to follow the path.

In other competencies, such as legal, finance, and organizational development, I barely knew the path existed. The Leadership program taught me how to find the path and the tools and resources necessary for walking down that path. During the Leadership Program, I took my first few tentative steps down the path; yet miles stretch out before me.

The Leadership Program has taught me the skills for following the paths of leadership. I have learned how to find and apply a theory to my walk. I have learned how to interact, question, and learn from my fellow travelers. I have learned how to read the journals and research of those who have trod the path ahead of me; and to apply their insights and discoveries to guide my feet.

As I wrote in my IDP, my short term future goal is to be a research-and-theory-grounded, published leader in emerging field of k12 enrichment videoconferencing. As I have walked the paths of the 15 competencies, I have simultaneously made progress towards this goal. My long term goals remain to be available to support Adventist education. My PhD studies have prepared me, so that when God leads me to the next phase, I will be prepared to climb the next hill on the path in front of me.

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