

Educational Leadership Philosophy

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“Success in leading will be wholly dependent on the capacity to build and sustain those human relationships that enable people to make extraordinary things happen on a regular basis.”

- J. Kouzes & B. Posner (2019), *Leadership in Higher Education*

For me, **leadership is a relationship**. It is about bringing people together, enabling others, and collaborating towards a common goal. As the third sibling out of four, I learned from a young age to have influence by consulting, gathering information, exploring fair and just solutions, mediating and negotiating. Even helping my siblings reach a consensus about what movie we would watch filled me with a sense of gratitude and accomplishment. For me, success is making the ordinary extraordinary – small successes can be big wins.

My educational leadership philosophy is the same; **it is about building strong and trusting relationships to promote and foster excellence in teaching and learning**. I truly believe (and agree with Kouzes and Posner) that effective leaders know that the only way to achieve significant change is by developing and sustaining positive working relationships. In a 360° leadership assessment (based on anonymous feedback) that was prepared for me in 2019, some adjectives that my colleagues used to describe me were: **“collaborative, authentic, supportive”** and **“caring, integrity, driver of change”**. I was heartened to see these because, in my view, they encapsulate and reflect my educational leadership philosophy.

Leadership as Authentic and Supportive Collaborator

My primary goal as an educational leader is to foster safe and trusting relationships with my colleagues and our students to support and enable the best teaching and learning experiences possible. I am always available to discuss and mentor and share my thoughts and expertise. I consult broadly and carry out research when I need to. I explore solutions and support and enable others, individually and collectively, to do extraordinary things. **I help set the stage to allow for excellence in teaching and learning and I am continuously and consistently in the wings, ready to jump in should the “stars of the show” need any assistance at any time.**

Leadership as a Caring and Honest Driver of Change

To have meaningful relationships, there must be understanding, compassion, and respect. I strive to be a competent and trustworthy leader that cares deeply. **I do not gossip, nor do I judge or criticize.** I always remember that “everyone has a story” and I seek to meet everyone where they are at in any given situation. I work towards empowering colleagues to be the best teachers and learners they can be.

Driving change requires a calm leader even in a storm. I consult widely, research, listen, think outside the box, and turn my mind to the potential consequences of every decision. These are all moments to care, to respect and to work together to build consensus for solutions that will enhance teaching and learning. Most importantly, **educational leadership is a process – an iterative circular process of reflection, consultation, examination and change as needed.** When making decisions or leading an initiative, I recognize the value of conducting research to identify best practices or exemplars. I provide opportunities for consultation with diverse stakeholders, and I work towards a shared vision and solution. I always keep in mind that people may forget what you did, but they “will never forget how you made them feel” [Maya Angelou].