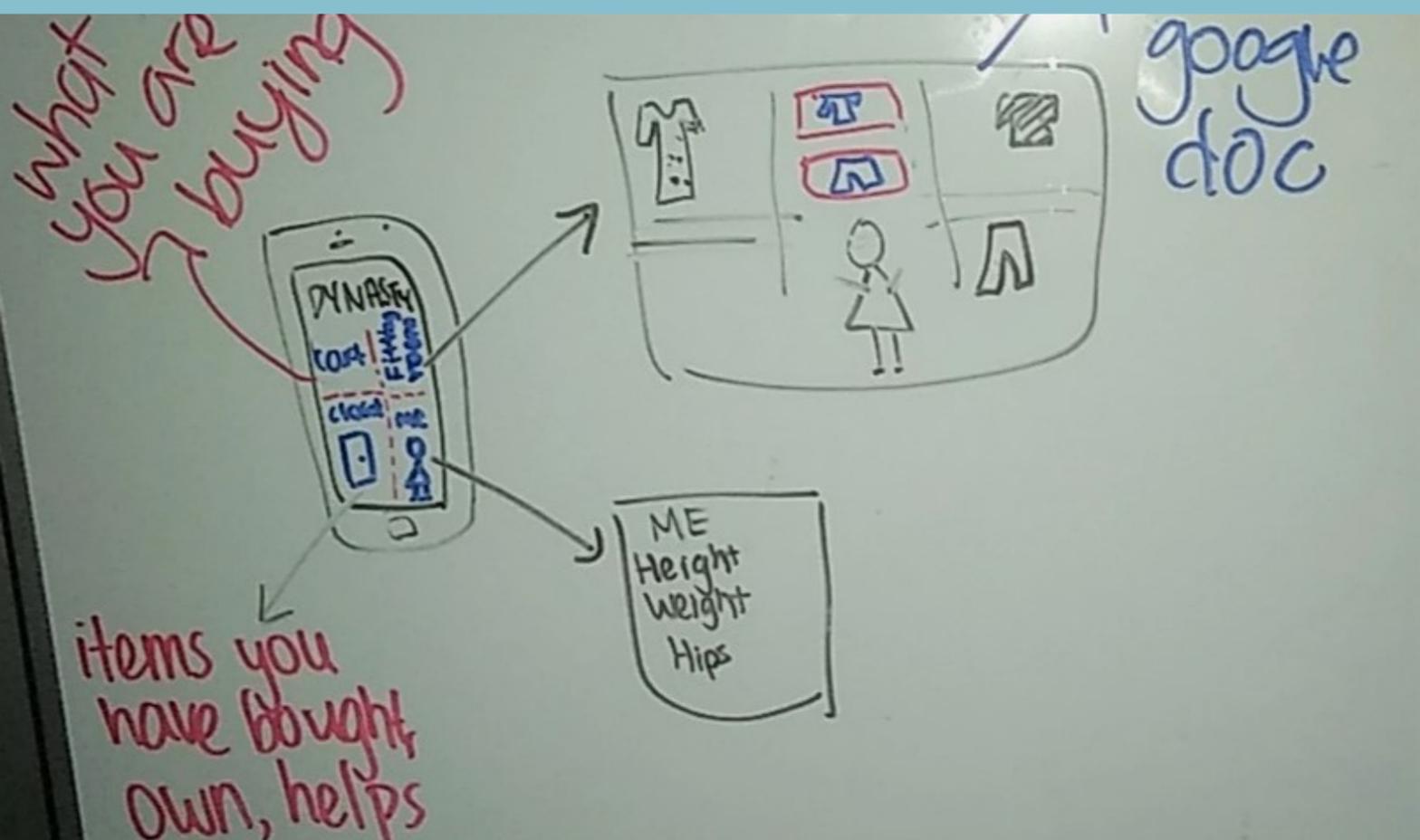
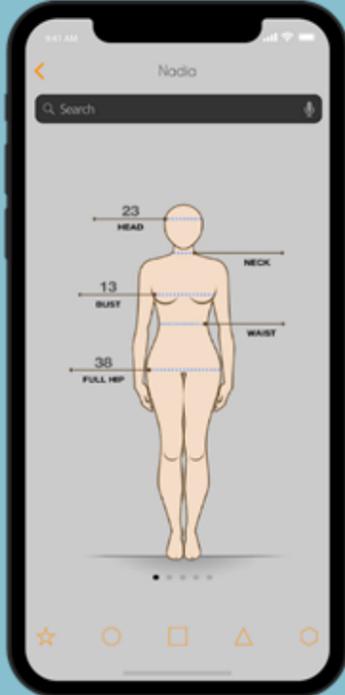
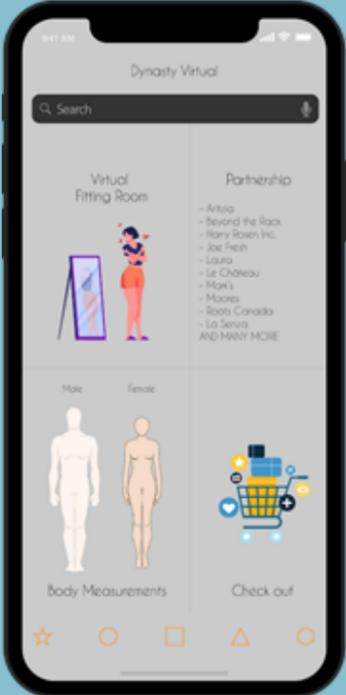
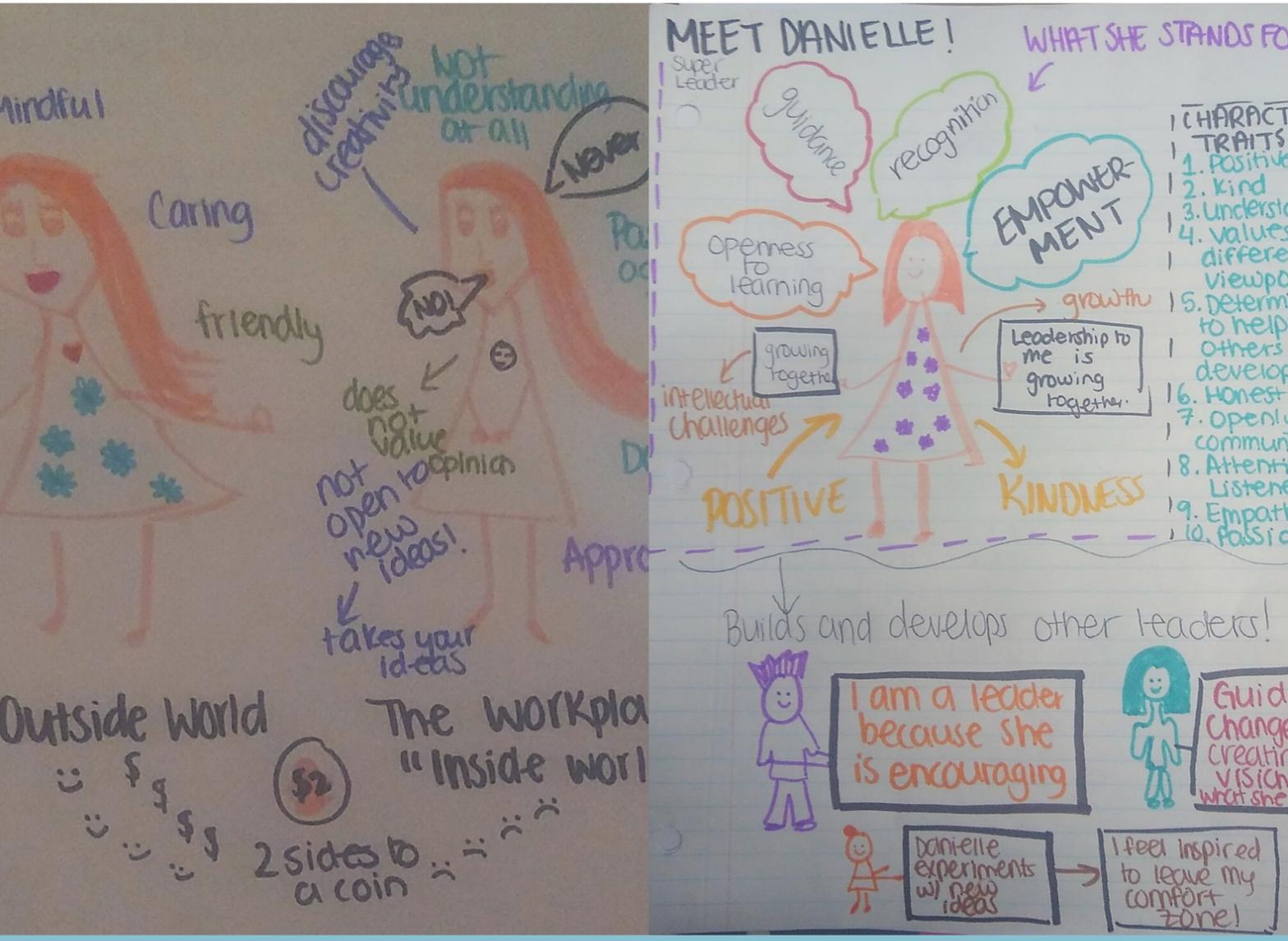


Dalveen's Creative Leadership Portfolio



DALVEEN PADDA
SHERIDAN COLLEGE
PREPARED FOR: PATSY MARSHALL

Dalveen's Creative Leadership Portfolio

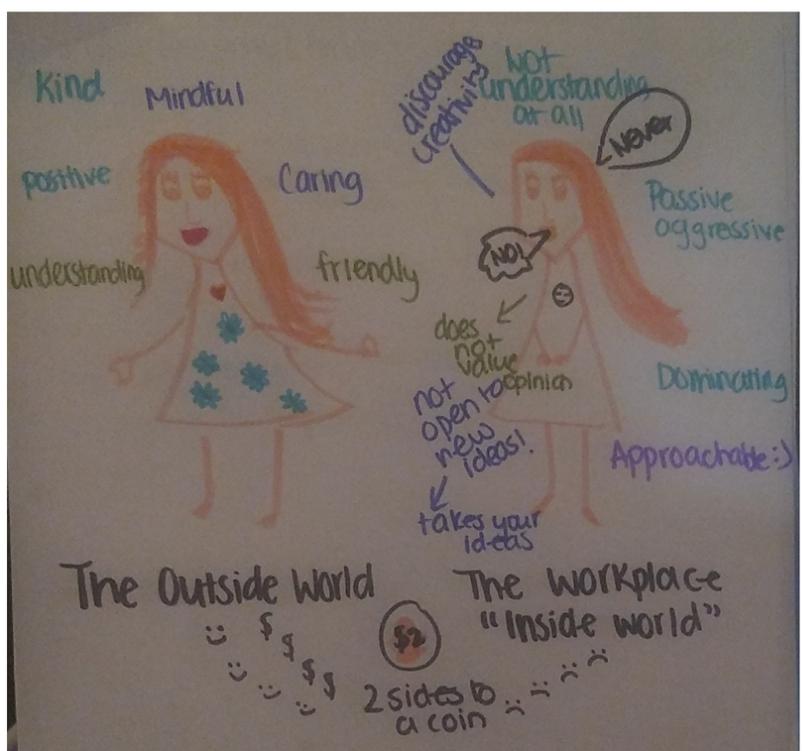
INTRODUCTION

One of the first things I heard when starting at Sheridan in my very first term was that behind every organizations' success are two important traits; leadership and creativity. I always knew these elements were important but never truly understood the way in which the two worked hand in hand, or how the latter contributed to an organizations' success. After reflecting upon the two and learning about them through numerous lens, I too can attest that creativity and leadership truly help organizations grow through the continuous growth of individuals. I did not realize the impact of the two until reflecting upon my own experiences with leaders and my own expression of creativity in this course. The following portfolio contains a few monuments from this course that helped me come to the realization that leadership and creativity are two traits all beings possess, and often it just takes the right leader to help channel that.

WEEK 1:

THE WORST LEADER

The worst leader I identified was one who appeared to be a great leader and individual on the surface, but rather was one who discouraged team members, established authority and limited contributions by placing us all in invisible boxes to constrain creativity. I could never imagine this individual having qualities of a bad leader as they were one of my friends. We all started at the organization together in the same position and the working environment was full of positivity. We used to colour when it was not busy on shift and find ways to tidy up the office and really create a personable workspace. This atmosphere entirely changed when one of our team members became our Team Lead. Their personality changed and it was as if we could not even recognize them anymore.



The reason my drawing has two views of my leader is outside the workplace, they were positive, encouraging, kind, motivating, however within the workplace were pessimistic, dismissive of new ideas and repellent to creativity and change. My team members and I were always looking for ways to contribute to the organization and enhance the value generated from our customer service-oriented positions. However, when we tried to express our ideas to improve a current process or innovate with other departments - we were asked to stick to what is written in our roles. Creativity was immediately dismissed so were our thoughts, as the customer service perspective was not deemed to be impactful. We were instead asked to work on tasks such as ensuring the staplers had enough staples, and the printers had paper, which truly made me devalue my work as a CSR. My leaders intention to not hear our thoughts, ideas and solely rely upon their own instincts often made me feel my passions were not relevant, my thinking was not big enough and creativity was not necessary as it was not listed as a requirement in our job description.

THE WORST LEADER - REFLECTION

Currently I am working in Sheridan's Student Leadership Development and Engagement department, and my role is to encourage creativity for our Peer Mentors and guide them in achieving their goals as a mentor for Sheridan students, as well as encourage their own development. My manager always says that the moment we leave our comfort zone - growth and development occur. However, the hard part is learning where the comfort zones lie for each individual. Hence one of the first things I did was to try and develop a relationship with each and every one of the Peer Mentors I onboarded and then assign projects. Doing so, I realized the Peers were not expanding their curiosity or creativity when leading events or projects, instead were doing the minimum of what was expected of them. The Peer Mentors did not have much experience in facilitating or developing new events and activities, hence my approach was to provide them with my ideas as examples, but I did not see any change instead they became reliant on superiors providing them with the answers. This was one of my biggest mistakes as my team members were not growing, and instead of giving them projects, I should have motivated and encouraged them but I was unsure of how to achieve this.

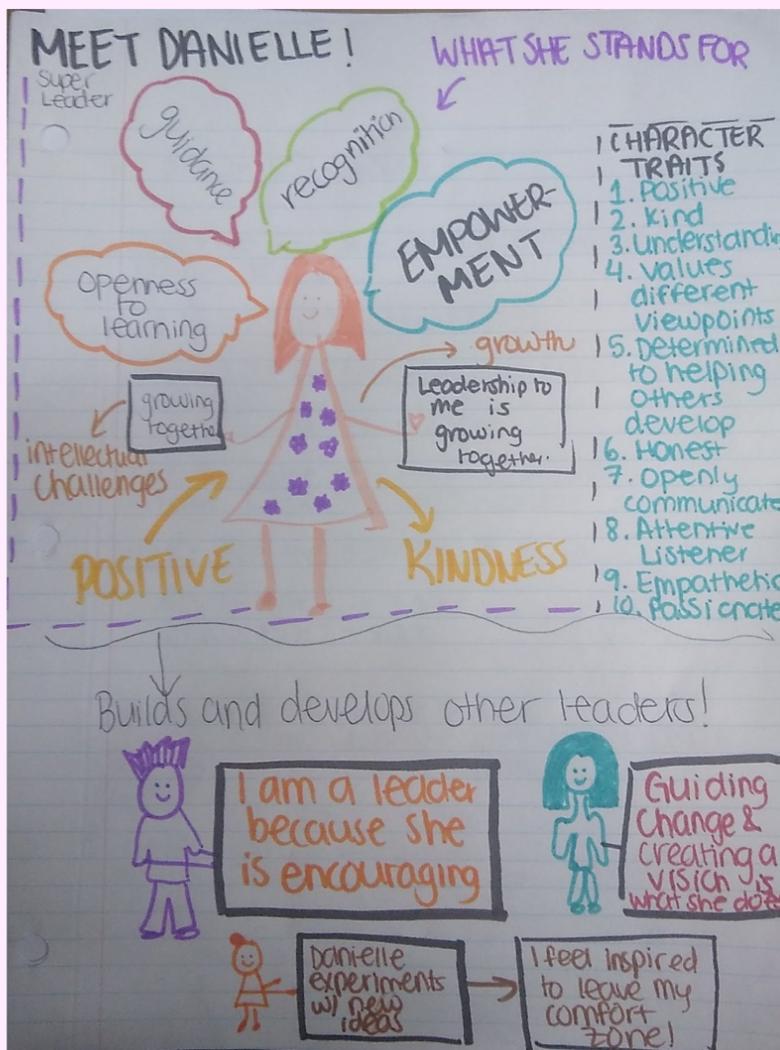


I obtained the answer to my question from Amabile and Kahire's *Creative and the Role of the Leader*, where I was reminded of the easiest yet frequently neglected learnings; to spur creativity and motivation, one must encourage others to pursue their own passions (Amabile & Kahire, 2008). Using this teaching, I took my first step; reintroduce the Dare to Care Campaign, an initiative for which Peers select a social issue they personally care about and develop ways to raise awareness in the Sheridan community. I instantly witnessed the amount of time and effort invested in these initiatives drastically increase as Peers stepped out of their comfort zones. It was truly rewarding to see what taking a step back and allowing my team to flourish could accomplish. It's like Teresa Amabile says "creativity gets killed much more often than it gets supported", and all I was missing was the support and encouragement.

In addition, the managers' guide to enhance creativity developed by Amabile and Khairi is one guide I continually used throughout this term and I think it actually helped me realize the type of leader I want to be. I currently work in the higher education industry, and one of the major reasons I am interested in this industry is that I am committed and highly passionate about continuous learning. Hence, having this guide on my side serves as a reminder and provides direction for leading others to further develop, along with myself. One of the hardest things I have noticed across students and employees thus far is that they are often afraid of failing, hence will not take a chance on themselves. Learners who are transitioning from high school seem to be nervous about failure and this guide has taught me the way in which can help them see another lens of failure. Rather than seeing it as something you were unable to achieve, think of it as a learning experience that you can utilize in the future. I am really looking forward to applying the managers' guide to enhancing creativity and leadership at my workplace! (Amabile & Kahire, 2008).

Dalveen's Creative Leadership Portfolio

WEEK 2: SUPER LEADER - DANIELLE



Danielle is an individual who authentically invests her own time and efforts in motivating and encouraging those around her to work towards their own aspirations. She does this through building positive relations with each and every individual she interacts with. Danielle exhibits numerous characteristics of a transformational leader, especially due to her commitment to recognizing and acknowledging the differences of all leaders.

Danielle is my current Supervisor and she is the Coordination of Student Leadership Development and Engagement. One of the greatest things I've learned from her is reconstructing my prior knowledge. For instance, I was once telling Danielle about the golden rule I learned in my grade four class, and how it is something I apply, which is "treat others the way you want to be treated", and she instantly helped me realize the mistake in my thinking!

Danielle allowed me to see what was wrong with this statement; it was not accepting the differences that make us unique leaders, and was only focusing on looking at things from one perspective which is something one should not do as we all have the ability to add values in different ways.

Ever since I was a little girl, I knew I wanted to be a part of the educational industry whether it was in the form of a teacher, counsellor or advisor. During my time at College, I realized the particular area of education I want to work in is higher education. The reason I wanted to go into these areas was because I would be able to help learners work towards their potential, realize their self-worth and make a difference in the communities we live in. This is something Danielle does everyday as a transformational leader and I only hope to achieve this through her values and acts of kindness, empathy, passion, understanding, optimism and attentive listening. Danielle, a transformational leader, is the type of leader I hope to become. I want to show confidence in my team members and their ability to reach their full potential, rather than treating everyone with the same and neglecting their differences

BECOMING A SUPER LEADER - REFLECTION

Over the years, I have come across many leaders but none like my own Supervisor, Danielle. Danielle is personally one of my role models, who truly inspires myself as well as others to continually want to improve and be open to change. I would love to create the same kind of impact Danielle has had on me for others to help them also realize their potential. To do so, I needed to identify the kind of leader Danielle was, and why she is particularly my role model when it comes to all things growth related. This discussion prompt really allowed me to discover this through Zakeer Ahmed, Allah Nawaz and Irfan Ullah Khan's *Leadership Theories and Styles: A Literature Review*. The reading illustrates that a transformational leader is one who possess and integrates the four following attributes in all things they do: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration (Ahmed, Nawaz & Khan, 2016).



One of the first attributes that helped me realize Danielle possessed a transformational leadership style was her use of individualized consideration, whereby she did not act as an authoritative figure, rather someone who genuinely was committed and interested in your growth and at the end of the day wanted you to succeed. There is true power in helping someone reach their full potential by viewing them as a human being first. I have been continually integrating individualized consideration in my role in the Student Affairs department as a Peer Leadership Facilitator, building relationships with Peer Mentors one-on-one as I trained them in their first month of work. However, after they have been trained, they typically interact with their own Team Leads, and my role has become a lot more administrative.

One of the Peers had reached out to me as they were feeling they were not adding value as a Peer Mentor and were rethinking their goals and program choice. Hence, I began talking to them to help them remember why they became a peer mentor in the first place or came to Sheridan. The Peer Mentor identified that they went into social work because they wanted to help find children the best homes and also combat social issues such as lack of support for Indigenous women and mental health. Based on this, I put intellectual stimulation into action by encouraging them to create an event or program in relation to one of these things they care about. By acting as the guide on the side rather than the sage on the stage, I was able to encourage and motivate the Peer of why they wanted to know what they did in the first place. The happiness from this Peer in combination with Zakeer, Allah and Irfan helped shed light into my life, showing me that even something as small as a positive relationship with an individual can help encourage them to follow their passions. Ever since this day, I have made a commitment to popping into team meetings for a few minutes to simply say hi, and do a quick check in which has sent more Peers my way looking for advice in general about their studies and their career goals.

I believe the biggest piece of advice I learned was a leader should not suffocate its employees, rather empower them and give them the freedom to make choices in the best interest of the company (Ahmed, Nawaz & Khan, 2017). This is a crucial step for any HR professional or individual from the educational field to take as employees as well as students must see the value of their skills, and must be provided with an open outlet to express their creativity. The reason is that when people are invested and passionate about something they have chosen, their level of engagement will result in great results. Continually adapting ones leadership style is also a vital skill any HR professional should possess as they are the change agents in the company that will allow for positive outcomes to foster through unity. One attribute I would personally like to grow in as a transformational leader is idealized influence, and I plan to do this by involving Peer Mentors in the overall content, having them lead their own icebreakers, and providing them with opportunities to develop their facilitation and engagement skills, rather than throwing them into a task. This will allow me to truly transform their confidence by helping them realize the strengths they already possess that are vital to the work they are doing.

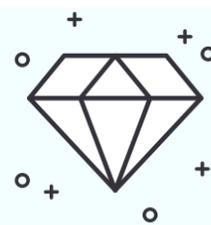
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WEEK 3: GET MOTIVATED



Why Sheridan

I could have chosen to pursue my Human Resources degree anywhere but I picked Sheridan because of its flipped classroom model. The reason for this is that I was a transitioning student from high school and did not have any practical experience in the field, and am someone who learns best from conversing and interacting with others. The flipped model has benefited me by providing me with opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge obtained prior to class, in a practical way within the classroom. I have also appreciated professors initiative to tailor learning to the different learning styles in the classroom.



Why HR and AE?

I am currently pursuing my human resources degree as well as my Adult Education certificate with Sheridan. I chose to enter HR because I knew I wanted to be in a role in which I would be presented with opportunities to interact with individuals, contribute to a positive company culture and help foster relationships. After taking the Learning and Development course in my HR program, I discovered an immediate love for adult education and began looking for ways in which I could learn more. I always wanted to go into teaching, and this was a way for me to combine my love for growth, facilitation and HR.



If not HR, then what?

In grade 12, when we had to make the decision to pick a program, I was feeling quite conflicted as I was highly passionate about Human Resources, Nursing, Mental Health and Advising. If I was not in HR, I would likely pursue a career in counselling and advising. I would want to work in higher education, in the Health and Wellness department of the institution. The reason why mental health is such an important area for me is that I feel this is something we were taught to neglect growing up. I would want to tackle the stigmas associated with mental health and encourage wellness.



Fun in the role of a Facilitator

The most exciting part of my role as a Leadership facilitator is being able to interact with so many individuals, and have opportunities to not only facilitate but also learn from them. My favourite part is designing professional development opportunities for Peers and seeing how engaged they are, and glad to have attended a voluntary social event I have hosted. It is truly the best feeling in the world, and it is my favourite part of my role - being able to experiment with new ideas and collaborate with team members to design professional development opportunities for Peers.

Unlimited Resources & Time

If I was provided with unlimited resources and time, one of the first things I would do is to open up my own bakery! I absolutely love to bake and its more for fun rather than a professional business. I wouldn't have to worry about revenue, and keep the business open so families can come and bake with me. This will help create a fun environment. In addition to that, I would definitely learn to paint and knit - paint mainly for myself, and knit clothes to provide to the homeless where possible.

Reflection

When Teresa Amabile says "Creativity thrives when managers let people decide how to climb a mountain; they needn't, however, let employees choose which one." I immediately feel my eyes widen and open, as if I have been waiting for the day on which I would hear these words (Teresa,1998). Through Amabile's *How to Kill Creativity*, I have gained insight into ways in which HR professionals can contribute to a more productive workforce and a positive learning culture. The first step is to realize that creativity can take form in three ways; motivation, creative thinking and lastly expertise. Prior to this particular reading, I was already aware intrinsic motivation was more influential than extrinsic, but was just unsure how. For starters, intrinsic motivation definitely does allow for better ideation from members of an organization as they have a personal stake in it, but what I failed to realize was that even intrinsic motivation has its limits. In my field of work in higher education, I realize that a professors tone towards a student or an ongoing dispute between a colleague could truly hinder motivation, taking away value the employee or student could generate. As Teresa mentions, creativity in the business world must be managed and can be done so by incorporating six elements: challenge; resources; work-group features; supervisory encouragement; organizational support; and freedom. Despite being independent, these six elements are all interdependent upon one another. Of the six, I believe supervisory encouragement and work-group features are two of the most major ones to look into for an HR professional as it has to do with the overall dynamic and culture in the company/team environment. After learning that one of the major ways in which creativity is killed is due to a lack of of recognition of the employees efforts, I realize that intrinsic motivation will also impact whether the employee stays. This shows despite the monetary income the employee may make, it is not enough when their hard work is not recognized, as they offer diverse perspective. This gives me the idea to host an event to recognize my Peer Mentors and Team Leads, as they have not received any form of recognition by the organization itself. (Amabile, 1998)

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WEEK 4: COORDINATING PRODUCT INNOVATION

Title: Dynasty Virtual



Dynasty Virtual

Synthesis

This is a combination of a virtual app that assists individuals with online shopping to create a virtual closet. It is as simple as recording your scale and finding the perfect product to match your style. Our new and effective app *Dynasty Virtual* is designed to bring ease to all shoppers through the comfort of their own home. We have an added feature which allows you to upload your image and photoshop outfits you want to try with a simple touch. *Dynasty Virtual* allows you to shop from multiple retail stores and try on millions of outfits without stepping outside of your house.

Story

With the rising cases of Covid-19 all onsite clothing stores have been temporarily shut down as a safety precaution for all citizens in Toronto. This issue has forced Nadia into a stressful situation as she has no outfit to wear for her interview at Dreams HealthCare, which is in two days! As Nadia is a visual shopper, who loves to try on clothes before a purchase, she found online shopping to be quite difficult as she did not know what would look good on her. A friend of hers suggested downloading the app *Dynasty Virtual*. Nadia noticed how easy this app was – all she had to do was add in her scaled measurements, upload an image and shop while being able to virtually try on clothes. This process was less time consuming and enjoyable as she was able to try on multiple outfits from branded stores like H&M, Gap, and Aritzia with just a touch of a button. At the end of the day, Nadia was able to purchase her perfect interview outfit through *Dynasty Virtual* without having to leave her couch!

Metaphor

Dress fitting is one CLICK away!

Prototype

As our team focused on creating a mobile application, we were not able to create a real physical prototype, therefore, our team had to use photoshop to develop a simulated visual image of the app, and its functions.



REFLECTION

This discussion activity has been by far my most favourite experience in the course. The reason for this is for us to innovate a product, there was continual collaboration, piggybacking of ideas. What made our group so effective was our ability to integrate the element of self-awareness as heavily emphasized by Robert McKee. To come up with an idea for our product, we all thought about the current COVID-19 pandemic, and began sharing our own stories as to how the experience has been, which parts of our lives have been impacted. We all had a passion for shopping and realized that this is potentially one of the biggest area that has revolutionized due to the pandemic. We then began thinking about what features we would personally like in an app, and what was amazing was the diversity of ideas we generated.

From this experience, what I learned was Robert McKee was absolutely correct. We as a team would not have been able to come up with an idea we all agreed upon or felt drawn towards if we did not possess self-knowledge, allowing for storytelling to take place. One interesting teaching I took away from Robert McKee's *Storytelling that Moves People* is that being a good story teller can help develop a good leader, and the reason for this is that by digging into our own experiences, we are able to find things we are passionate and identify internal struggles. I now see storytelling as an art and crucial part of growth. In higher education, when learners are tested through assessments such as multiple choice questions, they are not always an accurate measure of how much an individual knows or how much they have grown. Incorporating assessment tools such as storytelling and reflection exercises will allow educators like myself to recognize the additional knowledge that was not intended but has been acquired by the learner. Also, as an employee within the Student Leadership Development and Engagement department, from both the viewpoint of a Facilitator and HR student, storytelling is really an important tool because the self awareness that results from it is crucial for growth. Students and employees may not feel if they are growing or improving in competencies unless given the chance to monitor that growth. As someone passionate to become an adult educator, I aspire to use these insights from McKee going forward.

Lastly, another lesson I learned was even if one is a great storyteller they are not a good leader, unless the duality of compassion/humanity with respect to skepticism and reality exist. I feel this is a valid point because although self-knowledge will allow one to see beneath their own mask and better understand or relate with others, a lack of skepticism will not allow you to look beyond what you see, which at times is not the entire picture as it is tainted by a large amount of subjectivity.

(McKee, 2003).

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