

## My Personal-Best Experience of Leadership

With leadership, as with many things in life, experience can be the best teacher. We learn what to do by trying it out ourselves or by watching others. The problem is that not all of what's done or observed is effective or appropriate behavior. So it's important to base our leadership practices on the best of what people do or see—those times when people perform at their best as leaders or when we observe others at their best.

This assignment is designed to get you to focus on *your* personal-best leadership experience. You may be discussing this experience with a few others, so it's important that you complete this brief task prior to the conversation. Writing this case study about your own personal-best leadership experience can take anywhere from fifteen minutes to an hour, so please set aside adequate time for both reflection and expression.

1. Recall a time when you did your *very* best as a leader. Think about a time when you set your *individual standard of excellence* as a leader. It's a time when you *excelled*. Your leadership experience can be in school; in a classroom, club or team; in the community, a religious group, or a sports team; or in the workplace. It can be one that you are presently involved with or one you were involved with sometime in the past; in the public or private sector; as an appointed, selected, or "emerged" leader; for pay or as a volunteer. Write a very brief identifying description of that experience in the following space so you can give everyone an understanding of the context. For example: When did this occur? Who was involved? What challenges did you face?
2. Thinking about the case you just selected, what are the five to seven actions you took as a leader that made a difference? That is, what specifically would you say you did as a leader that mobilized your group or organization to get extraordinary things done?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
  - f.
  - g.

3. What were the two or three major lessons that you learned about leadership from this experience? That is, if you were going to give someone else advice about being a leader, based on your own experience, what would you tell that person?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

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