



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA
FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN Y CIENCIAS HUMANAS
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS



A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

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MARIA VICTORIA COTES ARROYO



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

DIPLOMA COURSE

Lifelong Professional Development: Empowering Foreign Language Teachers

MONTERÍA - CÓRDOBA

2023



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Statement submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of English
Teaching Program

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Personal Leadership Statement

2022-II

In the future, we would like to see ourselves as natural leaders. We enjoy managing a team and helping others apart of learning from the experience to develop our skills and abilities but also theirs. Also, we are passionate about the listener role: we make it a priority to listen to individuals, their feelings, concerns, and opinions; for us is about ensuring they know how much their opinion matters to us. Understanding these values and skills is essential for contributing to a team to work toward a goal.



A leader is a person who stands for others to make the greatest things and prove their worth, something you earn in your way of performance.

— Arcia & Cotes, *Personal Leadership Statement*



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Abstract

In the educational progress of an institution, leadership is a skill that enhances the efficiency and equity of education of a group, not only of individuals. Its function is to improve the results and influence the motivations and abilities of all the members that belong to it, and what better way than to implement the term empowerment and authenticity to promote positive changes? In this personal leadership statement, we cover key leadership concepts, our own assumptions, and the possible implications if we implement them in institutions with a plan for future development as great leaders. The plan is to use empowerment to transform the process of being a teacher into a more authentic and open leader. Thus, the plan proposed leads to better satisfaction and growth.

Keywords: Leadership, Empowerment, Authentic leader, School.



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Introduction

Leadership is an emerging phenomenon and its definition will continue to change and evolve as time goes by and as more and more research is done on the subject. According to Daft (2008), “Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes.” (p. 4). Consequently, a leader has the impact to motivate, encourage and empower other people to turn every challenge into a solution. In the same manner, Mott et al. (2006, p. 457) stated, "Leadership is a challenge and an opportunity", that is to say, a leader undertakes opportunities to help a group of individuals succeed in their work, promoting confidence to unleash people's high capabilities. Additionally, “Authentic leaders are by definition more aware of the values that drive their decisions — which makes them better able to describe those values accurately and so align their words and actions” (Leroy, Palanski, & Simmons, 2012, p.257).

According to Robinson (2006) "The real role of leadership in education...is not, and should not be, ‘command and control’; the real role of leadership is ‘climate control’". In this setting, a leader influences and inspires people through communication, creativity, empathy, commitment, adaptation, and most importantly teamwork. Leaders with these characteristics and values should provide a pleasant environment and be available for others when needed, instead of controlling every single part of the learning process. In this context, and as far as we are concerned, leadership is a continuous process of influencing humanity to follow and build a vision to make effective changes.



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In addition, we are drawn to the fact that authentic leaders are driven by values, which leads them to reorient the behavior that they establish in the environment in which they work. This implies that this leader acts as himself, his true self, expressing his thoughts and feelings with his team and thus achieving the objectives set together. That is why we would like to take this perspective in our paper.

Our Assumptions

Teacher leaders greatly influence people not only due to their models of integrity and professionalism but also their commitment to the academic and learning organization. In other words, for leaders in teaching, it is essential to recognize opportunities and take the initiative, mobilize people around a common purpose, identify resources, and take actions to have an impact on humankind (Lumpkin et al., 2014). In this regard, it is crucial for teachers to have an open mind that conceives the idea of doubting and rethinking assumptions about students' differences as a way to promote diversity in the classroom. Daft (2008) pointed out that they understand the limitations of past experience and reach out for diverse perspectives. Put differently, educators should use their assumptions as a tool that leads to promoting values, creating lessons, using strategies, and challenging stereotypes and generalizations.

Regarding collaborative work, it may be said that this path has been extremely useful for our team to become leaders whose trust and support are vital for a process of constant learning. York-Barr and Duke (2004) indicated that effective teacher leaders develop



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trusting and collaborative relationships. Each of us has contributed ideas and thoughts related to our experiences and has led us to better-executed objectives, such as delivering workshops on time and being committed to our labor. As future teacher leaders and leaders in the years to come, it can be perceived that the responsibilities and initiatives we have worked on have helped us to produce interactive learning where competencies towards an established and agreed-upon goal are built. Collaborative work has also supported us to improve communication and problem-solving skills important for our work, environment, and daily basis.

Therefore, in our eyes, collaborative work is an important tool used to take our work team to a higher level, obtaining a positive and participatory impact that is appreciated as future leaders. Burrell affirmed that “part of being successful is about asking questions and listening to the answers” (n. d.). As future leaders in the empowerment process, some fundamental questions have arisen concerning our process. Three of these questions are: Will we be overall good leaders? Do we have all the competencies to be a leader? And lastly, how can we demonstrate our abilities as leaders when we have doubts and there are problems that we cannot solve?

During the formative process that we are part of in our diploma as a degree option, we have managed to answer one of these questions but we still lack the other and next to do in our learning process to become future leaders empowered by personality and word.



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Leadership Empowerment and Implications for the Future

When discussing our leadership plans and their implementation in schools, some ideas have come up. According to Daft (2008), “A significant way in which leaders can meet the higher motivational needs of subordinates is to shift power down from the top of the organizational hierarchy and share it with subordinates.” (p.242). In that context, we want to embrace this part in order to go deep into the traditional way that educators work and teach students in schools. That is based on the idea that teachers only can be the ones who have the correct and only knowledge.

The plan is to use empowerment to grow the process of a teacher into a more authentic and open leader where delegation is possible to have better satisfaction development in the institution. Not only does empowerment provide quality but a strong motivation to meet the higher needs of an individual. (Daft, p. 243)

In light of the above and within our prospective plan, the idea that came to us was to change the way the administration of the institutional place works. This can be one in which all the members of the schools, including vice principals, subject teachers, students, and parents can contribute, take measures, and act in the decisions that come up with advances to improve the internal structure of the faculty. We believe that this change is necessary as it leads to better outcomes in the school. That is to say when a system works as a whole, that makes it easy to achieve the proposed objectives.



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Conclusion

Leadership plans fulfill the function of managing all those detailed ideas that were determined as objectives to be achieved and therefore reach success. In a few words, these plans will be taken as a tool used to guide our work strategically and perform it with precision. Planning and organization as a whole will help us determine a course of action to achieve our goals and targets. For this reason, having a good organization will guarantee that the leadership plan will be successful. It depends on it to control, lead, and manage the planning of a team.

In schools, it is important to ensure great programs with exceptional methodologies and designs in order to innovate and make a difference in foreign language learning. That is why different approaches should be considered. For instance, an immersion program that consists of a proposal in which learners are fully involved in the foreign language by using it as the medium of instruction (both in and outside the class), might demonstrate higher levels of academic performance in the learning of the target language. Another important feature is to use a foreign language instead of the mother tongue to teach two or three subjects to increase the contact time with it and make learning significant and powerful.



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