

The Quiet Leadership Role I Played That No One Noticed

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Leadership is widely seen as something loud, commanding and attention catching, however, there are moments of leadership in my life, where a quiet moment had a significant effect. I had a leadership role in my last college year but this was a stealthy leadership style that most parties did not notice in any manner but the impact of this leadership was felt by the affected parties. The lesson learned was that great leadership does not only signify recognition but leaving a substantial impact in the background.

This case occurred after I joined a student group that has the mandate of hosting an annual conference. Whereas the more visible functions, e.g., the management of speakers, and the advertising of the event, were the most important, my role was rather hidden. My responsibility was to manage the logistical side of the event, coordinating with the vendors, as well as making last-minute changes. It was a job that required a lot of back stage performance and I was not always noticed by the greater audience.

Although they failed to appreciate the fact, I soon understood that the success of the event was heavily dependent on my contribution. The true test of it was seen when tough situations came out of the blue such as vendor disforthcomingness at the last minute, technical issues during practice and other speakers who needed special consideration. My leadership did not involve taking the center stage but silently resolving issues and ensuring the event was on schedule. I could make quick decisions when on the spot, seek alternative solutions when things went wrong, and informed the whole team of the changes without imposing pressure. I did not want to be noticed or praised with the work I did; all I needed was to make sure that everything was going well.

Other people were also occupied with the front office aspects of the event, but I was the one developing the back office that enabled the rest to run smoothly. I was essentially a leader by example. One of the studies related to servant leadership indicates that successful leaders tend to place the needs of others at the forefront and come behind to serve the teams (Greenleaf, 2002). This was what leadership entailed in the conference. I did not want to stand out, I wanted to make the event a success and people, who were involved, had what they needed to be successful in their work.

The leadership silence that I exercised in the position taught me relevant lessons, which I still use in my professional life. I came to know that being a leader is a thing to do efficiently as opposed to glamorously. It is about trust-building and doing all that is possible to make everything fall together. My contribution went unrecognized by the majority of people but I was genuinely grateful to the team and event participants who gave me their legitimate gratitude as an individual who made sure the event was a success.

To sum up, the quiet leadership style that I was engaged in showed me that being a true leader does not necessarily imply visibility but contribution. The experience has been further shaping my leadership style today because of the lessons that I have learned.

References

Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. Paulist Press.