leadership development plan contents

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reflected best self

I am a husband, a father, a brother, a colleague, and a friend. I am sensitive, compassionate, intuitive, and innovative.

My best self is a servant-leader—one who inspires others by unlocking the potential inside themselves. In accomplishing this end, I am highly organized and approach the work in front of me in an efficient and intuitive manner. I listen and have compassion for others and their respective, individualized needs. I openly celebrate wins and quietly and considerately mourn losses and failure. With the resources at my disposal, I ensure they are utilized in such a way as to maximize their intrinsic and extrinsic value.

My best self understands the worth of sacrifice. Whether it is personal or professional, I know that nothing worthwhile comes without sacrifice and an expert application of technical skill and dexterity. And, when things do not happen as planned or as hoped, I adapt and learn quickly from mistakes and setbacks to minimize any lasting damage. In that same vein, I embrace change for what it is: improvement and opportunity. Change tests us all, but I always come out on top.

My best self is mature and professional. In representing my organization, my affiliations, and my family, I know that I represent more than just myself. I employ professional conversation and conduct at all times and in all places.

My best self is passionate. Let me share an example of the feedback I received during this exercise: “We were on the roof of the parking structure across the street from the Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia overlooking the hospital and the cityscape. You passionately described the hospital’s efforts to provide care to the poor and underserved market that was all around us. It was a memorable view and an impressive guide.”

My best self is all of these things, but most of all, it is always improving. I seek opportunities to improve my relationships, my technical skills, and my leadership style and capabilities.

This is my best self. And it will get better.

Tucker Petersen
my inspired vision

An achievable vision requires a principled foundation and a desire to become something more. My vision is to lead by example, to inspire others to live a successful and principled life, and to become something more.

BALANCE

The Master in the art of living makes little distinction between his work and his play, his labor and his leisure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation, his love and his religion. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence in whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing. To him he is always doing both.

- James Michener

INTEGRITY

Men and nations may loudly proclaim, ‘Peace! Peace!’ but there shall be no peace until individuals nurture in their souls those principles of personal purity, integrity, and character which foster the development of peace. Peace cannot be imposed. It must come from the lives and hearts of men. There is no other way.

- Ezra Taft Benson

WORK ETHIC

So, possess the strength and the courage, to conquer what’ere you choose; ‘Tis the person who never gets started, that is destined forever to lose!

- Author Unknown

LIFE-LONG LEARNING

I am defeated, and know it if I meet any human being from whom I find myself unable to learn anything.

- George Herbert Palmer

A VISION...

A vision is not just a picture of what could be; it is an appeal to our better selves, a call to become something more.

- Rosabeth Moss Kanter
SYNTHESIS

A synthesis of multiple strengths and weaknesses assessments shows that I have many opportunities for improvement, but also that I have strengths and skills that I can leverage in order to achieve the desired improvement.

The opportunities for improvement can be summarized or categorized into three buckets. First are the relational weaknesses. These deal specifically with my relationships with others and how I interact with those around me from first encounters to long-term associations. I find that I often jump to conclusions about people and situations, and to my detriment, fail to alter those conclusions even when conflicting and convincing evidence is presented. Another relational weakness I have is that I do not make enough effort to listen effectively and often forget things people tell me.

The second bucket of opportunities is commitment and control. By improving in these areas I will save time and improve efficiency because I will commit early and for the duration of the project to quality production.

Finally, the third bucket is my own introversion. I have long known that I am an introvert, and many of the weaknesses I have in the other categories stem from this single bucket. By improving here I will be better able and willing to ask for help when I need it, listen actively and effectively, and recognize the value that others bring to the table.

In identifying these opportunities for improvement, I am becoming more and more keenly aware of the strengths I have to leverage against them. To deal with relational opportunities, I am loyal, understanding, and have a deep desire to learn. These also apply to my commitment and control weaknesses, but I can add to that my technical and analytical skill. Finally, to deal with my introversion, I recognize that I have at times taken necessary steps to approach others and build relationships and my professional network. Because I have done it in the past, I know I can do it in the future. The key now is to continue to do it. This skill along with my deep desire for quality feedback and an aspiration for improvement will help me along the way.

In summary, I have many weaknesses that I know about and as time goes on, they change and some are taken off the list while others are added. However, I also have many strengths, and through an application and leveraging of those strengths, I will grow and develop as a professional and as a leader in all spheres.
STRENGTHS & SKILLS ASSESSMENT

NEGOTIATION  I have an ability to talk to people when I need to, and to successfully negotiate positive outcomes for both parties in the discussion.

APPROACH  I am an introvert, but when a situation requires me to speak to someone, I can do so comfortably and professionally.

UNDERSTANDING  I understand body language and tone, and can alter my approach to a situation accordingly.

LOYAL TO VALUES  I am loyal to my personally-held beliefs and values, and will not compromise them. People know this, and it adds to my credibility, dependability, and authenticity.

INFORMATION SYNTHESIS  I have the ability to quickly synthesize information in an understandable and efficient way.

ANALYTICAL  I have the ability to think things out analytically, and to understand the consequences of sequences of various actions.

BALANCED  I have found balance in my personal and professional life, and can realize when they are out of balance. When that happens, I have approaches I take to correct the balance without sacrificing one or the other.

DESIRE TO LEARN  I have an inherent desire to learn as much as I can about everything. This helps me to find the value in almost every situation and project. Additionally, it gives me motivation to do things well.

FEEDBACK  I thrive on feedback, and continuously seek it, and apply it. This helps me to improve, and lets others know I value their opinion.

FRIEND  I am a friend to almost everyone I meet. After an initial encounter, that person and I can talk like old friends. This helps in networking and relationship building.

COMPUTER  I am extremely skilled with many computer software packages that are used in everyday operations (e.g., Microsoft Office, DecisionTools, Adobe, etc.).

ABILITY TO CHANGE  When I realize an opportunity for improvement, or set a goal for myself, I make a plan to improve or achieve that goal. The plan is the first step. See Commitment below.
WEAKNESSES & OPPORTUNITIES ASSESSMENT

QUICK TO JUDGE  I often jump to conclusions about people, and sometimes hold to those early opinions even in the face of conflicting evidence and behavior in order to save face.

STUBBORN  If I believe that I am correct about a problem or question (no matter how trivial), I maintain my position sometimes to the detriment of relationships.

SLOPPY  I sometimes fail to take into account all salient information and really take the time to develop a highest-quality product in order to get it submitted quickly, making for lost time in the future to correct past sloppy mistakes.

INTROVERTED  I am an introvert, and if given the choice between talking to someone or staying quiet, I will usually stay quiet unless the situation requires otherwise.

VALUE OF OTHERS  I sometimes fail to see the value of others, whether it be value to me and to my goals, or to the value of the organization I work for.

NAMES  I have a hard time remembering people’s names. This is harmful to my networking if I can’t remember who that “contact” was.

INFORMATION GATHERING  I have difficulty in always knowing where to find the correct information. In a sea of data, it is sometimes difficult for me to sort out what is most salient.

COMMITMENT  When I have a plan for something in my personal life (and sometimes my professional life, when not associated with a deliverable), I fail many times to stick to the plan, and it ends up sinking before it could really ever gain momentum.
opportunities for improvement

OPPORTUNITY: QUICK TO JUDGE & STUBBORN

COMPETENCY: Enable Others to Act (Foster Collaboration)  
Encourage the Heart (Recognize Contributions)

FEEDBACK:  
I often jump to conclusions about people, and sometimes hold to those early opinions even in the face of conflicting evidence and behavior in order to save face.  
If I believe that I am correct about a problem or question (no matter how trivial), I maintain my position sometimes to the detriment of relationships.

REASON: Will help me to build better, stronger relationships with those I work with. Will enable me to enlist others to follow a shared vision. Will allow me to recognize the value that others bring to the table in any setting, thus allowing for more effective teams and better performance.

OPPORTUNITY: CARELESS

COMPETENCY: Model the Way (Set the Example)

FEEDBACK:  
I sometimes fail to take into account all salient information and really take the time to develop a highest-quality product in order to get it submitted quickly, making for lost time in the future to correct past sloppy mistakes.

REASON: Will give me more time to focus on problem solving and removing obstacles when they do occur rather than creating obstacles myself. Will result in improved performance and fewer errors.
**OPPORTUNITY:** INTROVERTED

**COMPETENCY:**
- Inspire a Shared Vision (Enlist Others)
- Challenge the Process (Experiment & Take Risks)
- Enable Others to Act (Foster Collaboration)
- Encourage the Heart (Celebrate the Values & Victories)

**FEEDBACK:**
I am an introvert, and if given the choice between talking to someone or staying quiet, I will usually stay quiet unless the situation requires otherwise.

**REASON:**
Will allow me to grow my professional network. Will provide me with increased resources to develop better teams, recruit accomplished and qualified professionals, and improve personal, unit, and organizational performance.

**OPPORTUNITY:** VALUE OF OTHERS

**COMPETENCY:**
- Enable Others to Act (Foster Collaboration)
- Encourage the Heart (Recognize Contributions)

**FEEDBACK:**
I sometimes fail to see the value of others, whether it be value to me and to my goals, or to the value of the organization I work for.

**REASON:**
Will help me to create stronger relationships with those with whom I work. Will aide in recognizing existing talent to solve existing problems, rather than spending too much time seeking out resources that were already present, thus resulting in more timely problem solving.
OPPORTUNITY: COMMITMENT

COMPETENCY: Model the Way (Set the Example)
Challenge the Process (Experiment & Take Risks)
Encourage the Heart (Celebrate the Values & Victories)

FEEDBACK: When I have a plan for something in my personal life (and sometimes my professional life, when not associated with a deliverable), I fail many times to stick to the plan, and it ends up sinking before it could really ever gain momentum.

REASON: Will allow for more fulfillment when projects are accomplished. Will broaden my experiences that I have to draw from when trying to inspire, uplift, and enlist others. Will increase the satisfaction I have in my personal and professional life as I will not have to constantly remember unfinished projects that leave reminders all over.
leadership development goals

DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

TACTICAL & FUNCTIONAL

RELATED COMPETENCIES:

- Model the Way (Set the Example)
- Challenge the Process (Experiment & Take Risks)

STRENGTHS TO LEVERAGE:

- Desire to Learn
- Information Synthesis
- Desire to Learn
- Computer Skills

POTENTIAL OBSTACLES:

- Opportunities to Practice
- Feedback on Results of Those Opportunities

RESOURCES:

- Supervisors
- Employers
- Professional Network

ACTION PLAN

Action #1 Due:
Seek out a specific opportunity to work on budget variance analysis.

Action #2 Due:
Seek out a specific opportunity to observe and be involved in capital decision making.

Action #3 Due:
Seek out further opportunity to practice performance dashboard development and analysis.

RESULTS
DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

WRITTEN & SPOKEN WORD

RELATED COMPETENCIES:
Inspire a Shared Vision
Enable Others to Act (Strengthen Others)

STRENGTHS TO LEVERAGE:
Understanding
Information Synthesis
Analytical
Feedback
Approach

POTENTIAL OBSTACLES:
Lack of Opportunity
Little or No Appreciation for My Opinion

RESOURCES:
Employers
Supervisors
Public Speaking Coach

ACTION PLAN

RESULTS

Action #1  Due:
Seek out opportunity to produce a written report.

Action #2  Due:
Seek out opportunity to produce an oral report (or present written report at a meeting).

Action #3  Due:
Seek out opportunity to persuade others or sell a product or service.
DEVELOPMENT GOAL: NETWORKING SKILLS

RELATED COMPETENCIES:
- Inspire a Shared Vision (Enlist Others)
- Challenge the Process (Experiment & Take Risks)
- Challenge the Process (Search for Opportunities)

STRENGTHS TO LEVERAGE:
- Approach
- Negotiation
- Understanding
- Friend
- Ability to Change

POTENTIAL OBSTACLES:
- Introversion
- Time to Grow my Network
- Interest of Others in Joining My Network

RESOURCES:
- ACHE/MHEGA/MHESA
- Employer

ACTION PLAN

Action #1 Due:
Walk up to someone and start a conversation.

Action #2 Due:
At the next networking event I attend, leave with at least seven business cards of people I spoke with.

Action #3 Due:
Start a conversation with a professional who I want to have in my network, and make the situation right to leave them with my card.

RESULTS
reflections & other assessments

The following section represents various reflections and other assessments from Kouzes and Posner’s *The Leadership Challenge* and Kevin Cashman’s *Leadership from the Inside Out: Becoming a Leader for Life*. The purpose of including these reflections in the Leadership Development Plan is to supplement and give support to the further development of leadership goals, strengths and weaknesses assessments, and action plans for opportunities for improvement. The content is designed to be modified as goals and opportunities and environments change.

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

Think back over the last few years and recall projects you have been a part of, whether you were the leader or not. Identify two or three projects that were the most meaningful, energizing, enriching and fun for you.

What you would say characterized these experiences? What made them meaningful, energizing, enriching, and fun? What made you want to continue to be a part of them? Make a list of these attributes.

What do the attributes you listed above say about what you value in the way projects are conducted? For example, you might say “I like the chance to work with some really talented people on a project that was really cutting-edge.” This suggests “teamwork” and “innovation” and “intelligence” are important values to you. What values and actions are important to you in creating a climate in which you feel happy and successful? (KP-LCE-3A)

The first project that comes to mind is when I chaired a multi-disciplinary steering committee charged with developing a care model in keeping with the “medical home” principles. The second project I think of is working with pharmacy administrators to find ways to cut pharmacy costs in the employee pharmacy.

Each of these projects entailed working with administrators who I had not worked with before, providing an opportunity to prove to them what I could do and the value I could bring to the table. That alone made them meaningful for me, as I knew that I could not just sit by and let the project happen. They were going to ask me for my input, and I had to be ready to give it. I remember preparing for those meetings, stressing about what questions they would ask me, and rehearsing responses to likely questions. I wanted to make a good impression, as it would go a long way to securing letters of recommendation in the future. I knew I would enjoy working with such skilled and accomplished individuals, and I had to show them that I could and would be the same.

The technical challenge of these projects also made them invigorating and refreshing. Staying sharp by practicing the skills I use every day is crucial. The issues were challenging, and made for many learning opportunities. Many times we had to find creative solutions to complex and unusual problems. That process was a lot of fun!

The attributes I think of when recalling these experiences are innovative, challenging, collaborative, and technical. These attributes likely suggest, and I believe it, that I enjoy and look forward to working in collaborative, skilled groups that tackle technically challenging situations in an innovative way.

The values that are important to me are, first and foremost, that I feel appreciated for the work I do. That correlates with being continually challenged with more projects. If I get to a point where I am no
longer challenged, I need to be in an environment where I can change that. I will feel, then, that my successes have come from challenge and hard work, and that’s something I can be happy about.

Write a Tribute to Yourself (KP-LCE-3B)

Thank you all for coming.

We are gathered here tonight to celebrate the life’s work of a leader in the industry and a close personal friend of mine. We pay tribute to Tucker Petersen.

Tucker is a loving father, son, husband, brother, and friend to most anyone he meets. He is quick to offer his hand to help a stranger in need, and if you are lucky enough to call him friend, you know even more so how generous he truly is.

I first met Tucker forty-two years ago as his college roommate at Brigham Young University. I instantly saw something special in him. We were all different, but Tucker wasn’t just different. He stood out, and for all the right reasons. He understood people. He knew them from the moment he met them. It’s hard to say how he did it, but he could immediately recognize, empathize with, and appreciate the value in others.

I remember one day at the grocery store, as we checked out, he chose to go to a longer line just to speak to a cashier who looked like she was having a rough day. The young lady was also different. Different in a way that likely caused a lot of emotional and physical pain. Tucker, in a simple act of friendship, gave her a compliment. She smiled. It was a smile that said, “Thank you.”

In other settings, Tucker’s values come out just as strong. He is the symbol of integrity. Tucker is never afraid to tell you what he believes and what he stands for. In doing so, whether he knows it or not, he sets himself to be measured. In the work he does, many are always waiting for him to slip. Never once have I seen it happen, and I don’t expect it ever will.

In addition to his generosity and his personal values, there is no denying his technical prowess and skill that he brings to the office each day. We all know his accomplishments and accolades. We need not share them again. I don’t believe he would want me to, anyway.

Let me just finish by saying this. Tucker. Thank you for your example. Thank you for your skill and innovation. Thank you for your generosity and friendship. Thank you for showing us what a leader should be.

Write Your Credo (KP-LCE-3C)

As you all know, I will be leaving for a six-month sabbatical, and wanted to share some thoughts with you to help you in the work you will be doing while I am away.

Use the following as guiding principles in your day-to-day engagements and throughout your life. If you can successfully integrate these standards and values, I believe that you will be successful in everything you do.

First, work. Work hard. To do a job successfully and excellently, you must put in the time and the effort. I promise that the rewards you reap from that hard work will be doubly sweet if you have truly sacrificed.
Second, be honest. Be honest with yourself and those you work and interact with. People know when you’re “faking” it. Not only is it an insult to them, but it reflects poorly upon you. Be honest always. This is not just something you do to avoid a boss finding out about something you messed up, but it is also a crucial element to successful relationships in every part of our lives. Do not be afraid to give the bad news. It may be hard at first, but people will value you for it. Be straight with them, and they will offer you the same courtesy in return.

Respect others and be generous. Going out of your way to be kind and generous is a sacrifice of your time and energy, and nine times out of ten, people will see it as such and value it just the same. There is no substitute for kindness. There is no value in being condescending and mean.

Find what is of value to you, and treasure it. When you’re done at the office. Go home. Be with friends. Help someone. Work is only part of our life, so let it only be a part. If you have a family, be with them and let them know what they’re worth to you. You may be spending long hours at the office for them, but unless you are spending time with them, they won’t see it. More importantly, they won’t believe it.

These values and principles are general, but they are powerful. Incorporate them into your life, and I promise you will find so much more than you ever did before. You will enjoy your work more. You will enjoy being home more. You will find balance. You will be happier.

Have a good six months!

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Share a story about your internship or other experiences that reflects your values. (KP-LCE-4B)

Liz, the administrator for the pharmacies at the Albert Einstein Healthcare Network, was asked her staff to look into opportunities to cut costs in the employee pharmacy. Being a disproportionate share facility, Einstein was able to take advantage of the 340b program for purchasing drugs at a reduced cost. The stipulations of the program are vague at best, and to ensure that cuts were made appropriately, we involved Legal.

In our discussions with Legal, there was one type of drug that was questionable, as to its eligibility for reduced pricing. Our legal department informed us that in their research some organizations take the cut that is most likely illegal, but because it’s rarely, if ever enforced, they know they could probably get away with it. The majority of staff, including the VP of Healthcare Services, suggested that we move forward and purchase these other drugs at a reduced cost (a potential savings of over $300,000). Liz, however, was adamant that it was, in fact, illegal. And, even if nobody pursued this and enforced it, nothing would change the fact that it was illegal and dishonest.

She took a big step that day, and it was one that could have cost her standing, reputation (as a prude), and maybe her job (for failing to meet financial goals). However, in the end, Liz stood up for being honest. Her values were not questioned, and the issue was forgotten. She did not have to stand up and defend her values, but because she did she will be known for her honesty and integrity, and that’s something even more valuable than meeting financial targets.

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Determine the “Something” You Want to Do (in your career or fellowship or other setting). Describe it in as much detail as possible. (KP-LCE-5A)

In my fellowship I want to work on a project that decreases ED wait times for patients and families. There are several reasons I want to do this. First, waiting can be stressful on both the patients and the families,
so decreasing the time between door-to-answers can alleviate much of that stress, as stress is usually compounded by time thinking about it. Second, the faster we as an organization can turn the patients over, the more money and time that can be saved for the organization. Additionally, improving patient turnover time is a skill that can be applied in many settings and service lines. By having this skill, I can improve the value that I add to any organization that I work for. Additionally, it’s a skill I believe that I can cultivate quickly with the skills I already have. To do so is a challenge, and would make for an uplifting and rewarding fellowship experience.

Ask other people you know (classmates, family members, friends) about their aspirations. Describe how this went for you. Was it easy or difficult? (KP-LCE-5B)

This process was more difficult than I imagined. I found out that unless it is a formal setting (i.e., an interview), people are naturally skeptical when you start asking them about aspirations. However, once we got into our discussions, the answers flowed more readily as people got into that train of thought. I think that we don’t naturally think about our aspirations (some do), but when we start, we get on a roll and the process becomes easier.

Also, the process was different depending on who I asked. In asking students who are working towards a professional degree, the questions about work came easier. In asking family members and those who primarily are stay-at-home parents, the family questions came easier, but the questions about work and career were extremely difficult.

In getting to the real answers, I think depending on whom you’re asking, the approach must be different. Start with the questions that they feel comfortable asking, and then move to the more difficult ones (depending on what they focus on every day).

Imagine that you are attending a dinner by your colleagues ten years from now, honoring you as “The Visionary Leader of the Year.” One after the other, your colleagues and family talk about your contributions you have made to them, the organization, and to the community. What do you hope they will say about you?

What you want others to say about your contributions is really an expression of your own dreams. What does your description of what you want others to say tell you about the difference you’d like to make in the world? (KP-LCE-6B)

The answer to this exercise is quite similar to the tribute I wrote for myself. I hope that people talk about my integrity and my generosity, and how those guided my vision of the future: making a difference in others’ lives. Additionally, I hope they will talk about my technical abilities in making that vision a reality.

As for what vision that is, I don’t yet know what that is. I do want them to say that my values influenced my decision making throughout the entire process.

I think what I want others to say about me tells me that I value the intrinsic motivation more than technical ability. I think that you can train anyone, but that in order to get the most out of someone, you need to find out what is important to them and pull it out of them. Additionally, by finding out what people value, by using a position of influence, you can remove barriers to performance and really let people perform.
Answer the following (KP-LCE-7A):

1. What have you changed lately?

2. What “daring failure” have you experienced in your life? How did you handle it? What did you learn? Be specific.

3. What do you find fun and rewarding about taking risks and trying new things?

4. What do you find difficult about taking risks and trying new things?

1. Lately, I have tried to change my level of commitment to my studies. I have, for awhile, excused myself from long hours and late nights because I had a duty and responsibility to spend as much time with my family as possible. That responsibility has not changed, but I have realized that with a little creativity in my scheduling, I can make the time necessary for them, but may have to sacrifice some sleep and comfort to do so. This way I can devote the required time and energy into my studies. Since starting this change a few months ago, I have noticed a remarkable difference in my attitude toward school and my family. Both have improved, and I’m not feeling as drained of energy as I expected I would. I feel energized by the progress.

2. Recently I found myself in a position where I had no money. This stemmed mostly from a decision I made to not take as much out in student loans, and to make the money we had stretch further. It seemed like a very smart decision at the time, but the stress of wondering if we would have money for rent and other obligations was almost unbearable. This stress also came from a failure to create a budget and stick to it. Deciding to go with less money requires that spending habits change, but we didn’t change them.

To get us through until the next installment of the loans came in, we restructured our loan repayment, credit card debt, and made some significant lifestyle changes (at the time, only for the short term). It got us through the last few weeks until more money came in.

We learned, however, to make the budget early and to follow it religiously. If we didn’t, we would potentially find ourselves in the same situation. Also, we have learned that we can still enjoy life even after the lifestyle changes we made. That’s good, because it helps us to save that much more, and put it away or pay off portions of our student loans.

3. Taking risks and trying new thinks is exciting. For me, that’s a great reward! I get bored easily, and I am always looking for a challenge or a new way to approach a common problem. This almost always includes taking some risk and challenging the process. It’s exciting because it really gets me involved in something that was waning in interest.

4. On the other side of that, the difficult part of taking risks and trying new things is getting others to come along, especially if they are the type that enjoy routine and dislike change and disruption. While this creates another challenge, this is not one that I truly enjoy. However, once I achieve the buy-in from others, the process gets that much more exciting as it gains momentum and people anticipate the rewards and benefits of the risk we’re taking on.

Answer the following (KP-LCE-9A):
1. Think of a time when, as a direct result of something a leader said or did, you felt personally powerful and capable. Write down the actions the leader took that contributed to your feeling strong, capable, and effective – the master of your own experience. Be as specific as you can.

2. Think of a time when you felt powerless, weak, and insignificant as a result of something a leader said or did. What specifically did he or she do?

3. Recall a time when you were part of a team that “just clicked” – a time when it seemed as if everyone was working together smoothly and effortlessly. Describe how people acted toward one another and what the team leader did that contributed to making the team work.

4. Using the lessons from your own experiences – as an individual and as a team member – ask yourself, “How can I enable others to feel powerful and avoid diminishing their personal effectiveness? How can I contribute to teamwork and trust?” Record your responses.

1. During my internship, my preceptor gave me an assignment that I had real doubts about whether or not I could accomplish it as he expected. I vacillated as to whether or not I should express my doubts, but in the end I did. He simply said, “I need you to do it, and I know you can. Get to work.” The confidence he showed in me didn’t completely erase the doubt, but it gave me the extra boost I needed to get the job done. I didn’t have an exact approach, but if he knew I could do it, I knew I had the tools to do so. In the end, I accomplished the task, and he was very grateful and used the end product in his leadership meeting the next week.

2. I had been working on a long-term project for the CEO of a health system in southwest Michigan. I had previously had the tools to accomplish the task, but because of budget restraints he had to cut my licensed access to the software package. He did this without consulting me, and I felt resentment. He asked me to do a job, but then took away the tools to accomplish it. I felt powerless and insignificant, but mostly hurt that he wouldn’t even consult me when I believed he knew I needed it. It seemed to me that he didn’t really care about the project I had devoted so much time to.

3. When I was living in Montreal, I was on a hockey team and we had a number of plays where things just went like clockwork. We didn’t have to think about it, it just happened. The captain of our team gave us clear roles and expectations, and we all knew what we had to do. He also treated us as equals (sometimes “leaders” feel they are above you), and used the pronoun “we”, not “you”. We were a unit that clicked effortlessly, and it felt good to be able to just move and act as a well-oiled machine.

4. It is the small things that enable others to achieve. Giving them the tools they need, encouraging them and instilling them with confidence, and treating them as equals are the basics of helping them achieve.

Think of a time when someone has personally recognized and rewarded you for outstanding performance – the times when someone showed genuine appreciation for what you accomplished. Select one time that you would consider your most memorable recognition – a time when you felt the most appreciated by someone. Recall the story in as much vivid detail as you can.

What made this time so memorable? Why did you select this particular experience?

Make a special note of what the other person did to recognize you. What actions did he or she take? What did he or she do? Describe the setting, the other person’s actions, and your feelings. (KP-LCE-11A)
After I had finished my first internship at Three Rivers Health in Three Rivers, Michigan, I was asked to do contract work for them long-distance. My first assignment was to do review the progress they had made on a new patient-centered care initiative by doing statistical analysis on the data from their patient satisfaction surveys (both qualitative and quantitative data). The project was to last approximately two months, with the chief deliverable being an extensive summary report of what worked, what did not, and other areas for improvement. The report also included supplementary qualitative information to help characterize and elaborate on the figures presented.

After spending many hours sifting through data and producing the report, I received an email from the CEO. In it he said he was very surprised at the level of detail and coherence in the report, and that he had had interns previously, but none that had ever produced such a valuable tool for him and his executive leadership team.

This event was memorable for me because I knew the kinds of pressures and time demands that his executive had to deal with. The fact that he took the time to thank me personally for my efforts and to give such compliments and confidence was inspiring for me. Selecting this occasion was easy for this exercise. This assignment was given to me because members of the executive team knew I had experience in statistical analysis and decided that rather than giving the assignment to a full-time data analyst, they gave it to me. I had the tools to do the job well, and I did it well. The whole experience was a confidence booster and an opportunity for me to show the value I can bring to an organization.

Additionally, he did it personally and quietly. I didn’t need to be recognized by everyone, but at times I wasn’t even sure that the CEO was watching what I did or even cared. After this experience, I knew. We have since been in contact and still are to this day. We have developed a mentor/student relationship, and he has been a valuable asset to me in the job search and throughout my short career to date.

It felt uplifting and empowering to get such a note from this CEO. Additionally, it gave me the confidence to continue pursuing my MHSA, and the inspiration to know that I could do the job and do it well.

**LEADERSHIP FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

“Conscious Wake-Up Call” (p. 30)

What is really important to me? Is this the life I want to live? How do I really want to live my life? What gives passion, meaning, and purpose to my life? How can I make even more of a difference? How can I live connected to those inner values?

What’s really important to me? My family. Everything can come or go, and I’d find a way to deal with it, but my family is what is most important to me. There are many other things that give meaning to my life, like my education, sports, music, food, but the reality is, none of those really compares to my family. Additionally, my personal integrity and credibility are extremely important to me. These are the intangibles that really direct how I live my life and what I do. Without them, I really have no direction.

Sometimes I wonder if this is the life I want. I think about what life would be like if I could pursue my real dreams of playing professional baseball or being a chef traveling through the world sampling the cuisines of every exotic hamlet across the globe. Take those two options off the table and leave me my friends and loved ones, then I’m living the life I want (albeit I carry more debt that I had really ever planned for this stage of my life). As for living my life, I find that I have time to spend doing the things I want to. I spend time with family. I have my music. Being in the kitchen making dinner each night is a relaxing and
therapeutic experience. I’m happy. Sure, there are things I wish I knew about my future, but no one knows too much about what’s ahead. That’s what makes life exciting, dramatic, and fun.

As for making a difference, I think I will get there. My sphere of influence is relatively small at the moment, but as I progress through my career (as I plan to) it will grow and I will be able to inspire positive change wherever I am. If I stick to my plans and personal values, I will be able to make that difference. My inner values (integrity, authenticity, humility and pride) will guide how I go about making that difference, and what exactly it entails. I am excited to see what lies ahead and what influence I will have.

I am happy. There are things I would change, sure. But, those things are the things that give life balance and harmony. There is opposition in all things, good and bad. Without the bad we cannot appreciate the good. So, would I really change them? Probably not. It’s a good life for me, and I hope it stays that way.

“Dealing with Change” (p. 121)

Use the following questions to reflect on how you deal with change in your life.

1. Think about the times you faced major crises or challenges. What qualities or potentialities arose? What qualities would you like to develop further during those times of crisis? What were the key things you learned during those times?
2. When presented with a new experience, what is your first reaction?
3. How do you react when you have invested significant work and effort into something and it doesn’t work out? What do you fear most?
4. The next time you face a potential loss, how will you cope differently?
5. Reflect on how well you:
   - Focus on Opportunities vs. Problems
   - Focus on Long-Term vs. Short-Term
   - Focus on Purpose vs. Circumstance
   - Focus on Adaptability vs. Control
   - Focus on Service vs. Self
   - Focus on Listening vs. Expertise
6. How agile and adaptable are you when it comes to learning from first-time situations?
   1. In times that I have faced major crisis, it was important for me to remain calm. Now, as a father and husband, it is even more crucial. In facing these crises, I found that I was overly stressed and often short with those around me. This is something I hope to improve when dealing with future crises. Staying calm, for me, is the easy part. Staying happy, for me is the hard part. I want to be kinder to others, as I try to keep them calm, instead of making them angry as I try to keep everything bottled up inside. I need to surround myself with people that I can talk my problems out with. Those people are often already there, ready and willing to help, but I don’t take advantage of that. That is a quality I want to develop as I handle future crises. During the crises I’ve faced to date, I have learned that I can handle the problem, but it often times makes me weaker afterwards (for a time) because I have to talk
about it with someone, whereas had I talked the problems out during the process, we could then celebrate, rather than explaining why I was so short with them and kept them out of the loop.

2. When presented with a new experience, my first reaction is to examine what’s really going on. I try to study the surroundings and the situation that has created this new experience. I also try to imagine what the end goal is (either explicit or implicit). I try to approach it as a learning experience. Most times this helps me to stay calm if it turns into a stressful situation.

3. I get very stressed and start to close off all those around me. Afterwards this will often come out in bursts of anger or frustration on those it’s not meant to.

What do I fear most? I fear that all of the time, energy, money, work, and everything else that I put into getting my MHSA will be for naught because I won’t be able to find a fellowship or job. I fear this because of all of the applications and interviews I have made thus far suggest that I should have a job already, but I don’t. So, something must be wrong with me. The reason this is my worst fear is because I won’t be able to “learn” from this experience as I would any other endeavor because if I don’t have a job, I will still have a mountain of student loan debt to repay regardless of my job situation.

4. The next time I face a potential loss, I will cope differently by talking it out sooner. Also, I will seek help sooner. I have already started to learn from this (referring to my response in question #3). I have started to utilize my professional network, and it has already yielded some job leads. I realize that I should have done this sooner, but hesitated because I was uncomfortable. I have now learned that staying comfortable yields nothing. You have to get uncomfortable to challenge yourself and get results.

5. Almost always I focus on the opportunities. Very infrequently do I focus on why something will not work, but rather what we can do. As for long and short term focus, right now it’s mostly on the long term. While it is mostly beneficial to focus on the long term, I should focus also on the short term. For me, that sometimes gets left out.

Right now in my life, I tend to focus on circumstance and getting through a particular situation. I have an ideal purpose and vision, but right now I just have to get through my current situation to feel like I can start working on it. Currently, I have a lot of control over most things in my life. However, I am learning more to adapt to the curveballs life throws at me. It has been difficult at times, and the little information as to why it happens can be disconcerting. However, it’s a change in progress.

Again, right now my focus is on myself. However, I truly believe that I am doing all of this (MHSA, student debt, sacrificing family time) so I can serve others in the future better. Finally, as a student, I am very much in the listening and learning from others state-of-mind. When I find myself in a situation that requires my expertise, I can apply it, but I stay open to learning opportunities that come from active listening.

6. I believe that I am extremely agile and adaptable when it comes to learning from first-time situations. I have a sense of what went well and what did not. Often times when things go poorly, there is an overall awkward or disquieting feeling. Those are the tells of when to change your behavior and actions to accommodate the situation in the future.