

A REDEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

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There has been a redefinition of leadership. The old style of leadership was based on domination, power and even fear. It was hierarchical, and relied on sanctions to bring followers into line. There has been a change in recent years which has witnessed a demand for more servant leadership, a style that is based on example, that uses personality rather than threat, that looks to motivate intrinsically rather than extrinsically.

Learning Leadership endeavours to teach the hard bit of leadership. Unless society wants to have generation after generation witnessing inadequate leadership, future generations must be taught what true leadership is.

- The easy bit of leadership is to use inherited gifts for the betterment of oneself. The hard bit of leadership is to use these gifts for the betterment of others.
- The easy bit of leadership is to be popular. The hard bit of leadership is to be unpopular.
- The easy bit of leadership is to wear the badge. The hard bit of leadership is to deserve the badge.
- The easy bit of leadership is to do what is popular. The hard bit of leadership is to do what is right.
- The easy bit of leadership is to deal with policy. The hard bit of leadership is to deal with people.
- The easy bit of leadership is to enjoy its success. The hard bit of leadership is to endure its failure.
- The easy bit of leadership is to follow consensus. The hard bit of leadership is to follow conviction.
- The easy bit of leadership is administration. The hard bit of leadership is inspiration.
- The easy bit of leadership is to cope with the friendliness. The hard bit of leadership is to cope with the loneliness.
- The easy bit of leadership is to judge others. The hard bit of leadership is to judge yourself.

MESSAGE TO TEACHERS

Why a Course on Leadership for the Young?

Need for Authentic Leadership

The world has little use for a course that is going to assist precocious youth to nurture ideas well above their station. Little is served refining the arrogance of those hell-bent on securing a life of privilege and power. Nothing can commend a course that instructs in the art of domination.

Learning Leadership was written because there is a desperate need for authentic leadership. There is a desperate need to understand what true leadership is and there is a desperate need to develop those leadership skills in the young.

Everyone has some leadership potential that can be released for the benefit of humankind. *Learning Leadership* is designed to give inspiration and encouragement to students and help them to explore their leadership potential.

The nations of the world are showing signs of hunger for authentic leadership. There is a weariness with self-serving politicians whose vision for their country fails to extend beyond short-term political expediency. There is a cynicism with many in authority and a growing anger at the lack of moral fortitude to be found among some leaders. We must look to the next generation to show us a better way to lead.

Leaders and Managers

Without a vision people will certainly perish. There must be found within a community those who can inspire and direct it. Lots of people like to describe themselves as leaders, but they are not. They many be managers and do useful and necessary tasks related to organising things, but they are not necessarily leaders. Leadership has to do with initiative, creativity and inspiration. It is not necessarily about bureaucracy and administration. Management is more to do with the head, whereas leadership is more to do with the heart.

World Leaders

James Walsh wrote in *Time* magazine on 12 July 1993, an article entitled “Tokyo’s No Star Lineup.” Walsh suggested that the world’s most powerful leaders, the so called “Group of Seven” made a very sorry collection when they met for their “G7” discussions in Tokyo. It was argued that the world’s leaders at that time were weak and discredited.

Some would suggest that nothing much has changed today. There is an absence of morality and grand passion. Sometimes one finds the grand passion in a leader but not the morality. At other times one finds the morality but not the grand passion.

Walsh suggests that a society must often have enemies in order to generate leaders. Tragically most nations appear to have now found enemies. The question remains whether leaders have also been found.

Relevance to Youth

If contemporary leaders need to be challenged, then so too must our youth. They need to be given the hope that they can change things for the better. They need to know they can make a difference. Professor Geoff Masters reported on a number of Australian studies which indicated that school students are less likely to engage in voluntary political activities or civic engagements. Local issues and the environment are more likely to attract their support (Masters, G (2002). Students likely to vote then sit back. *Educate News*, April 2002, p28).

A study of leadership is not just a study of power and influence. It incorporates the study of accountability and responsibility. These are two endangered concepts in many who seek a world of growing freedom with growing age. Inextricably linked to the heady joys of advancing age is the chain of advancing responsibility. All young people need to learn how to handle this responsibility as leaders and as followers.

The development of leadership skills in the young can incorporate some life-enriching experiences and an affirmation of their worth that can help the young cope with the growing epidemic of depression and general lack of resilience. Martin Seligman described depression today as being “the common cold of mental illness” and goes on to state:

Not only is severe depression much more common now, it also attacks its victims much younger. (Seligman: M (1995). *The Optimistic Child*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Massachusetts, USA. p37-39).

Our young need to be encouraged to find their strengths, exercise their talents and realise their dreams.

The Cultural Inheritance

The young also need to be taught their cultural inheritance, to be reminded of the great myths, stories and legends associated with leaders past and present. All people, be they young or old, should gather from time to time under the shade of a tree and listen to the tribal stories. Stories need to be told that inspire, encourage, direct and ensure that the value of good example is not lost. We tend to sit our young in front of the television and leave the storytelling to the media. This is not always wise, for often, the stories they hear are inappropriate and destructive of the sort of values we need to be advancing in our communities.

Start at an Early Age

You know that the beginning is the most important part of any work, especially in the case of a young and tender thing, for that is the time at which the character is being formed and the desired impression is more readily taken... Shall we just carelessly allow children to hear any casual tale which may be devised by casual persons, and to receive into their minds ideas for the most part the very opposite of those which we should wish to have when they are grown up?

We cannot...Anything received into the mind at that age is likely to become indelible and unalterable; and therefore it is most important that the tales which the young first hear should be models of virtuous thoughts...

Then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything...

There can be no nobler training than that.

(The Republic, Plato)

As the old saying goes *Give me the child until he is seven, and I'll show you the man*. The perfect time to teach the skills associated with leadership is to the young. It is in these formative years that a person may be most influenced for good or for bad. These are crucial years which must not be wasted.

The tragedy is that these years often are wasted. Developmental theorists have so gripped the educational agenda in the western world that many leadership skills are under-developed in our young because they are not allowed to be exercised until they are older. This practice has done some students a great deal of harm.

Most worthy ideas can be taught at almost any age in some way. The challenge is to find the appropriate way. It is not defensible to defer the teaching of leadership skills until adulthood. By then most of the capacities to learn profound, character-building attributes have been lost. For this reason this course is unapologetic in its orientation to helping the young to develop leadership skills. To wait longer is to wait too long.

CAN ANY COURSE REALLY ENCOURAGE LEADERSHIP SKILLS?

There are no miracle answers. Any course that claims to give the magical incantation necessary to turn every youth into a gifted leader needs to be treated with some suspicion. What can be reasonably hoped for is optimising a number of innate leadership skills and developing a number of new leadership skills.

It may be said by some that leadership skills are largely inherited rather than learnt. *Either you have got it or you haven't. You can't put in what God's left out.* There is truth in these comments and there are errors in these comments. *Learning Leadership* acknowledges the powerful influence of **nature**, but it also acknowledges the powerful influence of **nurture** in the formation of leadership skills in the young.

NATURE VERSUS NURTURE

Studies on twins carried out in America have suggested that many of the qualities associated with leadership such as authoritarianism, are inherited from parents. In his book *The Optimistic Child* Martin Seligman states that between a quarter to half of people's main personality traits are inherited from parents (Seligman M (1995). *The Optimistic Child*. Random House, Sydney, Australia, p96). This also suggests that between half to three quarters of these traits are not inherited from parents. These traits are acquired, are learnt throughout life, but more particularly in the early years of life.

There is no question that genetics plays a great role in determining leadership skills. Enough powerful dynasties exist to bear testimony to some families having rich leadership blood flowing through their veins.

Yet failure to recognise the capacity to learn leadership skills, to acknowledge the influence of nurture, is to risk lapsing into the stupor of fatalism. It suggests that nothing can be done. *Learning Leadership* refutes this view and dares to suggest that something can be done. Leadership skills can be taught, can be acquired and can be realised in the young.

Many variables exist that determine leadership skills. The influence of nurture is particularly important to recognise, for it reminds us that we can be masters of our own destiny and that all students can be leaders in some way or other

.SHOULD ALL STUDENTS STUDY *LEARNING LEADERSHIP*?

Leadership is not necessarily waving a sword, charging the enemy, and hoping the cavalry will follow. It can mean a quiet conversation with a friend in the hope of guiding them to an answer to a problem. It can mean showing some initiative in a situation, be it a car accident, launching a boat, or calming an angry neighbour.

Quite simply, one is a leader if someone else is following. The truth is most people at some time are privileged to influence others to follow in some way.

Leadership is a science for everyone, not just for the chosen few. Not all will be privileged to lead to the same extent as others, but all will lead in small ways if not in big ways. These small expressions of leadership should never be underestimated, for collectively they determine the health and character of a nation.

Everyone will lead at certain times and everyone will follow at certain times. Wisdom comes from knowing when to lead and when to follow.

Everyone should know that they will be called upon to lead. *Learning Leadership* is a course designed to help young people fulfil their obligations in this regard.

LEADERSHIP MUST BE CELEBRATED BY WOMEN AS WELL AS MEN

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) US First Lady, 1933-1945

He was the leader, she was not. He was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States of America and arguably the most powerful man in the world. She was Eleanor Roosevelt, a shy, plain girl who had lost both her parents by the age of ten. Although from a wealthy family, Eleanor had endured much emotional poverty as a child for she was brought up in a cold and austere environment. They met and later married on 17 March, 1905.

Franklin, the leader, governed America and much of the affairs of the world. Eleanor, not the leader, supported him. Franklin had an affair with a social secretary, Lucy Mercer, and Eleanor still supported him. Franklin was stricken with polio in 1921 and Eleanor stayed with him.

Deborah Felder in her book *The 100 Greatest Women of All Time* ranks Eleanor Roosevelt as one the greatest woman of all time. Although supposedly not a leader, Eleanor became actively involved in the League of Women voters, the Women's Trade Union League and in a wide range of social and civil rights issues. After Franklin died in 1945, Eleanor chaired the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and had an active role in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human rights. At the age of 78, Eleanor died of tuberculosis. In her own quiet way, Eleanor Roosevelt, not the leader, had become a leader.

MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

My Dear Students

I am delighted you are doing a study on leadership, for schools need leadership, particularly the sort provided by you. You have the capacity to influence student values, attitudes and behaviour with an effectiveness that Heads of schools can only dream of.

Leadership Unpopular

Some students will not even consider leadership, for leadership enjoys a rather grubby reputation. For example our elected leaders in Parliament are often unpopular, with sentiments such as "*make your politicians work - don't re-elect them*" being common. There are many within schools who are comfortable in not seeking to lead. There are those who rarely engage in any activity that might risk discomfort. All this might be applauded - for any fool can be uncomfortable if it were not for the fact that some risk sleeping through their lives, of limiting themselves to the drowsy role of spectator. Some like to escape the challenges of leadership with its hard edges in order to live a pillowed existence in which they are stupid with slumber and the engagement in trivial things. I congratulate you for resisting this temptation and for considering leadership.

Covert Leadership

Don't worry if you are not a super hero; don't worry if you are not necessarily in the 1st XI. Not all leadership is about heroics. Most leadership is covert and unassuming. It is to be found in the gentle word of encouragement, the helping of another, the steering of a conversation, a suggestion, or some small service. These are tasks that we can all fulfil, and thus any student should give serious consideration to leadership in some form or other.

There are some who think heroes are formed in the mayhem and carnage of battle, yet there are heroes who live lives of quiet service and whose achievements are built up over a lifetime (Longstaff, S (1998), quoted in *Viewpoint*, issue 31, 23 October).

Leadership is not Extinct

I happen to hold the view that although endangered, leadership is not yet extinct, and that effective leadership can still be found in our society. It's just that those who are leading are not necessarily in designated leadership positions, and those found in designated positions are not necessarily leading!

Is Someone Following?

I would like to suggest that a leader is not always someone with an impressive badge, significant responsibilities and an invitation to dine with the gods. A leader need not even be someone with rank, power or position. Quite simply, a leader is someone who someone else is following. This means that any of us can be a leader. If our words direct and our actions inspire, we are leading. If we cause another to follow our example, or to follow our direction we are leading.

I have generally found that the most effective leaders are those who guide, steer and direct others without them necessarily being aware of it.

Leadership can be Hard

Yes, leadership can be hard. There is within leadership the good, the bad and the ugly. Many of our leaders are stoned with ridicule, bruised by the challenge and accusation of those who, out of envy, spite or a basic love of mischief like to make a leader's life difficult. If you can topple a leader you demonstrate power, and there are many who want to demonstrate that power. This can make leadership both difficult and lonely. This can make leaders vulnerable, for there are many who like to see leaders fall. You ask if there will be a cost. Yes, there will be a cost in time, energy and emotion. Sometimes that cost can be significant. I was reading an extract from Ernest Gordon's book *Miracle on the River Kwai*, in which he recounts the true story of a missing shovel. The guards were furious that the offending shovel could not be found and were going to kill the entire work party of POWs unless the shovel was returned. It was then that a soldier stepped forward and admitted taking the shovel. It was only after he had been swiftly executed that a recount of the shovels indicated that they were all present. Laying down one's life for others is a heroic action. It is also the action of a leader.

Giving one's life to serve others can be dangerous. The American Negro Harriet Tubman, after escaping from slavery, risked her life time and time again by going back to the southern slave states of America to conduct about 100 slaves to freedom in the north. During the American Civil War Harriet Tubman worked as a teacher, nurse and spy. She endured much hardship and died in 1913 leaving behind a great example of sacrificial leadership.

It seems to me that one of the great sins of our present age is to be different, to be a leader. If you are not prepared to run with the pack, you can find yourself rounded upon with some savagery and driven away with resentful animosity. Quite simply, if one becomes a leader, one can become a target. Only the brave need apply. However, leadership is not without its rewards. There is the privilege of being given the gift of control, of influencing the actions and thoughts of others. These days society does not want mere managers, it has no need for the "controllosaurus". Society wants leaders, shepherds, who are prepared to lay down their life for their sheep.

Living for Ever

I understand that scientists are now offering a Genomic DNA Preservation Service, where one can preserve one's genes so that scientists in the future can recreate you.

How would you like to relive your life in the future? Here we can offer a DNA preservation service that can preserve your genetic blueprint for an eternity, a process that would allow scientists of the future to let you live forever.

So ran the opening sentences of an extraordinary letter I received some time ago. It went on: "Only \$395 and your intact DNA is all that is required for future scientists to produce your identical twin, with no need for expensive and damaging tissue cryopreservation." What was also needed were three strands of my hair sent to a person who claimed to have a B.Sc.(Hons).

Leaders can reproduce themselves in other more principled ways and have little need to invest in such a service, for they will live for eternity, they will cause others to imitate their values, skills, attitudes and behaviour that will be passed on from one generation to another.

The Good, Bad and Ugly

However I want to be fair and warn you not only of the good, but also of the bad and the ugly. Within the school setting you will come across wonderful students, and you will come across others who will prove to be a real trial.

Lurking within our playgrounds and classrooms are students who have been raised on an infant pastime of pulling wings off flies, and frying ants with a magnifying glass, students who gain a peculiar pleasure in making another student miserable by pulling off their friends and frying them with ridicule and rejection.

Within our schools you will find students who are concerned only for themselves and who have little regard for others, leading a number of social commentators to suggest that many contemporary students are suffering from narcissism.

Narcissism has been described as having feelings of inflated self-importance, a feeling of entitlement because you feel you are special. Those suffering from narcissism are often insensitive to others yet are deeply sensitive to criticism. They may enjoy others and believe that others may enjoy them. Those afflicted with this self-love can also exploit others to their own advantage (Callaghan, G (1997) Here's looking at me kid. *Weekend Australian Magazine* 25 October).

You also need to know that you will meet with many excellent students who model empathy, compassion, justice, service and kindness, who have what the Hindu call *dharma*, which means duty. For the Buddhist the word also means truth, and although both concepts are at risk of extinction, they are not yet gone from within our schools

Inner Lustre

Most people can lead, but the question remains as to what direction they lead. There are some who probably shouldn't lead because they cannot navigate an appropriate path.

There are others who shouldn't be leaders because they lack depth. One expert who works at the Australian Centre for Leadership Studies in Sydney has suggested that potential leaders need to ask whether they are a "diamond" or a "cubic zirconia (Long, DG (1968), *Leaders: Diamonds or Cubic Zirconia?* Australian Centre for Leadership Studies, Sydney). Evidently both look similar, but it is possible to look straight through a cubic zirconia, whereas a diamond has substance, has an inner lustre, has a quality. Likewise, leaders must have an inner lustre, must have extra qualities like integrity, sensitivity and creativity.

I like the idea of leaders having an inner lustre, of leaders having a depth or a soul. All too often we encourage shallow people in positions of authority. These are people who have not paid enough attention to their inner being, to that part which gives substance to one's life and brings together mind and body, dreams and reality. When this is lacking there is a shallowness, a loss of meaning and a failure to recognise the sacredness in other people. Do you have a lustre, a depth, a soul?

EQ

It might encourage you to know that the whole concept of IQ (intelligence quotient) or general intelligence, is now being questioned. More attention is now being placed on EQ (emotional intelligence) as the necessary skill for success in life.

EQ = Emotional Quotient

The ability to relate well with others, to sense the mood, to be able to see other people's point of view, to be empathetic, to be able to act appropriately.

I would suggest that if you have a high EQ, if you have "emotional intelligence", you might have what it takes to be a leader. By emotional intelligence I mean the ability to be empathetic, to sense mood, to behave appropriately within a social setting, to have the maturity to work towards a deferred reward. Those with a high EQ are the sorts of people who will take time to inspect a student's grazed knee and the glass jar in which there is housed a black crawling thing. These are the sorts of people who have the ability to identify with, have compassion for and to know the unspoken feelings of others.

Kindness

A story was told to me by a retired teacher who kept hearing of a past student of his school who was renowned for being an outstanding leader. Many years later the teacher met this man and was surprised to find that he was a very ordinary-looking fellow who was not particularly distinguished in speech or action. When challenging the many who suggested that this past student had been so effective as a leader, the teacher was told he was a memorable leader because he was kind. This attribute is usually not associated with leadership and it should be. Kindness can be encouraged if we recognize that every person is blessed with the divine gift of being human, and being human, we share similar joys and similar hurts.

Accepting the Different

A story is told of Michael Schluter and David Lee's book *The R Factor* of an archaeologist on the Island of Java, who found a very interesting stone on which were many carvings. (Schluter, M and Lee, D (1993) *The R Factor*, Hodder and Stoughton, London). When asking the natives of the village about the history of the stone, he was told the story of a white monkey had been washed up on the shore and who had then been chained to the stone. What fascinated the archaeologist was that carved into the stone in English, Dutch and Spanish was the seaman's account of his shipwreck and imprisonment on the island. Being white - being different - the sailor had not been granted humanity by his captors but was described as a "white monkey" and was treated accordingly.

In our own schools, in our own society, there are many who do not recognise anyone who is different. Tribalism is rampant and divisions exist. Many of the great leaders in society recognise the humanity of everyone, even those who are different.

Helping Those who Need it

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, one of Australia's leading authorities on adolescent health, suggests that for every 1,000 students in our schools, 200 will be depressed, 500 will have a depressive illness at some stage during their student life, and 0.15 will commit suicide (Carr-Gregg, M (2000). Address given on adolescent health problems. Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, Pastoral Care Conference, Westminster School, Adelaide, July). The student leader needs to be aware that within the body of a school there are likely to be a number of students whose self-esteem is such that they will need particular care and attention. These students will not always be attractive or pleasant to work with, for it is the lot of the leader to "love the unlovely".

The exercising of your leadership skills is likely to take a fair amount of your time, a great deal of your energy, and a significant drain on your emotional reserves.

The Need to Inspire

Leaders in schools are required to inspire their communities and to excite their schools to do the things that are worthy of them. This will take a considerable amount of energy. Leaders in schools will also need to anticipate, to be pro-active rather than reactive and to head off an emerging problem rather than having to merely deal with its after-effects. Leaders in schools will need to give confidence, for we live in an age where people do not even believe in themselves let alone others. We need leaders in schools who believe in themselves, and who believe in others.

Challenging Inappropriate Cultures

I was reading an American journal recently which suggested that there was tragic evidence of a near narcoleptic state of numbness over school violence. I didn't know what it meant either, so I looked it up and found that narcolepsy is a disease with fits of somnolence. The same dictionary will probably tell you that somnolent means sleepy, drowsy, being in a state between sleeping and waking.

By way of illustration the article described an incident at the Thomas Jefferson High School where, during a five-year period, 50 students died, many in the school itself. In the United States it seems the memories of January 1989 are still vivid, when an alcoholic drifter took an AK-47 assault rifle into the Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, California and killed or injured 34 people. Then there was the Columbine High School massacre followed. Since that time there have been many other atrocities in schools, not just in America but in many other countries. The violence in our schools is of course a reflection of the violence in our society, and the fear is that this violence and crime is being *normalised*.

There is a danger in becoming captive to the expectation of crime to the extent we even tolerate and normalise it. Signs appear in shops: "No cash on premises". These little messages to thieves are saying, "Don't bother to rob me, I've got nothing. Rob someone else." Some cars have "no radio" stickers on their cars to save the thief the bother of breaking into a car to steal the radio and not finding one. We need to be

outraged at crime. We need to avoid surrendering to the dark forces within our society (Moynihan, DP (1993-4), "Defining Deviancy Down", *American Educator*, Winter., p.18).

Good leaders must be prepared to challenge inappropriate cultures. It has been suggested that power corrupts people. For this reason leaders need to be trained in their use of power. I would also like to suggest that leaders need to be trained to let go of their power when they are no longer in formal positions of leadership. All too often leaders do not finish well. The same can sometimes be said of senior students in school, when in their last few months there is the temptation to become incredibly egocentric, particularly at examination time, and to engage in such unfortunate activities as "muck-up day" and so on. I would suggest that there is virtue in leaders within the school continuing strongly as leaders until the very end, and finishing strongly.

Use-by Dates

Good leaders should recognize their "use-by date" and plan their succession. As part of their decommissioning of leaders, leaders in both school and society need to be working to make themselves redundant - in that they should be raising up successors. History is full of examples where this has failed to happen. For example Louis XIV, the "Sun King" of France (1638–1715), was a remarkably successful leader, but because he did not train a successor, France was plunged into a period of political instability when he died.

Walk the Talk

Effective school will "walk the talk", will display the values they wish to encourage in others. They will not necessarily seek popularity, but they will seek respect. Contemporary culture gives little respect for position, but rather respect for the person, a respect which is gained through demonstration of boldness, courage, consistency, empathy, energy and service.

Finally

I hope you find this course on Leadership helpful and that the future brings you many opportunities to exercise your leadership skills for the benefit not only of yourself but for others.

With warm good wishes

Tim Hawkes

APPENDICES

WHAT IS *LEARNING LEADERSHIP*?

- *Learning Leadership* is a leadership course for students in secondary school.
- The course is made up of eighty units, all on some aspect of leadership.
- *Learning Leadership* is a course for both girls and boys.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL STYLE OF *LEARNING LEADERSHIP*

- *Learning Leadership* is made up of units of work which provide stimulus-response material for students and their teachers.
- *Learning Leadership* lends itself to customising by teachers. The addition of appropriate practical exercises and case studies using multi-media format would complement the material offered in *Learning Leadership*.
- Significant use is made of case studies and heroic example. Story telling is a powerful way to transmit values and virtues from one generation to another.

THE COURSE LENGTH

- Each unit will take about 50 minutes to 100 minutes to complete. Most units lend themselves to extension work, thus the exact length of time taken to complete a unit will vary.
- With schools already suffering an over-crowded curriculum, *Learning Leadership* is designed to be assimilated into a school's existing timetable with relative ease.
- The course lends itself to inclusion into tutor periods, PDHPE programs, civics courses, religious studies and humanities programs.

THE COURSE CONTENT

Each book:

- affirms that every student can be a leader in some way or other
- explores what leadership is and what it is not
- seeks to enhance leadership skills in students
- provides opportunities for students to discover and understand their own leadership skills
- seeks to inspire students through the use of heroic stories
- seeks to link theory with practice
- explores leadership within the broader context of character development.

FOR THOSE WISHING FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE
“LEARNING LEADERSHIP” SERIES, GO TO:

www.traininginleadership.com

or write to:

braesideshop@kings.edu.au

to order print copies.

Contents of: LEARNING LEADERSHIP – A Leadership Course for Secondary Students

BOOK 1		BOOK 2		BOOK 3		BOOK 4	
Unit 1	Can young people be leaders?	Unit 1	Know what you have to offer	Unit 1	Strategic planning	Unit 1	The power of one
Unit 2	Leadership. The good, the bad and the ugly	Unit 2	Being a team leader	Unit 2	Motives for leadership	Unit 2	The seasoned leader
Unit 3	Leadership styles	Unit 3	Leadership and power	Unit 3	Self esteem	Unit 3	Humour
Unit 4	Leadership and power	Unit 4	Dealing with the powerful	Unit 4	Dealing with enemies	Unit 4	Helping students of different ages
Unit 5	Bullies and bullying	Unit 5	Choosing to see, speak and act	Unit 5	Teamwork	Unit 5	Dealing with difficult people
Unit 6	Goal setting	Unit 6	Assertiveness	Unit 6	Courage	Unit 6	Helping others to work and play
Unit 7	Problem solving	Unit 7	Strategy and tactics	Unit 7	Wisdom	Unit 7	Counselling and caring
Unit 8	Emotional quotient (EQ)	Unit 8	Resilience	Unit 8	Initiative	Unit 8	Knowledge
Unit 9	Optimism	Unit 9	Compassion	Unit 9	Discipline	Unit 9	Persistence
Unit 10	Tolerance	Unit 10	Anger and defiance	Unit 10	Credibility	Unit 10	Protégés and successors
Unit 11	Cult leaders	Unit 11	Manager or leader?	Unit 11	Heroes and heroines	Unit 11	Responsibility and accountability
Unit 12	Delegation or passing the buck?	Unit 12	Motivation	Unit 12	Defining moments	Unit 12	Risk taking
Unit 13	Believing in something	Unit 13	Learning to listen	Unit 13	Becoming good leaders	Unit 13	Creativity and conformity
Unit 14	Leaders who see	Unit 14	Developing a vision	Unit 14* Being a school prefect		Unit 14	Prejudice or discernment?
Unit 15	Leading through music	Unit 15	Taking on the system	Unit 15	Captain my captain	Unit 15	Dealing with stress
Unit 16	Giving a speech (1)	Unit 16	Public speaking	Unit 16	Loyalty	Unit 16	Meetings
Unit 17	Giving a speech (2)	Unit 17	Writing that leads	Unit 17	Looking the part	Unit 17	Writing a résumé
Unit 18	Honesty	Unit 18* Causes and Convictions		Unit 18	Sight, sound and sense	Unit 18	Interviews
Unit 19	Making enemies	Unit 19	Getting involved with State Parliament	Unit 19	By accident or design	Unit 19	Integrity
Unit 20	Making friends	Unit 20	The cost of leadership	Unit 20	Dealing with failure	Unit 20	Finishing well

