

2008 LEADERSHIP RETREAT; DAY 1 PARTICIPANT EVALUATION SUMMARY

APA citation for this resource: University of Wollongong. (2008). *Distributive Leadership Project: Leadership retreat 2008 day 1 participant evaluation summary*. Retrieved <Insert Date>, from <http://www.uow.edu.au/cedir/DistributiveLeadership/>.

Day 1: 18th February, 2008

Session 1: Project Overview.

What aspects of this session did you find most useful relevant?

- Orientation to range of scholars and project.
- Great context setting expectations clear good timing.
- Understanding how this stage of the project fits within the larger project. Hearing the other projects.
- Insight into how the project developers were conceiving the project.
- Good but brief. Good to give the time to the scholars' presentations. (Institutional facilitator/leader)
- Deeper understanding of the project and its context.
- Technical aspects of project highlighted.
- Hearing the diverse project ideas from across the group.
- Good re-orientation. Great to find out about all the projects. (Past Scholar)
- Thinking about balance between action learning and leadership. Hearing about project and great diversity amongst scholars.
- To find the similarities between the projects.
- Hearing presentations from other participants.
- Overview of program.
- Good to hear the other's projects.
- Overview of projects reminded everyone of who they were working with and synchronicity between projects.

Were there aspects of this session that could be improved? If so how?

- Perhaps ask people to load up their presentation before the session.
- Have an even amount of the presentation between where people are coming from as well as what they are going to do.
- Not sure if the project overview was quite clear enough.
- Pretty good.
- If you say 3mins then keep people to 3mins.
- Timekeeping - start on time could have cut back on morning tea and lunch to make up time.

Do you have any suggestions, recommendations or comments to make regarding this session?

- At the end of each day have a page of references that were cited.
- Maybe allow a little time for questions of scholars about projects – great team building opportunity.
- More information re the actual project structure and processes and the nature of the methodology being used.
- It was fine.
- Perhaps get scholars to load their presentation on the computer – before hand – but I thought it was

better that people spoke “off the cuff”. (Past Scholar).

- Ok – to take photos! But is it possible to do it less obtrusively? ‘Mute’ camera Noise?
- Informal overview of projects from seats, No PowerPoint – keep them to time.

Session 2: Leadership in Higher Education.

What aspects of this session did you find most useful relevant?

- Orientation to large project.
- Interesting to see other perspectives on leadership. Good inter-university discussion.
- Hearing about different types of leadership.
- Reminder of the different models of leadership.
- I liked the way you kept the session open and allowed for lots of discussion. (Institutional facilitator/leader)
- Can't remember.
- Thinking about leadership explicitly. Thinking about experiences.
- Explanation of theories of leadership.
- I appreciated the dot points that had been synthesised from the literature.
- A good review of the current situation and reasons why project like this one are needed. Information on the “references” to support the assertions made during this session. (Past Scholar).
- Insight into leadership from a research perspective.
- Good to get info on distributive leadership.
- Discussion and debate on leadership and reflective images was fun.
- Overview.

Were there aspects of this session that could be improved? If so how?

- Brief description of stages – as part of strategic plan.
- I guess this session got a little lost because we were running behind schedule.
- Would have liked to receive a list of readings/references upon which the presentation was based.
- No – maybe some examples of ‘type’ of leadership (from real life). (Past Scholar)
- Explore ideas of leadership and management and non-hierarchical leaders.
- Maybe give me some readings to do? Steven Marshall? Make them accessible – otherwise the session is too brief and shallow?
- Need to own your stuff from higher education felt it was brushed over. Didn't get to framework.

Do you have any suggestions, recommendations or comments to make regarding this session?

- I'd like a more historical narrative of the development of leadership models and what has influenced their evolution.
- Stick to the programme as they have all blurred together and the programme doesn't provide useful prompts.
- It was good that questions and comments from the floor were encouraged. The atmosphere was open and collegial – but with plenty of debate. (Past Scholar)
- We could have looked at real examples of alternative leaders e.g. unit coordinators, leaders by persuasion – education designers etc.
- It would be interesting to know what type of ‘leadership’ people initially have been involved in before the

Distributive Leadership Project.

- Requirements and responsibilities of facilitators.

Session 3: Exploring Elements, Competencies and Characteristics of Effective Leadership, through Reflective Imagery.

What aspects of this session did you find most useful relevant?

- All useful! Really enjoyed the theatre images.
- I loved the Image Theatre. Group discussion in university group on leadership.
- This was fantastic!!! I really enjoyed the Image Theatre activity.
- The reflective imaging session was excellent!!
- Thought the images worked well. Everyone got involved. (Institutional facilitator/leader)
- Getting to know my colleagues better ... reflective imagery was excellent obviously ... realisation my experience much better than that of most colleagues.
- Different perspectives on leadership, noticing that many common experiences exist.
- Enjoyed/learned from the Image Theatre exercise.
- Getting the group taking having a laugh sharing experiences. (Past Scholar)
- Loved the Image Theatre – very effective.
- ‘Defining’ is always difficult. It was interesting to hear such strong statements from people who had obviously thought about it.
- Reflective Images activity was a good way to sum up the morning’s work.
- The “Reflective Imagery” exercises – great alternative to role play.
- Journal was good reflective exercise.
- Loved the images of leadership.

Were there aspects of this session that could be improved? If so how?

- Linking emotional intelligence much more – didn’t seem obviously relevant.
- Common definition – very repetitive questions and seemed to drag on. Not everyone included in debate.
- More on what an ideal leader might look like in practice.
- I was hoping to learn more about emotional intelligence.
- Consider putting ourselves in the shoes of a “formal” leader – it is easy to criticise.
- Bit too long.
- Seemed to be some confusion about what we were defining? Leadership on Distributive leadership.
- ? emotional intelligence ?

Do you have any suggestions, recommendations or comments to make regarding this session?

- Timing to be held as tight as rest of day.
- The image session could have been longer and used to explore the leadership concept in more depth.
- When was the frustrating discussion about definitions? Can’t place it during the day ... anyway perhaps give clearer parameters/guidance on what we’re doing and why.
- What a hoot!!! I’ll be using the Image Theatre technique in my own work and investigating other similar ideas. (Past Scholar).
- Shorter – maybe discuss instead of having to write a full journal entry.

- Maybe get us to define leadership and then get facilitators to clarify what distributive leadership is – clearly there are some things it is NOT!-
- Fantastic exercise.

Session 4: Exploring the Question 'What Kind of Leader am I?' through Reflective Journaling

What aspects of this session did you find most useful relevant?

- Reflective journaling as this is a technique I use as-hoc, but now feel I could make more structured.
- Journaling and sharing – really built trust between partners.
- Great to review the reflective process and explore ways of reflecting.
- Reminder of journaling as a useful activity.
- I lead the session so it's a bit hard to comment but I think it went well. Maybe could have focussed more on "What kind of leader I am" rather than the leadership generally. (Institutional facilitator/leader)
- Self-reflection was great, and constructive comments were even better!
- Was impressed that we achieved a working definition of leadership! This will be a useful reference point.
- I appreciated being able to document/reflect on a critical incident and to share it, get feedback from a different person's perspective.
- Reviewing ideas about leadership. Clarifying ideas about leadership through dialogue with current scholars. Getting everyone to contribute to a working 'orientation' to leadership. (Past Scholar)
- Review of reflection and methods of doing it. Reminder to check assumptions. Opportunity to comment with a current scholar. (Past Scholar).
- The reflection on the incident as well as reflecting another people's issues.
- Discussion with other fellows brought up very relevant stuff. Hearing concerns and perspectives of other scholars.
- Discussion with own scholar group. Reflective journaling exercise.
- Challenged people.

Were there aspects of this session that could be improved? If so how?

- The difficulty with this session came with the joint description (!) of the leadership for the project. Alternatively I feel this is integral to the project!
- More time to do the writing bits.
- Didn't actually deal with the question asked in the title.
- Change the title of the session – this doesn't seem descriptive of what was done.
- Exercise would have gone more smoothly (I think!) if our task had been set out as "For the purposes of this project, leadership is"
- If we had more time, we could identify themes that arose in the stories – would have liked to hear what these themes were.
- It would be interesting to read the other issues and feedback.
- I think reflective journaling needs more time.
- Suggest extra reading if interested?

Do you have any suggestions, recommendations or comments to make regarding this session?

- Perhaps frame at the front as an "approach" not definition – although may not still get over the hurdles we experienced!

- Give access to the styles of journaling. Heather lead us very well through the activities.
- Maybe an assessment that identifies my leadership style.
- Although we spent a great deal of time discussing leaders, leadership and distributive leadership it was VERY VERY worthwhile. The dialogue was open and well-meant and well-mannered. (Past Scholar).
- Think about real leaders – even good leaders have bad days and they may have some great qualities and do other things poorly.
- Time spent on whole group discussion was too long – intervention earlier might have helped??
- Valuable exercise.

Further Comments:

The most significant thing I can take away from today:

- Courage! To feel supported and to feel confident to profile my project within my school and Faculty.
- Most significant thing from today for me is being able to see leadership from many different perspectives, learning styles. It really rounded out my understanding.
- Most significant thing: Even though I am just in a formal leadership position. I have the capacity to still provide leadership.
- Enjoyable day.
- The most significant thing I will take away from today is the realisation how difficult it will be to implement the project in the spirit of leadership that we 'agreed' on.
- An altered perspective. I now have a greater, more general awareness of leadership, and effective leadership (I also got to meet many passionate people involved in teaching and learning which doesn't tend to happen in my discipline ...).
- Well organised – kept to time well – food excellent – good progress with group development/cohesion.
- Meeting and working with the group who are very interesting, diverse and a great resource.
- To me, D & G seemed a bit defensive about not having a position of what distributive leadership is? I believe you do? Why not share it? Share what the literature says? We don't have to redefine the wheel? This seemed to create an awkward moment – from my perspective?