

From the Editor's Clipboard Volume 8, Number 2 - Fall 2009

Hawks and Leaders: Learning to Succeed

This Spring my home site became the dwelling for a pair of Red-tailed Hawks. The hawks swooped in and built their nest in a tall tree near the house. Watching the hawks prepare the environment for their chicks' future, I was amazed how their activities were similar to educating people for leadership. As I watched the hawks' progress, the steps for successful leadership education became clearer and clearer....



Selecting and Arranging a Site

Hawks seek a location where their young are safe from harm and the food supply is ample for the family. They build a nest 35 to 75 feet in strong branches of a tree and use substantial materials to ensure longevity of the nest.

As leadership educators, we create environments where potential leaders are nurtured. These environments include classrooms, experiential settings, laboratories, and other environments. Just as the parent hawks, we need to scope out the location. The successful educational environment is conducive to honest and open communication. This initial site for leadership education provides leadership students with a safe place to begin their exploration of leadership.

Caring for the Young



The female and male hawks work full time caring for their young. The female is responsible for the 28 day incubation. During that time, the male hunts for food and feeds the female. After hatching, the young hawks stay in their nest for about 48 days. The parent hawks are responsible for feeding as the chicks grow into juveniles.

For leadership educators, the care for young leaders is similar to that of the hawks. Leadership educators are responsible for incubating those early thoughts of leadership. They present ideas, opportunities, and ambitions to diverse people who may or may not think of themselves as leaders. In these early stages, successful leadership educators work hard to provide the fuel of leadership -- encouragement, support, and study of initial leadership theories and practices. It is important for educators to nurture and foster the development of a leadership ambition within their students.



Flight

After about one month in the nest, the young hawks transform into small adults. They lose their white downy feathers and start to stretch their wings. During this time, the young hawks begin exploring the edge of the nest. Then, they venture out to the tree branches and walk back and forth to the nest. The parent hawks are busy feeding the youngsters who have a ravenous appetite. The young hawks exist in an environment where they can observe experienced parents and practice critical skills.

As an observer of the hawks, I was fascinated by this stage of their development. I wondered how they would learn to fly. How would they take the leap from nest to flight? In the hawk nest, I counted 3 birds making their first trip from the nest. It was a sad morning when I spotted one that did not make it from the tree branch to the nest. The small hawk had fallen on the ground below the nest.

The day after the hawk accident, the surviving 2 hawks took off, spread their wings, and flew to a tree across the way. From there, they flew far from sight and returned for only 2 more days. Then they were gone -- off to begin their lives as adult hawks making their own way in the world.

Leadership educators have the awesome responsibility of developing educational and/or training programs. Just as the young hawks began their flight training with a step to the edge of the nest, potential leaders need a plan that provides small steps for their clientele. First experiences need a safety net within the leadership environment. Without the initial practice steps, people thrust into leadership may fall to the ground just as the young hawk who did not make it back to the nest. The progression of the hawks' flight practice -- nest edge, tree branches, first flight -- is an excellent example for leadership education.

The Process Continues

Hawks use their same nest year after year. Some repair is conducted but the hawks' life cycle repeats over and over again. Leadership educators repeat their tasks year after year also. With new clientele and contextual changes, it is exciting to repair and change our teaching and learning environments. Reflection and continuous improvement enhances the cycle of leadership preparation. Constructive planning gives students opportunities to grow their leadership potential through practice and educational support. Successful leadership

educators have awesome opportunities to make a difference in the future through preparation of people for their first flight as leaders.

[pictures and support information retrieved from
<http://www.rain.org/campinternet/backcountry/science/zoology/red-tail-hawk/red-tail-hawk.html>, 08/12/09
<http://featherflower.blogspot.com>, 08/12/09]

Issue Information

The *Journal of Leadership Education (JOLE)* continues to strive for excellence in manuscript review and acceptance. Acceptance rates are calculated for each issue and vary depending on the number of submissions. The *JOLE* acceptance rate for this issue is 42%. The manuscripts were authored by 31 writers.

In their review of the submitted documents, representatives of the *JOLE* Editorial Board provided a juried assessment of a manuscript's scholarly significance and relevance. The Theoretical Features, Research Features, Application and Idea Briefs were peer reviewed and closely scrutinized to ensure selected manuscripts advance the theory and practice of leadership education. See the journal website for a more detailed discussion of these categories (www.fshu.edu/JOLE/). This issue of *JOLE* supports scholars in their development of new knowledge in the quest for successful leadership education.

Christine D. Townsend

Respectfully submitted, Christine D. Townsend, Editor

Peer Reviewed Idea and Application Briefs

Accepted Application Briefs

The Journal of Leadership Education peer reviews and publishes accepted Idea and Application Briefs that present relevant concepts. Briefs provide the opportunity for a shorter, to the point, discussion of either an idea or an application. (http://www.fhsu.edu/jole/categ_guidelines.html, retrieved 8/06/09) Idea Briefs explore an innovative idea, finding or challenge that is based in theory or practice. Application Briefs describe a project, program, practices, or tool with consideration of the principals/theory of why it is effective. In this issue of the journal, four Application Briefs were peer reviewed and accepted for publication.

Jon Billsberry describes two teaching techniques and presents a case for adopting socially-constructed theories in leadership education. His paper identifies the inconsistency in existing leadership theories and outlines methods instructors can utilize by aligning their curriculum development with the underlying theory of socially-constructed leadership theory.

The use of candor by successful leaders is the subject of Galpin's and Whittington's brief. They write that the benefits of candor are outweighed by its lack of use. A solution is to develop a culture of candor in the classroom. In their manuscript, they describe seven actions that provide instructors with the ability to influence students to develop their skills in candor.

Craig Johnson continues the development of the leadership classroom in his paper concerning followership. His brief presents a model for incorporating the subject of followership into three major leadership course segments. He supports the inclusion of followership in leadership courses because followers are a critical component in the success of leader actions.

Lindsay, Hassan, and Day report on a leadership education course that is part of a specific contextual application. At the United States Air Force Academy, a core course in leadership development is a part of the overall educational program. The authors present the assessment strategies that are used to integrate the classroom leadership education with the students' experiential leadership roles.

Ozgur Ekmekci, in "What Would I Do Differently? Using First Person Voice to Develop Leadership Identity for Health Care Professionals," reports that leadership education is more than acquisition of knowledge. He presents a model where medical students lead a change project and reflect their leadership progress in first person writing. He develops a teaching/learning strategy where students have the experience of thinking about what they would actually do in a leadership and change situation.

Peer Reviewed Research and Theory Features

Accepted Theory Features

This category is appropriate “for development of theory that is not necessarily data based, but concerns a clear issue/hypothesis, a review of related scholarship with synthesis of theory, and discussion and conclusion.”

(http://www.fhsu.edu/jole/categ_guidelines.html, retrieved 12/23/08) This issue contains three theory articles. Each of the articles was reviewed by members of the Editorial Board who recognize the merits of introducing new theories and merging different ideas into one thought.

Willis Watt presents a theory that was developed by a melding of Social Change Theory, Social Change Leadership Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory. He presents ten recommendations to support effective leadership during inevitable times of change.

Anne Perkins theorizes that courses are needed for entrance into the cross-cultural aspects of leadership. In her manuscript, Perkins addresses six premises of Western leadership theory and sets up a global framework for leadership education.

The third theory, constructed by Jeffrey McClellan, presents three levels of leadership and proposes development of transcendent servant-leaders. In his paper, the author writes of the challenge to conceptualize leadership in the current context containing multiple leadership definitions.

Accepted Research Features

This article category is an important repository for “research-based papers containing a clear statement of an issue/hypothesis, a review of related scholarship with synthesis of theory, a discussion and conclusion.”

(http://www.fhsu.edu/jole/categ_guidelines.html, retrieved 12/23/08) This issue contains eight research-based articles that focus on various leadership contexts, educational systems, and differing teaching methods.

Dolly Adams conducted her research with faculty members working in public schools. In her study she investigated the relationship between personality type and preferred leadership approaches. Although her study did not reveal any significant correlations, the study adds to continued leadership education discussion.

John Barbuto and Marilyn Bugenhagen studied elected leaders' emotional intelligence and quality of their leader-member exchange. Their study offers critical findings that link emotional intelligence and leader-member exchange.

Edgar, Boyd, Rutherford, and Briers investigated the themes found within the *Journal of Leadership Education (JOLE)*. The study results indicate the need for increasing research continuity within the journal.

According to the research by Elmuti, Jia, and Davis women face obstruction to leadership positions. Although women have aspiration for advancement they report discrimination, family-life demands, and other barriers. The authors also found women supported participative leadership styles.

Sherlock and Morgan studied graduate students and critical thinking. In their findings they report that students found critical thinking assignments and activities were good learning tools for successful leadership education.

Stoecker, Willis, and Lersch (with Hill and Burgert) completed research with community-based leadership programs. Their study looked at programs sponsored by different organizational groups and the objectives of these differing programs.

Athletic team leadership was the focus of the research completed by Extejt and Smith. In their study, they found no relationship between the length of athletic participation and level of leadership skill.

Horstmeier and Ricketts looked at civic engagement of participants in a youth leadership program. Although support for civic engagement is evident, they reported the totality of students participating in civic projects was low.