

From the Editor's Clipboard Volume 9, Number 2 - Summer 2010

What is the power in one little word? We all grew with the adage that “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” An adage meant to sooth children’s feelings when their peers have said mean things. But the truth is that words do hurt. Words are just that powerful. Ali Edwards has found a way to use the power of one little word to make life more meaningful. Ali writes a weekly blog on scrapbooking, creativity, and life (and the concept of life art). Even if you are not a scrapper, she offers interesting insights into many facets of life, including personal leadership. Her blog is at <http://www.aliedwards.com/one-little-word/> if you would like to check it out.

In 2006, Ali chose one word (play) to focus on for that year. As she describes it, "A single word can be a powerful thing. It can be the ripple in the pond that changes everything. It can be sharp and biting, or rich and soft and slow." She reflects on her word daily, incorporating it into every facet of her life. In the last four years, thousands of her followers have adopted this practice of choosing and focusing on a single word for the year. The impact on their lives has been astounding (according to their posts).

The concept of “one little word” can be a great tool for leadership educators. If our goal is the transformation of our students (in whatever form they come in), the one little word concept can become another tool in our arsenal. We have so much going on in our lives, as do our students, that the idea of focusing on one word seems overly simplistic. But that is the strength of this concept. By focusing on one important thing rather than 1,000 less important things, we can make a tremendous impact in our lives.

This spring, Manda Rosser chose to use the “one little word” concept with the students in the *Dr. Joe Townsend Leadership Fellows* program. Each participant chose their one word and created a collage that visually described its meaning to them. They shared their word at the initial retreat and one Fellow shared their word during the weekly meeting for which they were the host. During the final meeting of the Fellows, participants shared their one little word again and the impact that it had made on them during the semester. The impact on each student was visible to both their peers and the faculty working with the Fellows.

One student chose Passion as her word:

I chose 'Passion,' because I wanted everything I did to reflect the passion I had for it. Whether it be loving my family, reading a book, camping, leading, learning, photography, etc, I wanted to show passion behind all

that I did. I believe I successfully accomplished that this semester. I hope others can see that. In my opinion, people can have many passions, but to not act on those passions or live out those passions would be a shame and a waste. I consider it a blessing to have found passion/s in my life, and I do not want to waste time on things I am not passionate about or that have not impacted my life.

Another student chose Patience. She describes the impact of her word:

I have always been known as a bit impatient and so it was very difficult, yet refreshing to remind myself to be patient in all that I did this semester. I started with little things like while I was driving. Instead of getting upset with an individual who made an unwise driving choice, I thought about how maybe their day hadn't been going well or maybe they really didn't see me. I have also implemented this word with my relationships with roommates, family and other friends. My family has noticed a significant difference in my attitude because of my pursuit to have more patience. I plan to continue to use the one little word theory and create a bank of words that I consider on a daily basis to better myself.

And yet another chose Confidence:

I chose this word because sometimes I find myself holding back class discussions, or other public activities because I am scared to put my opinion out there and have people judge me. I want to work on my confidence to speak up and have no fear in public situations. I also chose confidence because I am getting ready to graduate and go out in the real world, so I want to have the confidence to make the decisions that I need to succeed in my endeavors.

How do you or your students implement this *one little word* idea? First you choose a word. This may require a little reflection or a word may “choose” you.

- Define what the word means to you.
- Identify the areas of your life to which you plan to apply the word.
- Because pictures are powerful, create some graphic way of describing your word
- Write about your word.
- Acting on your word is necessary for making it work. Make a list of actions that you can do today or this week to make your word have impact. Add new actions each week.

Any craftsman will tell you that having the right tool for the job makes a world of difference. It is no different for leadership educators. As we seek to make a

difference in others' lives and continue our own growth as leadership educators, we need multiple tools at our disposal. May *one little word* be the tool that you need to help your students grow in a new way. My word for 2010 is Commit.

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 58%. The manuscripts were authored by 11 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.fhsu.edu/JOLE/). This issue of *JOLE* supports scholars in their development of new knowledge in the quest for successful leadership education.

Respectfully submitted,



Barry L. Boyd, Editor

This issue begins with a commentary by Joseph Thomas, U.S. Naval Academy. Thomas comments on curriculum gaps when educating leaders who are involved in a highly technical curriculum. He proposes that in a setting where the curriculum is highly technical, special attention must be paid to the students' interpersonal communication skills.

Research Features

Examining Gender Differences of Servant Leadership: An Analysis of the Agentic and Communal Properties of Servant Leadership Questionnaire

Barbuto and Gifford investigated five servant leadership characteristics by male and female servant leaders. The findings contradict many studies on gender roles in leadership.

Using Achievement Motivation Theory to Explain Student Participation in a Residential Leadership Learning Community

Moore, Grabsch, and Rotter examined a voluntary residential leadership learning community to discover how achievement motivation theory influenced the

students to join these communities. The researchers found that only two out of the three needs were common motives for the students.

4-H Made Me a Leader: A College-Level Alumni Perspective of Leadership Life Skill Development

What motivates 4-H alumni to continue their involvement with that organization? Anderson, Bruce, and Mouton qualitatively examined this as well as the impact of 4-H experiences on college-level 4-H alumni's leadership life skill development.

Creating Meaningful Environments for Leadership Education

Guthrie and Thompson describe student experiences when institutions create environments that incorporate theory, practice, and reflection of leadership education. The authors discovered that a partnership between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs can provide a learning environment where students experience high quality leadership experiences.

Transformational Leadership and its Relationship to Adult 4-H Volunteers' Sense of Empowerment in Youth Development Settings

Rose's research dealt with the sense of empowerment that 4-H volunteers feel in relation to the perceived leadership styles of their 4-H Youth Development Educators. The study's results showed a connection between empowerment of volunteers and transformational leadership.

Students' Attitudes and Perceptions of the Use of Cooperative Exams in an Introductory Leadership Class

Moore investigated the use of cooperative exams in an introductory leadership class. The use of these exams led to advantages and disadvantages from the students' perspective, but overall, the students enjoyed the cooperative exams and think that they should continue to be used.

The Effects of Teaching Methods in Leadership Knowledge Retention: An Experimental Design of Lecture, Experiential, and Public Pedagogy

Williams and McClure examined the impact of three different teaching methodologies. Findings show that lecture is an inferior method of teaching leadership and that public pedagogy has efficient and consistent results.

Impact of Group Development Knowledge on Students' Perceived Importance and Confidence of Group Work Skills

Coers, Williams, and Duncan examined the impact of Tuckman and Jensen's group development process on students' attitudes towards group work. A positive impact leads the authors to recommend that leadership educators continue using and teaching this process in the classroom and helping students see how the skill transfers to roles outside of the classroom.

Application Briefs

Serving the Once and Future King: Exploring Servant Leadership in *Merlin*

Oliver and Reynolds discover a religiously neutral example of how worldly media can be used to teach ten basic principles of servant leadership. These ten principles can be seen in *Merlin*, and students can observe these principles as qualities that are still desired today.

Interviews: Linking Leadership Theory to Practice

Smith and Roebuck describe the impacts of an assignment where students interview a leader in order to apply leadership theories, and to understand the complexities of being a leader. Using a constructivist approach, this assignment has been successful in helping students connect leadership theory to practice.

Developing Life-Long Learners Through Personal Growth Projects

Boyd and Williams reported on an assignment that is required in a personal leadership development course. The assignment allows students to apply course content while developing the habit of life-long learning.

Theoretical

Servant Leadership and Constructive Development: How Servant Leaders Make Meaning of Service

Phipps proposes a theoretical framework that examines the subject/object relationship for servant leaders at progressive stages of meaning making, showing how the way leaders make meaning of service evolves with their constructive development.